

PS COMMITTEE #5  
May 1, 2009

Please bring your packets from the April 2 and 24 Public Safety Committee worksessions on the FY10 MCFRS operating budget to the May 1 worksession. The packets are available at:  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2009/090402/20090402\\_PS01.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2009/090402/20090402_PS01.pdf) and  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2009/090424/20090424\\_PS03.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2009/090424/20090424_PS03.pdf).

## MEMORANDUM

April 30, 2009

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Minna K. Davidson, Legislative Analyst *MKD*

SUBJECT: Worksession: FY10 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS)  
(continued)

### April 2 and 24 Public Safety Committee Reviews

The Public Safety Committee began its review of the FY10 operating budget for the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service on April 2 and 24. At those worksessions, the Committees reviewed the issues raised in the worksession packets, and requested additional information.

At the April 24 worksession, the Committee ended its in-depth review at Issue #19 on page 8 of the packet memo. The Committee touched briefly on some of the following issues, but did not discuss them in detail. At a minimum, the Committee may wish to discuss further Issue #20, overall MCFRS overtime (page 9), and Issue #21 MCFRS operating expenses.

### May 1, Worksession

For the May 1 worksession, the Committee will need to review the remaining issues from April 24, and the follow up information that was requested at that worksession. The Committee will then have to develop its recommendations to the Council on the MCFRS operating budget.

### Follow up Information

At the April 24 worksession, the Committee requested that MCFRS provide additional information in several areas. The information requests and MCFRS responses are attached on © 1-10. The responses are also annotated to refer to the relevant items in Committee packets. In

addition, the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCFVRA) provided comments on the daywork overtime reduction discussed in follow-up requests #1-3, and the daywork master firefighter reduction at Burtonsville which is discussed in follow up request #7 (MCFVRA comments on © 11-13).

For two follow up requests, MCFRS did not provide all of the information the Committee may need to develop recommendations. Additional information is discussed below.

**Follow up Request #4: Add master lease payment for supplies and equipment to replace 30 ambulances, \$1.8 million.** MCFRS response on © 2. See Issue #10, April 2 packet, page 10.

**PS Committee Request:** For the Executive’s recommendation to replace 30 ambulances, requested that MCFRS staff provide prioritized options to break the ambulance purchase into smaller groups (for example, 10 or 15 units at a time) and the associated costs.

**Background:** The Executive recommended a total of \$1.8 million to purchase 30 new ambulances and the associated equipment and supplies. The total cost breaks out as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>\$</b>
Master lease payment	\$744,150
Supplies	\$367,000
Equipment	\$699,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,810,150</b>

**MCFRS Response:** MCFRS’ suggested option would be to reduce the lease payment in FY10 by purchasing 15 units in the first half of FY10 and 15 units in early FY11, but they note that cost increases for FY11 are unknown at this time.

**Other options:** If the Committee wishes to recommend only a portion of the ambulance purchase in FY10, it is Council staff’s understanding that the funding amount should be adjusted proportionately. For example, if the Committee wants to recommend purchasing 10 ambulances, one-third of the funding, or \$600,000, should be budgeted. The \$600,000 would break out approximately as follows: \$248,050 for the master lease payment, \$122,333 for supplies, and \$233,000 for equipment.

Council staff would remind the Committee that the master lease portion of this funding would be the first of 10 payments with one payment in FY10, two payments each in FY11, 12, 13, and 14, and one payment in FY15. Whatever the level of the master lease payment, the County would be committing to pay a total of 10 times that amount over a period of six years.

**Follow up Request #5: Apparatus Based on Schedule, \$332,000**  
MCFRS response on © 2. See Issue # 11, April 2, page 11.

**PS Committee Request:** For the budget item called “Apparatus Based on Schedule” requested a more detailed breakout of the number of units and costs for the all wheel drive pumpers and brush trucks to be purchased through the master lease.

**Background:** This item would fund the first master lease payment to purchase two engine body/pump modules, four all wheel drive pumpers, and two light duty brush trucks which were scheduled to be purchased under the Apparatus Replacement CIP project, but had to be funded through other means because of cost increases in the CIP project. In addition, a new tanker for Kingsview Station 22 would be purchased through the same master lease.

Because this item is a master lease payment, any reduction in the number of vehicles would reduce the \$332,000 budget item by the proportion of the payment attributable to the vehicles reduced. The table below shows the vehicles to be purchased, their costs, and their proportion of the master lease payment.

<b>Units to be Purchased through "Apparatus Based on Schedule"</b>					
<b>Unit</b>	<b># of Units</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>%Total Cost</b>	<b>Proportion of \$332K M.L. payment</b>
Engine body pump modules	2	315,000	630,000	21.6%	71,712
All wheel drive pumpers	4	375,000	1,500,000	51.5%	170,980
Light duty brush trucks	2	125,000	250,000	8.6%	28,552
Tanker	1	533,000	533,000	18.3%	60,756
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>2,913,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>332,000</b>

As with the 30 ambulances, the FY10 master lease payment would be the first of 10 payments over a period of five to six years. If fewer vehicles are purchased through this master lease, future payments would be lower as well.

**Comments from Other Organizations**

At the April 24 worksession, the Committee received comments from the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad on the impact of the Executive’s recommended daywork overtime reduction, and the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCFVRA) on several budget issues. In addition, after the worksession, the Council received comments from the Montgomery County Career Fire Fighters Association requesting that the Committee recommend adding \$120,000 for four additional Class B Driver Courses at the Public Safety Training Academy. The comments from these organizations are attached as indicated in the table of contents.

**This packet contains:**

**circle #**

MCFRS responses to Committee requests	1
MCFVRA comments on daywork reductions	11
Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad comments	14
MCFVRA comments on MCFRS budget issues	19
MC Career Fire Fighters comments	27

## FY10 MCFRS Operating Budget

### Public Safety Committee Information Requests from April 24 Worksession

*Please provide responses by April 29.*

- For the three stations affected by the Executive's recommended daywork overtime reduction (Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, Wheaton Rescue Squad, and Kensington Station 5), requested that MCFRS staff provide an analysis of the number of incidents for each station between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. and between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

*April 2 packet  
Issue # 8  
p. 10*

*Removing staffing from 12 hour to 10 hour for FS5, Medic 741 @ R1, and R2 is outlined below in the data table. All data is from the Computer Aided Dispatch(CAD) records.*

**CY-08 Computer Aided Dispatch History-Incidents and Unit Responses**

	0600-0700	1700-1800	Average Calls/Week
<b>R1- M741</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1 Morning, 1.8 Evening</b>
<b>R2-All</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>3.7 Morning, 8 Evening</b>
<b>A-742</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>111</b>	
<b>M-742</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>175</b>	
<b>RS-742</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>131</b>	
<b>FS5-All</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1.3 Morning, 3.6 Evening</b>
<b>A705</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>118</b>	
<b>E-705</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>70</b>	

- Requested information about the impact of the daywork overtime reduction on response times for the three affected stations, especially if units from farther away must cover those stations' calls during rush hour.

*April 2 packet  
Issue # 8*

*This information is not available by the deadline. We anticipate graphical G-I-S maps by Friday that identify stated response goals. Note: AFRA (ALS equipped) engines are available at FS-16, FS18, FS19, and FS21. Transport ALS units are available at FS01, FS23, FS25. Rescue equipped aerials are available at FS01, FS12 and FS25.*

*p. 10*

*See maps on p. 8-10 of this packet.*

- Requested that MCFRS work with the MCVFRA toward a compromise daywork overtime reduction which would eliminate only one hour of daywork overtime at each affected station.

