

**FY2020 STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE,  
RESCUE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES AND COMMUNITY  
RISK REDUCTION MASTER PLAN  
PRIORITIES**



**June 26, 2019**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Goldstein".

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**FIRE CHIEF, SCOTT E. GOLDSTEIN**

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# MCFRS FY2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

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# MCFRS FY2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan presents and explains the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's goals for FY20 that were identified during the March 25, 2019 Annual Planning Meeting and further refined during a follow-up meeting on April 1. The FY20 goals are associated with those found in the department's 6-year master plan (*2016-2022 Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*, dated June 28, 2016). FY20 goals address departmental readiness, optimization of our assets, minimization of preventable deaths and injuries, well-being of our workforce, building and maintaining strong relationships with our partners, and implementing change to enhance performance.

For each goal, there are several initiatives presented in terms of the Division(s) or Office<sup>1</sup> having primary responsibility for oversight and implementation. These initiatives will be the focus of the department during FY20; although, implementation will continue into FY21 and possibly beyond for many of them. Our FY20 initiatives address the following areas and topics:

- Emergency Medical and Integrated Healthcare Services (EMIHS)
- Emergency communications
- Special operations
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Community risk reduction
- Facilities' maintenance, renovation and construction
- Logistics
- Staffing
- Training
- Health, safety and well-being of our workforce
- Information technology
- Data management and analysis
- Planning
- Accreditation
- Departmental performance and customer service
- Fiscal management

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., Office of the Fire Chief

# MCFRS FY2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

## **FY20 GOAL #1:**

### **ACHIEVE & MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF READINESS**

#### **OPERATIONS**

##### **1. New Paramedic Chase Unit Deployments**

The department has a multi-phase plan for deploying additional paramedic chase units (PCUs) by redeploying paramedics from medic units to PCUs while converting the former medic units into BLS ambulances. Each case, the EMT would remain on the unit and a second EMT would be assigned to it. The unit would then operate as a BLS ambulance. Under Phase 2 of the PCU deployment strategy<sup>2</sup>, two PCUs will be deployed at Station 8 and one each at Stations 3 and 23. Under Phase 3, PCUs will be deployed at Stations 1, 12 and 15 - one at each station. Should funding become available during FY20, these PCU deployments will be addressed wholly or partially depending upon the amount of funding allocated.

##### **2. Conversion of Medic Units to Ambulances**

In combination with the deployment of new PCUs per above, the department will convert medic units at Stations 29 and 31 to BLS ambulances. The paramedics from the two medic units will be reassigned within the department and two EMTs will be assigned to operate each of the two ambulances. Should funding become available during FY20, these conversions will be addressed.

##### **3. New Ambulance Deployments**

The department has a plan to deploy two new ambulances to address service demand in Silver Spring and Aspen Hill, with deployments at Station 19 (Ambulance 719) and Station 25 (Ambulance 725-Charlie). Should funding become available during FY20, these two additional ambulances will be placed in service, each staffed by two EMTs.

##### **4. Flex Ambulance Deployments**

MCFRS has identified the need for deploying “flex” ambulances to address times of peak demand for EMS services within specific areas of the County. These units would

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<sup>2</sup> An earlier phase implemented during FY18 involved the conversion of Medic 725 to a PCU (i.e., ALS725) and the former medic unit vehicle converted to an Ambulance (A725B).

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be strategically deployed where needed, so the locations could change depending upon the day of the week and time of day; thus, necessitating deployment flexibility. Should funding become available during FY20, one or more flex ambulances will be placed in service as needed, each staffed by two EMTs.

## **VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

### **1. Provision of CERT Basic Classes**

During FY20 (and extending through CY21), five Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Basic classes will be offered to County residents by County CERT instructors. Each CERT Basic class is 32 hours plus a 3-hour CPR session. There will also be at least one offering of the Teen CERT class in conjunction with the Gaithersburg-Washington Grove Fire Department's Junior Fire Brigade program. CERT classes are based upon FEMA's CERT curriculum.

### **2. Development of Expanded Certified ASHI CPR/AED Instructor Corps**

During FY20, the County's CERT leadership will develop an expanded instructor corps for teaching cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) use to the public. Twelve CERT members will be trained for this purpose and become American Safety & Health Institute (ASHI)-certified CPR/AED instructors. As a result, the CERT Program will have a total of 15 ASHI-certified instructors; thus, making it possible to train many more County residents in CPR and in AED-use. Concurrently, the CERT will purchase additional training equipment, including mannequins and AED trainers, for use by the expanded CPR-AED instructor corps.

### **3. Improvement of CERT Go Team Capabilities**

During FY20, the CERT leadership will continue developing the CERT "Go Team" through monthly field training and equipment acquisition. Additionally, the CERT leadership will work closely with the new Volunteer Services Division Chief to familiarize MCFRS command staff with the operational capabilities of the Go Team. These capabilities include assisting with immediate sheltering of residents who have been evacuated from burning structures, performing damage assessment following widespread incidents (e.g., severe weather events), and escorting evacuees back into their damaged residences to aid them in their immediate assessment of any lingering hazards and personal needs. The Go Team can also be called upon to assist with searches for missing persons and support to MCFRS during special events such as parades, charity races/walks, and other large-scale community events.