*April 2 packet  
Issue # 8*

*The MCFRS is not in a position to change a budget recommendation that results in a different FY10 cost impact. MCFRS continues to work on staffing plans that will achieve the Executive's cost savings associated with this recommended OTP reduction.*

*p. 10*

4. For the Executive's recommendation to replace 30 ambulances, requested that MCFRS staff provide prioritized options to break the ambulance purchase into smaller groups (for example, 10 or 15 units at a time) and the associated costs. April 2 packet  
Issue # 10  
p 10

*The Executive's plan funds the 30 vehicle replacement in whole, including equipment and supplies necessary to outfit the units as either front-line or, ready reserve. The Executive and the Fire Chief believes that the mileage, overall condition and incident demand fully justifies this request. Prior to the most recent CIP apparatus replacement, the LFRD's have absorbed price increases for equipment and supplies. They are unable to continue funding the large purchases necessary to meet medical protocols and standards without additional funding. Council has been provided periodic updates concerning the apparatus management plan and MCFRS is entering the fourth year of an unfunded Apparatus Replacement Plan that calls for 10 EMS units per year. Funding of this plan is necessary to avoid future large impact purchases in any of the vehicle types. Should other options be required, the MCFRS can reduce the total EMS unit Master Lease payment in FY10 by 50% if 15 units are replaced prior to January 1, 2010, and 15 units are replaced in early FY11. This requires a commitment to FY11 funding that is exclusive of at least one manufacturer's CY price increase and an unknown price increase for 2010 EPA compliant engines.*

5. For the budget item called "Apparatus Based on Schedule" requested a more detailed breakout of the number of units and costs for the all wheel drive pumpers and brush trucks to be purchased through the master lease. April 2 packet  
Issue # 11  
p 11

*With the exception of the tanker at FS22 (West Germantown), all units and equipment were part of the original COPS financing PDF the Council previously approved. Due to termination of the original pumper contract and the resultant price increases from the re-issued apparatus RFP, it was determined that it was not cost effective to issue more COPS. Instead, the Master Lease was selected to complete the project. The \$1,750,000, for four all-wheel drive pumpers (\$375,000 each) and two light duty brush trucks (\$125,000 each), are the result of recommendations made jointly by the LFRD Chiefs referenced above and Apparatus Section staff. If the Council is not able to fund any portion of this line item, staff respectfully requests the opportunity to refine the recommendations with the MCVFRA Chiefs based upon available funding as approved by Council.*

6. Requested information about the condition of the reserve tanker which is currently assigned to Kingsview Station 22, and the impact on public safety if that tanker remains in service as a front line vehicle for another year.

April 2 packet  
Issue # 11  
p. 11

*This tanker is critical to the build out of the response goals established first during the 2000 Water Study and subsequently addressed in tanker shuttle testing performed since 2004. Tanker 22 fills a substantial gap in and around Boyds, Darnestown and other areas not serviced by municipal water and where existing tankers exceed the 10 minute response goal. The Executive and the Fire Chief fully supports this tanker acquisition which also permits the UMCVFD to deploy a second tanker that is staffed fully by volunteers in the largest rural geographical response area in the County. Because four of the six large capacity tankers are owned by the LFRD's, the redeployed county owned tanker can serve as the only ready reserve tanker when one of the other six are out of service. The two county owned tankers were acquired in 1992 and are in adequate condition for eighteen year old units. Both of these units fall into a low demand category where maintenance efforts are closely monitored with the primary risks of corrosion, unsupported proprietary parts, and major component failure. Both will need to be replaced by 2012.*

7. Invited the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department to work through the MCVFRA to provide call load information to support their request to retain the daywork Master Firefighter position which the Executive recommends abolishing.

April 24 packet  
Issue # 13  
p. 3

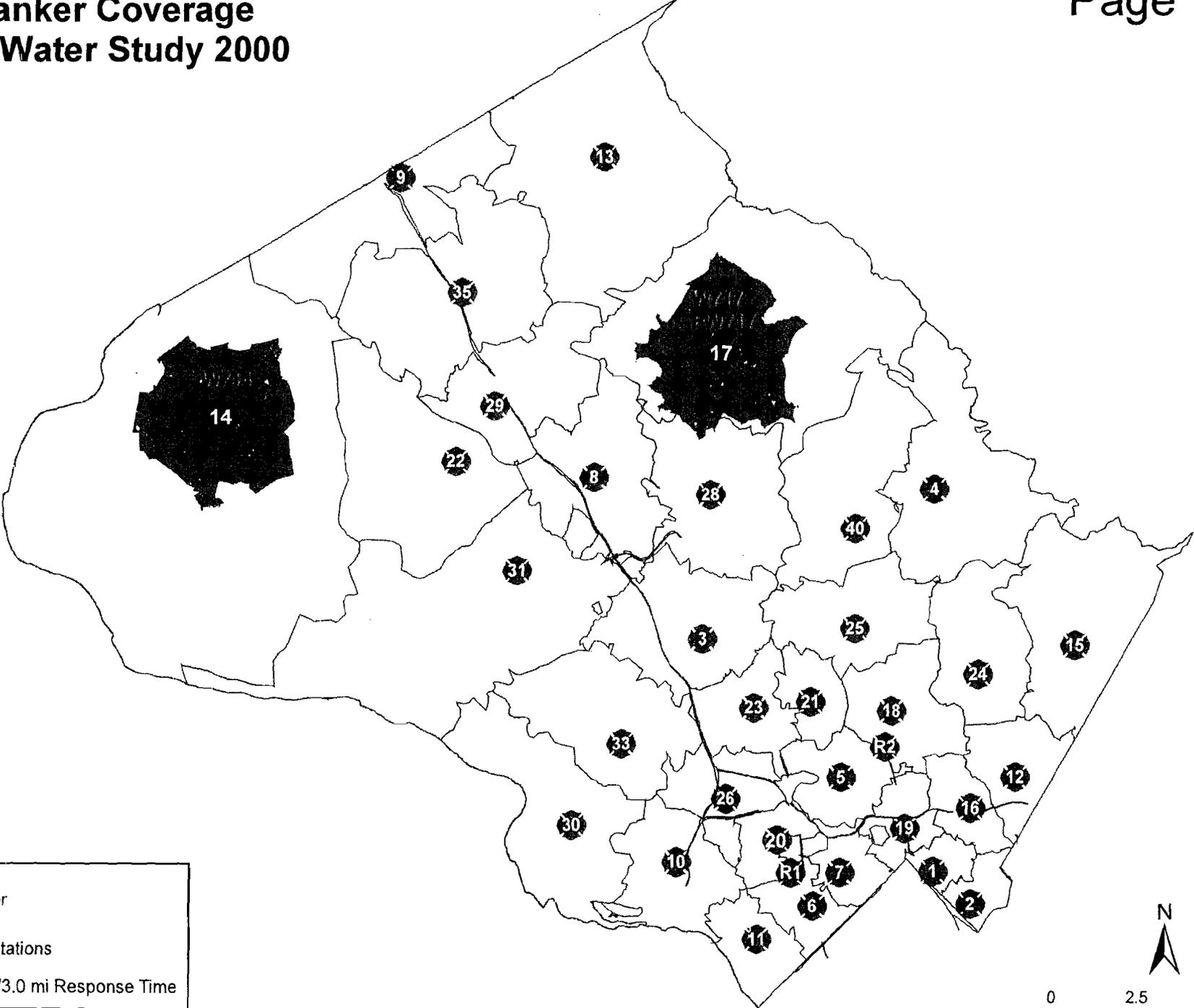
FS-715 CY-2008 Response Summary		
Unit	0700-1659 (Day)	1700-0659 (Night)
<b>Engine 715</b>	<b>1056</b>	<b>1065</b>
Truck 715	670	664
Rescue Squad 715	497	418
<b>Medic 715</b>	<b>1368</b>	<b>1458</b>
A-715	0	91
Note: E-715 and M-715 are staffed by career personnel		

8. Requested that the Fire Chief provide additional information about the grade of the civilian position needed to replace the Master Firefighter position for civilianization of SCBA maintenance.

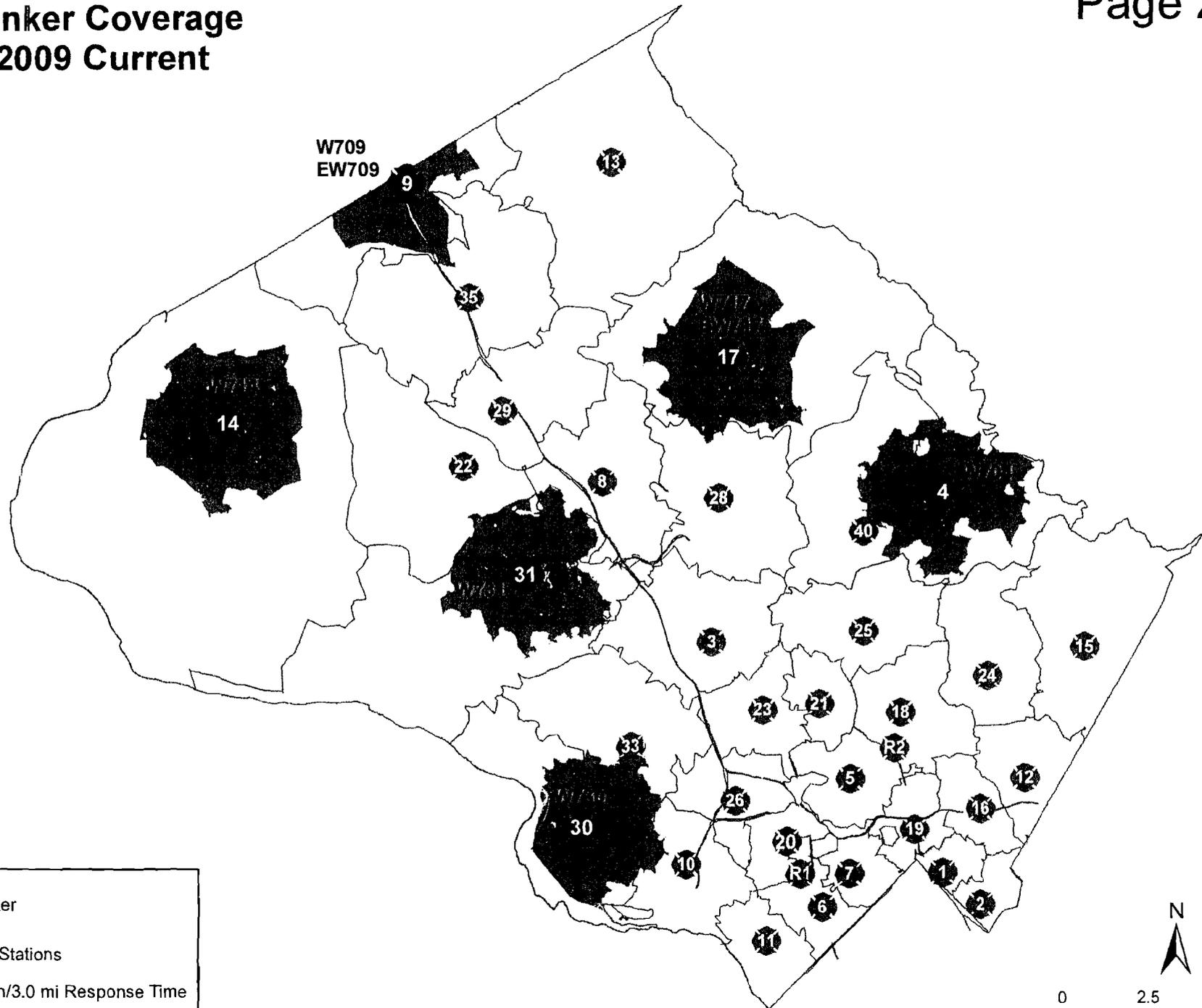
April 24 packet  
Issue # 16  
p. 6

*The scba MFR Technician Manager position is a crucial position to the MCFRS firefighters and EMS Providers. The scba MFR position is a highly technical position that requires this person to supervise personnel, prepare budget requests and purchase orders, coordination and ordering of inventory parts from vendors, respiratory fit testing, air compressor maintenance and air sampling of for 27 air compressor in MCFRS, hydrostatic cylinder testing, administration and coordination of the maintenance of CO meters, maintain the scba Inventory Control Tracking System and the calibration of extremely sensitive technical respiratory equipment. MCFRS has planned to move the MCFRS SCBA Service and Repair Facility to the Southlawn facility. The transition of the planned move will occur in the next two years. The uniformed SCBA MFR position is critical to the move and in establishing the new shop facility at Southlawn. Once the move is complete and the scba shop is operating and the new business processes have been established we plan to convert this uniformed position to a civilian manager position.*

# Tanker Coverage Pre Water Study 2000



# Tanker Coverage 2009 Current



	Tanker
	Fire Stations
	8 Min/3.0 mi Response Time

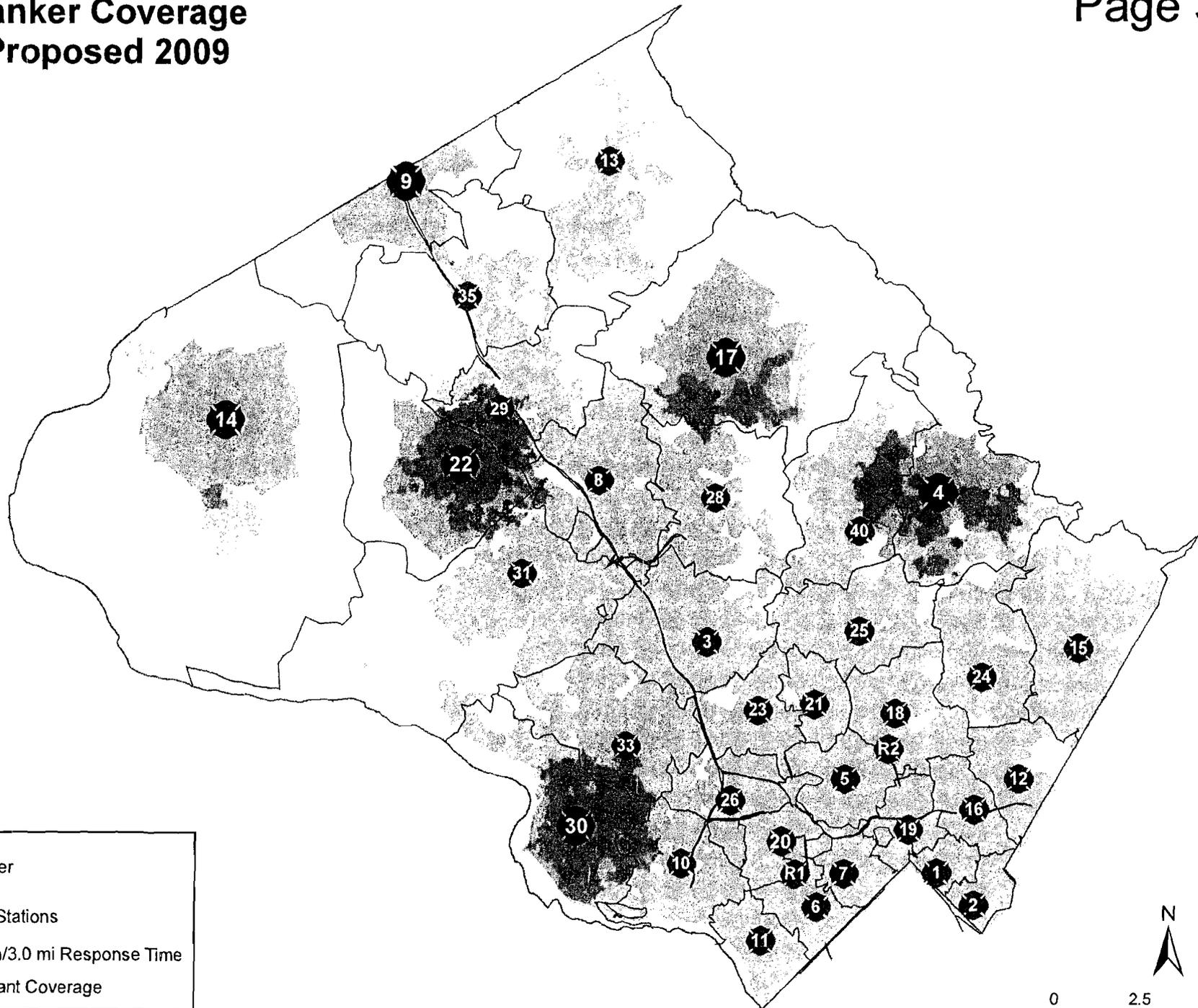
N



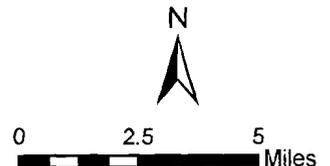
0 2.5 5 Miles



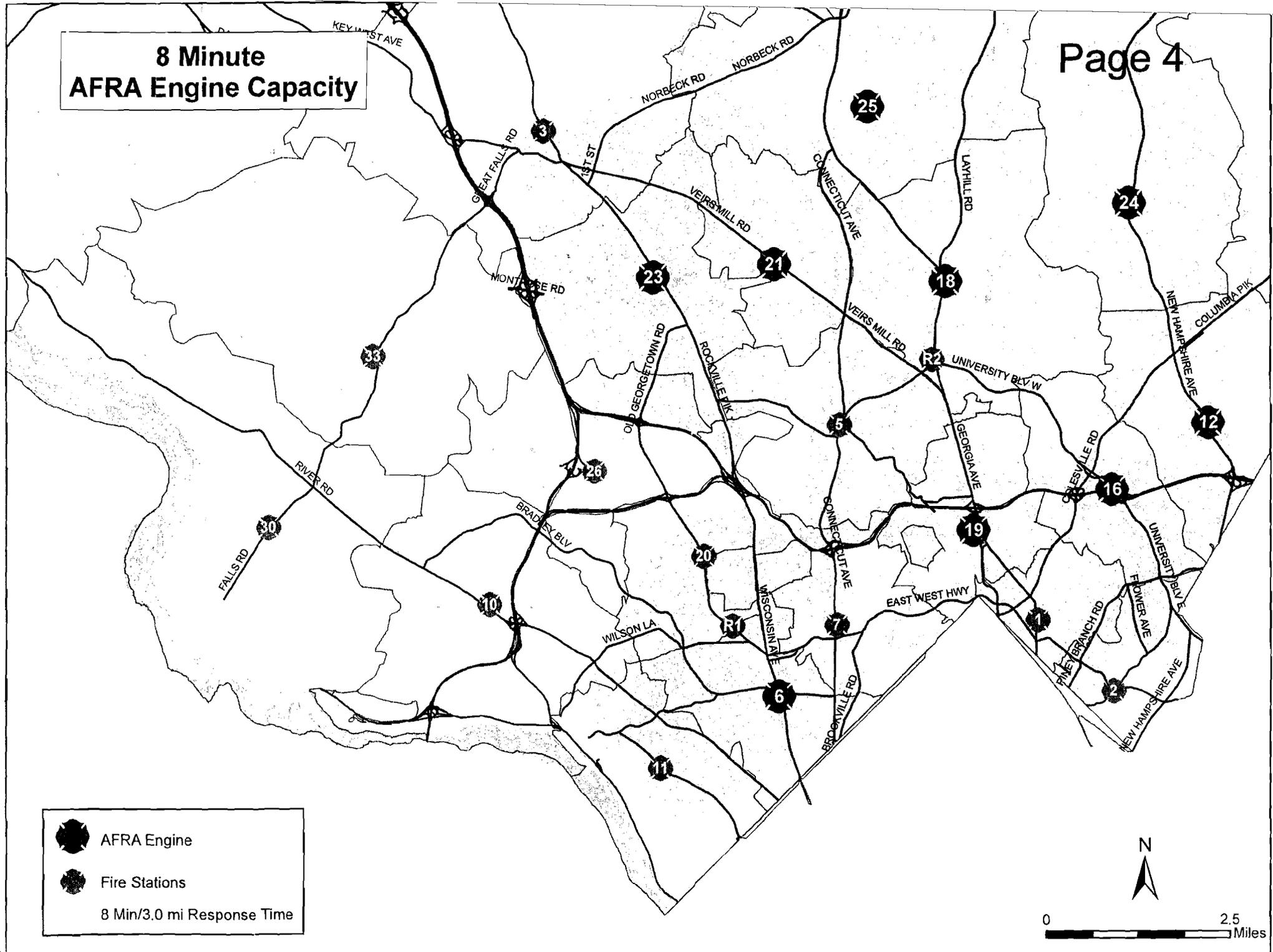
# Tanker Coverage Proposed 2009



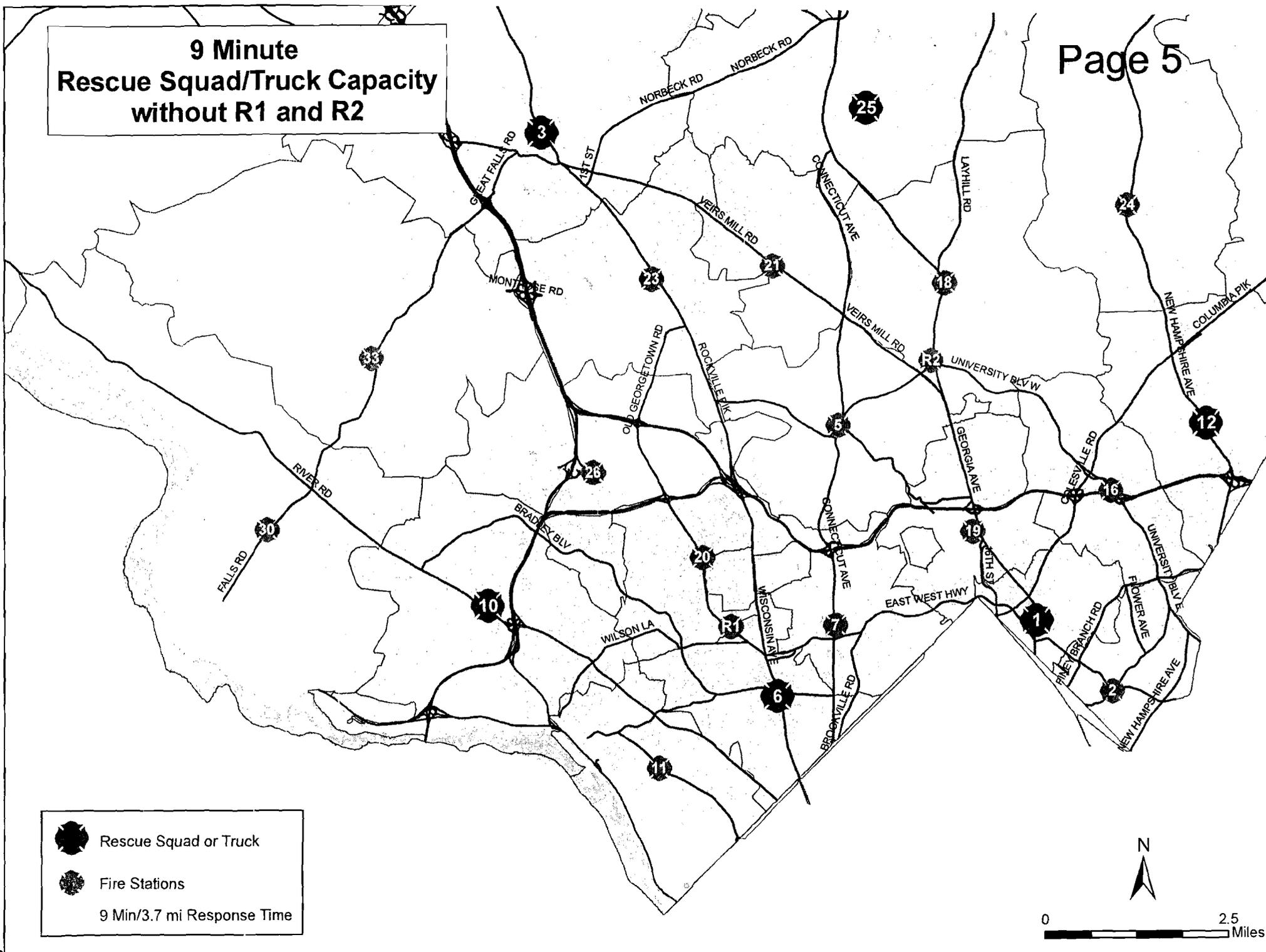
 Tanker  
 Fire Stations  
 8 Min/3.0 mi Response Time  
 Hydrant Coverage



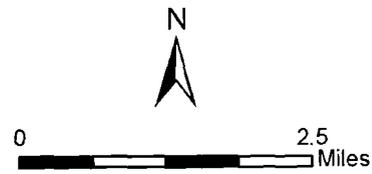
# 8 Minute AFRA Engine Capacity



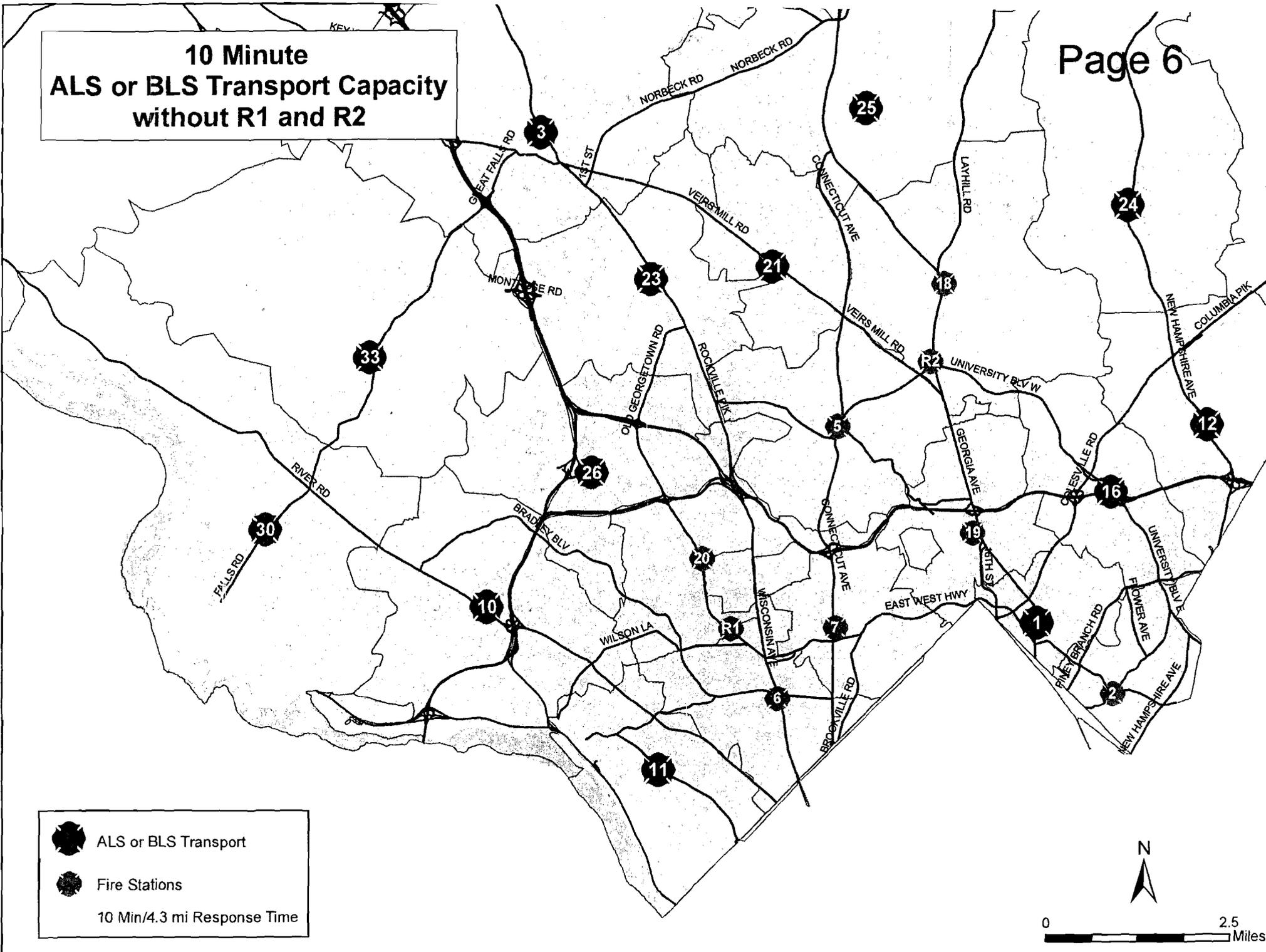
**9 Minute  
Rescue Squad/Truck Capacity  
without R1 and R2**



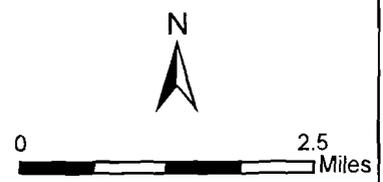
- Rescue Squad or Truck
- Fire Stations
- 9 Min/3.7 mi Response Time



**10 Minute  
ALS or BLS Transport Capacity  
without R1 and R2**



- ALS or BLS Transport
- Fire Stations
- 10 Min/4.3 mi Response Time





# Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Rescue Association

P.O. Box 1374  
Rockville, MD 20849  
301-424-1297

**Marcine D. Goodloe, President**  
**Eric N. Bernard, Executive Director**

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April 29, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews, President  
Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Ave  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear President Andrews,

The following is in response to the Montgomery County Council's Public Safety Committees request to review alternatives to the proposed reduction of staffing at three Local Fire and Rescue Departments (LFRDS) between the hours of 6AM to 7AM and from 5 PM to 6 PM weekdays. Specifically the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department, and the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad who have concurred with this response.

Also, included in the Executive's budget plan is the removal of one Master Firefighter from the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department. Here too that move is talking away a critical position needed to maintain on-going service during the day for proper response to that area. In these final hours, no solutions were offered to accommodate this void of service or reasonable alternatives, plans or a workable solution offered by the County to insure providing the needed and vital service to these large areas.

The leaders of the LFRD's have taken the Public Safety Committee's charge very seriously and, as they have done in previous years, spent an extensive amount of time discussing and looking into possible alternatives. After due consideration, including member polling and surveys, we find there are no alternatives which would satisfactorily accomplish that which is being requested, namely to require volunteers, already stretched to the maximum to be responsible for filling additional hours each day during the stated morning and afternoon hours. It is not just a matter of staying for one additional hour which already would interfere with their getting to work or school on time. A call could come in and require the volunteer to remain on the scene until many hours later.

Recently in a discussion with the MCFRS Fire Chief, the Montgomery County Volunteer reductions. Yet, it appeared in the County Executive's Budget. At that time, the LFRD's affected by these drastic proposals had the first opportunity to meet with the Fire Chief. The meeting was held on April 16, the night of the Association's monthly meeting. At that meeting it was unanimously voted by the membership to reject the proposed reductions in career staffing.

Nevertheless, the LFRD leadership once again took serious measures to review the proposal and did their very best to consider possible alternatives as requested by the Council's Public Safety Committee. The same type of staffing reduction request was made by the previous County Executive over six years ago. The County Council, after hearing and reviewing the same factual negative ramifications of the proposed cuts in staffing, wisely rejected the cuts and approved the funding plan in place today that covers the staffing now slated for elimination.

A major concern of the three LFRD's in having their staffing cut is the fact that they are all first due to the same greater lower county area. This fact results in an even more potentially negative and dangerous impact for this heavily populated area that contains major residential home, high rises, various commercial areas, schools, senior facilities, hospitals, Metro, 495 commuter routes, and freight rail. The LFRD's simply cannot guarantee that adequate coverage will be available during the proposed reduced hours, or worse, that the other more distant "next due" stations will not be out on a call and available to respond in their place. Nor do they want to be held or made responsible for that lack of service.

The communities donate to support the LFRD's for the purchase of apparatus and equipment, and volunteers who live in Montgomery County not only donate their time to reduce staffing costs but they, like the residents of the affect areas pay the same Fire Tax rate as other areas in the County. Volunteers are doing an outstanding and laudable job of providing service and believe there can be no other higher priority than saving lives and property.

As the Council continues to review response times, it should be aware that the next-due stations to respond if the first-due LFRD fails to respond, will further hamper response time quota - due to heavy, slow or non-moving traffic during these morning and evening peak rush hours. As well as the fact, that the next-due station could also be on call and not available requiring even further stations to try to respond. Any plan, which likely guarantees a significant response time increase during peak hours, may result in unnecessary loss of life and property.

Section 21-1(a) of the county Code states, "The Council believes that the County government is ultimately responsibility for assuring public safety by providing fire, rescue and emergency service." The Code further requires that this service be delivered thought the MCFRS under the authority of the Fire Chief, who will "fairly communicate and consider all views regarding these services." It is not only our view but also we are providing of facts to the Council members that the proposed cuts cannon assure the required public safety response.

The LFRD's targeted with the proposed staffing reductions already provide significant volunteer coverage beyond that expected of the other LFRD's and in accordance with their approved standby programs as required under the contract. The fact that these same LFRD's who have stepped up to the plate time and time again, are suddenly expected to provide additional service is ill-advised and has obvious negative effects for the public as well as volunteers. To expect more from the targeted LFRD's is neither a realistic nor a practical solution. Our volunteers have school and full time jobs to attend. Volunteers sacrifice a significant amount of time away from their families to take training and to serve their communities. They simply cannot be expected to sacrifice their education, careers, or their family's livelihood to fulfill this unacceptable and dangerous plan.

Most importantly, the LFRD's want to insure their communities receive the premier service they have come to rely upon and expect. The County Code specifies that our combination system is comprised of a public and private partnership that has the responsibility to provide, fire, rescue and emergency medical service. The volunteers, i.e. the Private Partners have, and are, meeting their responsibilities, especially those LFRD's that have been targeted for career staffing reductions. To drop this additional load on the shoulders of the LFRD's who already provide millions of dollars of savings and thousands of service hours to the county, is inconsistent with the spirit and intent of the County Code.

We therefore respectfully urge the Public Safety Committee and the County Council to reject the proposed reduction in staffing between the hours of 6:00 AM to 7:00AM and from 5:00PM to 6:00 PM in the targeted LFRD's and the removal of the Master Firefighter from station 15 daytime and to continue to provide the necessary funding in that regard.

Thank you.

Marcine D. Goodloe, President

4-13-09  
of [unclear]

MD  
CC  
SBF  
LL

April 24, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews  
Council President and Chairman  
Public Safety Committee  
Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Ave.  
Rockville Maryland 20850



**WHEATON VOLUNTEER  
RESCUE SQUAD • INC.**

11435 GRANDVIEW AVENUE  
WHEATON MARYLAND 20902  
(301) 949-4044 FAX (301) 942-0740  
ADMIN OFFICE (301) 949-9673

041927



**Fire Rescue Service Staffing Reductions**

Dear Councilmember Andrews:

I am writing to express the concerns of the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad, Inc. (WVRS) regarding proposed staffing reductions at the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad, Rescue Station 2. I also will discuss the cumulative impact of similar reductions at the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD), Station 5, and at the Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad (BCC), Rescue Station 1.

Rescue Station 2 is currently staffed by career personnel Monday through Friday from 6 AM to 6 PM. The station is fully staffed by volunteers from 6 PM to 6 AM Monday through Friday, as well as all day on weekends and holidays. Minimum staffing for the station is 9.

The current budget proposal reduces career staffing at the station from 12 hours to 10 hours a day Monday through Friday. It is proposed that no staffing be provided from 6 AM to 7AM and from 5 PM to 6 PM.

Two of the current 12 work hours, we understand, are funded through "scheduled overtime". We have been told that the IAFF contract schedule for day work is a 40 hour week. According to our discussions with Fire Chief Bowers, the staffing reductions have been proposed as a method of reducing overtime.

**History**

The career daytime staffing at Rescue Station 2 has worked 12 hour day shifts since the 1980s. The 12 hour shift was put in place because volunteer staffing was unable to cover the station consistently between 6 AM to 7 AM and 5 PM to 6 PM. The 12 hours of career coverage is necessary to allow the volunteer staffing to get to work or school on time and allow time for them to get home from school or work and in to the station.

It is important to consider that a working response just before the end of a shift could take several hours to complete and clear.

When the 12 hour shifts were originally implemented they did not require the payment of overtime. The standard work week for career staff was 48 hours. At some point since then through the contract negotiation process, these positions required two hours of overtime a day.

### **Equity**

The staffing reductions are proposed at the three stations in the County that are fully staffed nights and weekends by volunteers. The value of contributed service by Wheaton volunteers during our last fiscal year was \$4.5M. All three of the stations involved own their stations. Two of the three stations have all corporation owned apparatus, the third has some corporation owned apparatus.

These LFRDs and the citizens they serve are being penalized for the strong volunteer participation and community support. As you know in spite of the their commitment of time and donation of money to the LFRDs all County residents pay a uniform fire tax. The fire tax money from these communities was already being spent in other areas of the County. Now it is proposed that the limited resources received from the tax payment be further reduced.

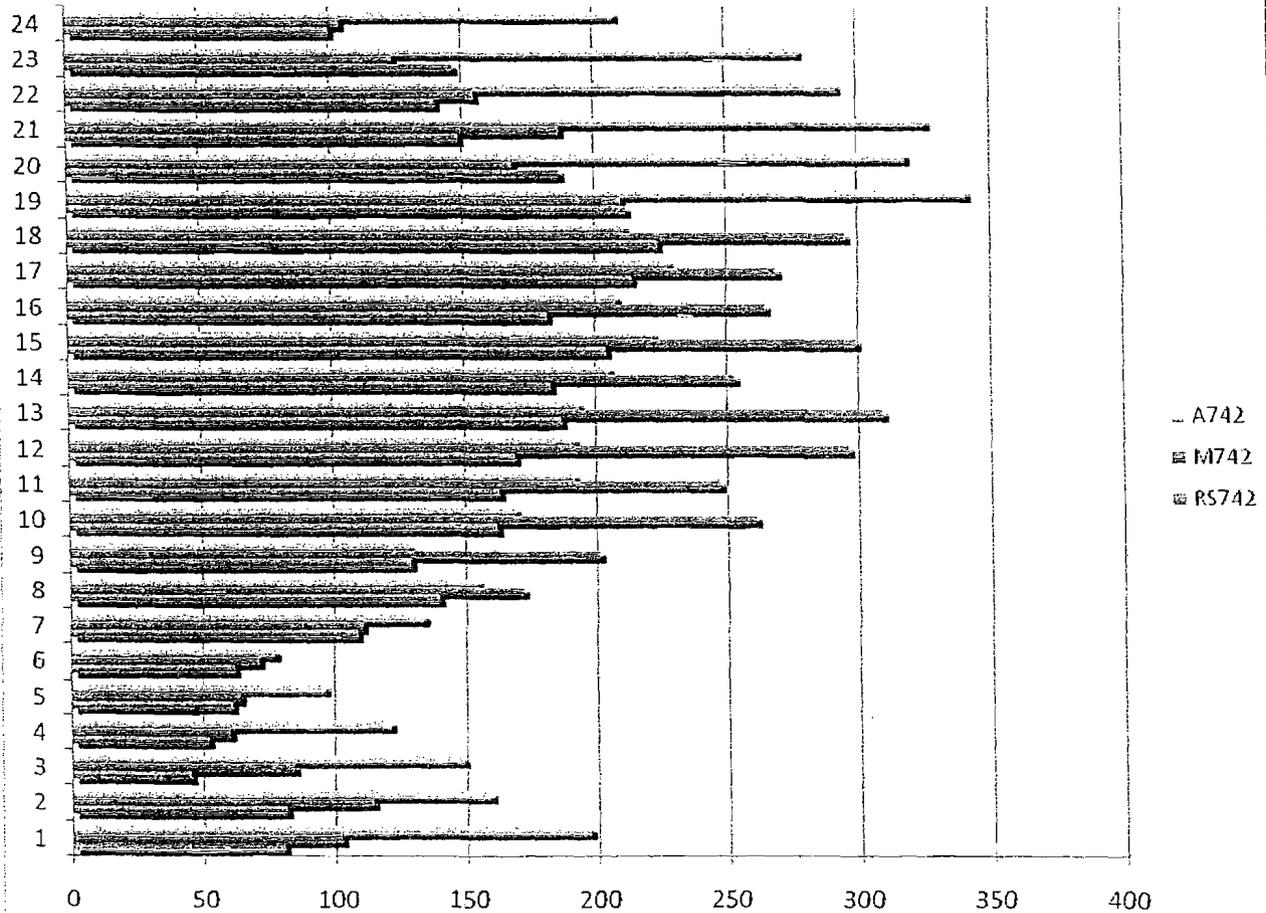
### **Impact on Service Delivery**

If service cuts are necessary in order to address the current fiscal crisis the impact on service delivery should be the primary concern. It has been indicated to us that the primary consideration in this decision making process was overtime cost reduction.

Below is the hourly breakdown of unit responses from Rescue Station 2 for CY 2008.

The vertical axis represents hours of the day. The horizontal axis is the number of responses. The green line (top line in each group for copies) represents BLS unit responses. The red line (middle line in each group for copies) represents ALS unit responses. The blue line (bottom line in each group for copies) represents heavy rescue squad responses.

## CY 2008



You can see that the 5-6 PM hour is the busiest hour of the day for heavy rescue squad responses. The Wheaton heavy rescue squad is the first due squad from the District of Columbia line to the south; Bel Pre Rd to the north; Piney Branch Rd. to the east and Saul Rd to the west. This area includes the heavily traveled commuter arteries of Georgia Ave, Connecticut Ave., University Blvd and Randolph Rd. In addition the area includes 4 Metro stations which are served by some of the deepest tunnels in the system, miles of freight rail and commuter rail track and significant portions of the heavily congested inner and outer loops of Interstate 495. The proposal before you removes staffing from this unit during both the morning and evening rush hours.

You will also note that during the 5-6 PM hour there were almost 300 ALS responses; nearly one response a day during this time period.

In total the Wheaton station had 1084 unit responses in CY 2008 during the two hours that are proposed for no staffing. This is more responses than some stations in the County responded to in a year.

According to published 2008 response data Wheaton has the most ALS unit responses in the County and is second in BLS responses.

It is also the busiest heavy rescue squad in the County

It is the fifth busiest station in the County Fire Rescue service.

As troubling as it is to propose destaffing the Wheaton station, the public service impact is further compounded by the destaffing of Kensington station 5 which is immediately adjacent West of the Wheaton station and the staffing reduction to the BCC Rescue Squad. Station 5 provides first responder care through the engine and ambulance for many of the advanced life support calls that Wheaton responds on. The BCC Rescue Squad provides second due ALS service in many areas of Kensington where Wheaton provides the primary ALS service. With the staffing reductions proposed it is very likely that someone having a heart attack in downtown Kensington would not get an engine or ambulance from Station 5, would not get an ambulance from Rescue Station 2 (second due BLS) would not get a medic unit from Rescue Station 2 (first due ALS) and would not get a medic unit from BCC (second due ALS).

Similar scenarios occur in areas adjacent to downtown Kensington where the three effected stations combine to provide service currently.

This scenario was discussed at a recent Mid County Citizens Advisory Board Meeting, the representative of the Fire Chief indicated that the situation could be effectively handled by surrounding units without unacceptable delay based on the County response time computer models. The County response time computer model does not adequately address the impact of traffic during rush hour in the Wheaton Kensington area. While the model provides reasonable data for average response times to assist in unit and station placement, it is not an adequate predictor of specific response times during peak traffic hours.

## Conclusion

I hope you agree that the proposed cuts are not the correct way of reducing Fire Rescue costs. We fully understand the severity of the budget situation and are more than willing to assist in finding alternative methods of saving. What is proposed simply is not the right answer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T.C. Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas C. Brown

President



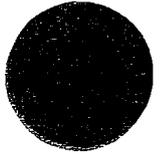
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# Montgomery County Volunteer Fire-Rescue Association

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Marcine D. Goodloe, President  
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**MCFRS FY10 OPERATING BUDGET**  
**Questions for April 24, 2009 PS Committee Work session**  
**Answers from the MCVFRA**  
*(MCVFRA Responses are Italicized and Bolded)*

**PS Committee April 2 Requests:**

1. *We are concerned that the fire chief and the executive will not consider a realistic budget without the EMST fee.*
2. Requested information about the backlog in driver training classes that are required for promotion to Firefighter III, and possible solutions to address the backlog.

*The MCVFRA disputes the number of volunteers that are waiting for the class. The 11 that are listed by the County are not reflective of the actual number the MCVFRA is getting from the departments. We believe the number is much closer to 60 and that the 11 may be those who have registered for the most recent class and did not get into the class. The MCVFRA has filed a formal grievance with the fire chief and requests relief in the form of dropping the class B course from a requirement to a recommended class and allow the firefighters to follow the old system which mirrors all other fire departments in the state which is to pass the Maryland State class B license requirements.*

**General:**

4. The Council approved an FY09 Savings Plan reduction of -\$1.45 million for MCFRS. However, the budget book, page 44-7, estimates that the total tax funded expenditures for MCFRS will be over budget by about \$1 million. What is the reason for the estimated increase?

*We want to make sure it is clear the Senator Amoss (508) funds are Maryland State grant funds and are actual to expenses. They should not create an over-budget situation. We would like further explanation.*

**Positions:**

- Master Firefighter day position in Burtonsville

***We are waiting to hear from BVFD***

- Lieutenant in Recruiting

***We agree with the reduction***

- Firefighter III in the ECC

***We agree with the reduction***

- Battalion Chief in Training

***We agree with the reduction***

9. On the non-uniformed side, two positions are recommended for abolishment, and nine are recommended to be lapsed. Please provide brief (no more than four lines) descriptions of these positions' duties and how they will be covered after the positions are abolished or lapsed.

- Abolish one Office Services Coordinator (CRRS-FY08 Retirement Incentive Plan)

***We agree with the reduction.***

- Abolish Gaithersburg Office Services Coordinator (Volunteer Services – FY09 Savings Plan)

***We agree with the reduction.***

- Lapse Sr. Planner (CRRS)

***We agree with the reduction. Consider for abolishment.***

- Lapse Administrative Specialist (Administrative Services)

***We agree with the reduction. Consider for abolishment.***

- Lapse Supply Technician II (Administrative Services)

***We agree with the reduction. Consider for abolishment.***

- Lapse Administrative Specialist III (Administrative Services)

***We agree with the reduction. Consider for abolishment.***

- Lapse Program Manager I (Administrative Services)

***We agree with the reduction. Consider for abolishment.***

- Lapse Manager III (Volunteer Services – FY09 Savings Plan)

***We vehemently disagree with this lapse. This position is the deputy director (second in command) of the Division of Volunteer Services. By sheer numbers, this is the largest division yet only has a staff of 4 and fully HALF of the positions are currently lapsed and unfilled!***

***Also of importance is the fact that County Code Chapter 21 specifically requires only two divisions – the Division of Volunteer Services and the Division of Operations. The three other divisions have been added by the past fire chief and NOT required by law. We feel that reductions should be taken in those divisions BEFORE the two required in the law.***

***The Division Chief of Volunteer Services is extremely handicapped by not having a deputy now for over 16 months. This position needs to be filled as we are relying more and more on volunteers as well as increasing the requirements of the volunteers. Please REJECT the lapse and fund this most important position in the combination MCFRS.***

- Lapse OSC (Volunteer Services – FY09 Savings Plan)

***We again strongly oppose this lapse and urge the position be filled as soon as possible. The Volunteer Services Division is the largest division with over 1,600 volunteers that must be managed effectively and this position is key. Again, 2 of the 4 positions in this division is currently unfilled and being lapsed. How can a division work effectively at 50% capacity?***

- Lapse OSC at Glen Echo (Volunteer Services – FY09 Savings Plan)

***We disagree with this position being continued as a lapse. The Glen Echo Volunteer Fire Department has only 1 administrative position which has been vacant now for over 6 months. They position is mission critical for both the volunteers and career members assigned to Glen Echo. This position must be filled as soon as possible.***

10. For FY10, the following sections are proposed to have uniformed staff as well as civilian staff. Could the uniformed positions\* be abolished instead of, or in addition to the civilian positions that are already recommend for reduction? If the uniformed positions cannot be abolished, could they be replaced with civilian positions?

***We believe that there are several uniformed positions that may be able to be civilianized at significant cost savings to the County without adverse consequences.***

***We further believe that one or more divisions can be combined or eliminated. The Division of Community Risk Reduction should be combined with the Division of Administrative Services and duplications should be eliminated. Administrative reductions must be made BEFORE any field personnel are removed.***

- Fire Chief's Office, Investigative Program

1 Manager III  
1 Battalion Chief\*

***We believe the Battalion Chief should be returned to the field. The County recently hired the Manager III.***

- Community Risk Reduction Services, Organizational Planning

1 Manager III  
1 Fire/Rescue Captain\*  
1 Psychologist  
1 Exercise Physiologist  
1 Therapist II

***We believe the uniformed positions should be returned to the field. The positions do all administrative work that does not require two high-ranking officers or uniformed people at all. Clearly, administrative items can and should be done by non-uniformed civilians at a significant cost savings.***

- Administrative Services, Employee Services

1 Fire/Rescue Assistant Chief\*  
1 Battalion Chief\*  
2 Administrative Specialists IIIs  
1 Administrative Specialist II  
2 Office Service Coordinators

***We believe that one or both of the uniformed positions should be returned to the field. Two senior uniformed officers are not necessary in these difficult budget times.***

#### Scheduling

11. Scheduling is currently handled by the four uniformed positions shown below. Could this function be civilianized, at least in part?

1 Fire/Rescue Assistant Chief  
2 Master Firefighters  
1 Firefighter III

***We believe that the Assistant Chief should be returned to the field.***

#### Safety Section

15. Why is an Assistant Chief needed for this section? What could be done to shift the Assistant Chief's duties to lower ranking personnel?

***We agree that lowering the level from assistant chief to battalion chief is appropriate.***

#### SCBA Maintenance

17. How is SCBA maintenance staffed? The only position in the Personnel Complement for this function is one SCBA Technician in Special Operations. Are uniformed personnel assigned to this function? If so, which positions are assigned, and what are their costs.

***We believe that the Master Firefighter should be returned to the field. It could absolutely be done by a civilian at a significant savings.***

#### Recruitment

For FY10, the Executive recommends abolishing a Lieutenant position in Recruiting and reducing the Recruitment Section's operating expenses by \$ 152,590. The FY10 personnel complement for the section would include:

- Community Risk Reduction Services, Recruitment

1 Manager III  
1 Fire Rescue Captain\*  
1 Administrative Specialist II

20. Is it necessary to retain a Captain position in this section, or could the position be replaced with a civilian position?

***The recruitment section should consist of the civilian manager and the civilian recruiter as the only full-time recruiters. The two uniformed personnel should be returned to the field and more volunteers used when needed especially when there are few recruit classes scheduled.***

21. If the operating expenses are reduced by -\$152,590, how much will be left in the recruitment budget?

\$111,237 will remain in the operating budget.

***The MCVFRA was given over \$68,000 in the recruitment budget for the past 3 years and has not spent one dollar. We were required to write a complete business plan that was submitted in September 2007 to Chief Carr. We would like to know where the funding for the volunteer and MCVFRA recruitment effort is located and when we can access the funding.***

22. If these reductions are taken, which recruiting activities would be reduced or eliminated, and which activities would continue?

***The Association would like to see a complete marketing plan and budget since the recruitment section has not included us in the process of any of the items they describe in their answer. Additionally, they have not worked with the MCVFRA JOINT recruitment team on the marketing plan that was submitted as part of the recruitment plan submitted in September 2007.***

23. What volunteer recruiting resources would be available through the MCVFRA?

The MCVFRA has drafted a plan for volunteer recruiting; however they have limited staff resources to implement the plan. The Administrative Specialist, Volunteer Recruiter along with the Recruitment Team Manager and uniformed personnel, work closely with the MCVFRA and its members to assist the MCVFRA in implementing their ideas for recruiting volunteers. The Mill Manager remains available to provide marketing expertise, assistance and implementation to the MCVFRA and its members.

***The plan devised by the MCVFRA has been in the implementation phase for well over a year and does NOT lack staff resources. We are currently in our 3<sup>rd</sup> continuous VBOC class training almost 100 new volunteers and have recruited over 280 volunteers through our joint recruitment efforts to date. What we lack are financial resources that we have been waiting for from the previous fire chief for well over a year and a half.***

*(See response to question 21). There remains a disconnect with the career recruitment team and the MCVFRA in planning together, sharing resources and ideas, and goal setting. The volunteer recruiter has been working extremely hard on assisting with the management of the VBOC classes and on outreach. We need to work closer with the team and follow the plan that has been written and approved. The funding needs to be made available and the joint campaign needs to start as soon as possible. The only hold-up is the funding availability.*

24. What would be the impact of the Executive's reductions on recruiting efforts in general? On outreach to increase diversity in MCFRS.

*Diversity recruitment is important and the volunteers have been extremely successful. The LFRDs are significantly more diverse and efforts to continue the diversification continue. It does not require uniformed managers to increase diversity. It requires a PLAN. It requires following a PLAN. We have submitted a plan and the goal from Chief Carr was to work jointly under the recruitment and retention business plan. We need to do that and move forward.*

Take Home cars

40. Council staff had previously requested that MCFRS staff provide the following information regarding take home cars. Please provide:

- The overall number of County cars used by MCFRS staff

*The MCVFRA would like clarity on the numbers of vehicles. We would request a chart to show that make of car, year, who it is assigned to, where they commute to with the car, number of emergency responses for 2009, 2008, 2007, purpose for the take home car, job assignment.*

*We also believe that the vehicles attributed to volunteers are artificially high because they include utility, mechanic, and station vehicles that are NOT take home cars, kept at the station, and are available for career and volunteer personnel to use to get supplies, go to classes and respond from the station – none of which are take home cars or assigned to a specific individual.*

*We believe a more detailed and clear picture of the vehicles is needed.*

Other Questions and Concerns Not Included in the Package:

Staffing reductions at BCCRS, WVRS, KVFD station 5 and BVFD station 15.

***At the MCVFRA meeting on April 16, 2009, a motion was passed to strongly oppose the reduction of career staffing hours at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase RS, the Kensington VFD, and the Wheaton VRS.***

***The reduced hours were to include hours between 6AM to 7AM and 5PM to 6PM, Monday through Fridays. These are in obvious conflict with normal business hours that volunteers would have to report to their full time jobs or attend college classes. The same difficulties would apply to volunteers being able to arrive at the stations from these and other obligations that cannot be changed. A fact that adds to the serious endangering of life and property due to lack of coverage if these reductions in career staffing are made.***

***These suggested cuts that has been proposed to this one area of the County will leave a dangerous gap in the lower County especially in the Wheaton, Kensington, Bethesda, Chevy Chase, and Silver Spring communities. These proposed staffing reductions affect 3 contiguous areas where conceivably 3 units back to back to back could potentially fail to respond. Communities that have high rise buildings, many businesses, schools, homes, hospitals, nursing homes, community centers, libraries, apartments, railroads, major highways, major shopping centers, hotels, restaurants, religious buildings, the beltway, and others – all serious life-hazard locations.***

***As an example, the KVFD has stated they provide 65% of the staffing at an estimated savings of \$900,000.00 just in personnel cost alone. As you are aware the Bethesda-Chevy Chase RS provide 100% of the service. The Wheaton VRS also supplies an estimated 65% of the service for another estimated savings of \$900,000.00. While the supposed cost savings for all 4 stations would only be about \$450,000.00.***

***This area is one of the busiest in the County and it does not make sense to make these reductions. The County needs to look to other savings before such a severe service reduction and impact is taken.***

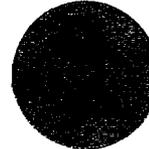


# Montgomery County Career Fire Fighters Ass'n., Inc.

LOCAL 1664

Councilmember Phil Andrews  
Chair, Public Safety Committee  
Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

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PHIL ANDREWS  
COUNCILMEMBER

April 23, 2009

Subject: FY10 Fire & Rescue Service Budget – PSTA – Class “B” Driver Course

Dear Councilmember Andrews,

This letter follows up our conversation from earlier this month regarding the FY10 Fire & Rescue Service Budget, specifically, funding for the Public Safety Training Academy to conduct a sufficient number of Class “B” Driver Courses.

The Class “B” Driver Course is a promotional requirement for the rank of Fire Fighter/Rescuer III. Due to insufficient funding in the Public Safety Training Academy budget over the past few Fiscal Years the Fire & Rescue Service has developed a backlog of approximately 43 career fire fighters that need to take the Class “B” Driver Course to complete the promotional requirements for the rank of Fire Fighter / Rescuer III. This has adversely impacted our members by delaying their promotions due to the lack of a sufficient number of classes.

The Class “B” Driver Course is limited to twelve persons per class. Each class of 12 students costs approximately \$30,000. In order to provide relief for the backlog of career fire fighters needing the class for promotion there would need to be four (4) additional classes dedicated to career fire fighters added to the Public Safety Training Academy budget. The total fiscal impact for the four (4) classes would be approximately \$120,000.

To resolve this issue we are asking the Public Safety Committee to recommend the following for the FY10 Fire & Rescue Service Budget:

Add funding for four (4) additional Class “B” Driver Courses at the Public Safety Training  
Cost - \$120,000.

In order to facilitate these classes the Public Safety Training Academy requires five (5) reserve engine companies to be assigned to that facility.

Additionally, we would ask the Public Safety Committee to support the funding of a sufficient number of Class “B” Driver Courses in the future to avoid having a back log of career fire fighters needing the course for promotion to Fire Fighter / Rescuer III.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical issue for the Fire & Rescue Service.

Respectfully,



Jeffrey Buddle,  
Vice President

cc: Councilmember Roger Berliner, Public Safety Committee  
Councilmember Marc Elrich, Public Safety Committee  
Councilmember Dutchy Trachtenburg, Chair, Management and Fiscal Policy Committee  
Councilmember Valerie Ervin, Management and Fiscal Policy Committee  
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