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## **4. Funding for Coordination among NCR CERT Teams**

During FY20, the CERT Program Manager will continue efforts to seek and secure needed funding to operate and expand the County's CERT Program above and beyond the limited funding allocated within the MCFRS budget. Foremost, federal Homeland Security grant monies will, as in past years, be sought through the County's Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security. The CERT also receives a moderate amount of donations from individuals, organizations and businesses from time to time that helps to fund the purchase of new equipment and training. During years when the County's CERT hosts the annual CERTCON Exercise for CERT teams in the National Capital Region, other teams/jurisdictions provide nominal funding to help defray costs; although, the host team typically provides most of the funding. As the Montgomery County CERT hosted the 2018 CERTCON Exercise, other NCR CERT teams will presumably host the 2019 and 2020 exercises.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **1. Communications Redundancy for Fire-Rescue Apparatus**

During FY20, Technical Operations (TechOps) will implement the distribution and installation of cellular devices to all Fire-Rescue apparatus. These devices will be networked with an application that allows for a continuously operating backup communications system in the event of a failure of the Public Safety Radio System.

### **2. Station 25 Expansion/Renovation**

Construction at Station 25, initiated during FY19, is expected to be completed by June 2020. With the Department of General Services (DGS) managing this project, the MCFRS role will be to provide continued guidance to DGS and the general contractor (i.e., Keller Brothers).

The project involves 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 purposes. There will be a mezzanine level above this new space for HVAC equipment. The project will be accomplished in two phases; thus, allowing Station 25 to remain operational during construction, aided by two large trailers placed behind the station that will be occupied during Phase 2.

### **3. Station 35 Construction Process**

By early FY20, the sewer line extension through the Clarksburg Historic District to the fire station site should be completed as well as the lift station that will eventually carry waste from Station 35 up to the sewer pipe along Frederick Road. During FY20Q1, the facility design will be finalized for this two-story fire station. The project will then go out for bid about mid-year. Later during the fiscal year, the selection process for



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the general contractor will occur, led by DGS with participation/input from the MCFRS Facilities Section Manager. The anticipated date for construction to begin is January 2020, and the projected completion date is July 2021.

### **4. White Flint Fire Station**

During FY20, the design for White Flint (a.k.a., “Pike District”) Fire Station “#43” will be finalized. The two-story station will have 5 apparatus bays housing a paramedic engine, aerial unit, and three EMS units. Most of the apparatus will be relocated to Station 43 from Station 23 which will remain operational to some level. While the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the new station will be occupied solely by MCFRS, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor will have offices shared by the Montgomery County Police and the White Flint Urban District.

### **5. Level-of-Effort Projects**

“Level of Effort” Capital Improvement Projects (i.e., designated system upgrades or replacements) listed below are planned and funded for implementation during FY20. While these are DGS-managed projects, the MCFRS Facilities Section Manager will have ongoing coordination, guidance and oversight responsibilities in support of DGS.

- HVAC System Replacement: Stations 8, 26, 31
- Generator Replacement: Stations 1, 11
- Roof Replacement: Station 8
- Parking, Access Ways, and Sidewalk Resurfacing: Stations 8, 10
- Female Facilities: Station 30
- Apparatus Bay Doors Replacement: Stations 13, 16, 17

## **OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF**

### **1. Station 39 Site Evaluation**

Following approval of the Program of Requirements (POR) for Montgomery Village Station 39, the site evaluation process will be initiated and potentially completed during FY20. Section Managers of both the Planning & Accreditation Section and Facilities Section, plus an Operations Division 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 explained to committee members by the MCFRS representatives and then used by the committee for identifying and evaluating candidate sites for Station 39.

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## **FY20 GOAL #2: OPTIMIZE ASSETS TO ENSURE MISSION SUCCESS**

### **OPERATIONS**

#### **1. Equipping Paramedic Engines/ALS Units with LUCAS Devices**

During FY20, the EMIHS<sup>3</sup> Section will purchase additional LUCAS automated chest compression devices. Capping a multi-year effort to outfit all MCFRS frontline engine companies, a LUCAS device was deployed aboard Paramedic Engine 719 (Silver Spring – Montgomery Hills) and Paramedic Engine 732 (Travilah) during FY19Q4.

As funding becomes available, MCFRS intends to expand our phased deployment of LUCAS Devices to include Paramedic Chase Units (PCU), Paramedic Aerial Tower 708, the Public Safety Training Academy (one device), and a reserve complement to address ready replacement of devices that are out for repair or maintenance.

#### **2. Deployment Analysis – BLS/ALS/Transport Units**

During FY20, the EMIHS Section will perform a comprehensive deployment analysis of MCFRS response vehicles pertaining to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) deliverables. This includes Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) transport units, paramedic chase units, and paramedic engines.

Detailed statistics will be pulled from the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, our data warehouse, and ePCR reports and will be analyzed through MCFRS' FirstWatch and Deccan data analysis applications. Our analysis will examine the MCFRS unit numeric (e.g. total responses, dispatch specifics to include day of week, time of day, etc.) time variables to include total response time, on scene time, cycle time, etc.

This analysis will evaluate our current response framework for the purposes of optimizing MCFRS' current deployment of existing resources (i.e. response platforms and personnel), further maximizing efficiencies and effectiveness of our EMS deliverables.

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<sup>3</sup> During FY19, the department's Emergency Medical Services was renamed "Emergency Medical and Integrated Healthcare Services" to better characterize the expanded mission of the EMS Section.

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## **3. Universal Call-Takers Consolidation**

During FY20, the ongoing consolidation of universal call-takers (UTCs) under the County Police Department will continue with emphasis on training. MCFRS instructors will assist MCP with training of UTCs in the Fire-Rescue call-taking discipline. They will also mentor the MCP call-taker supervisors.

## **4. Upgrading of Command Post 732**

During FY20, the Special Operations Section will work to upgrade Command Post 732 (CP732) so that its technological capabilities will mirror that of the department's newest command post vehicle (i.e., CP718) to the greatest extent possible. To fund this project, the department has applied for a State ERS grant in the amount of \$100,000. The anticipated awarding of the grant would likely occur during FY20Q2 or Q3. Training of MCFRS command officers on the use of CP732's and CP718's technological equipment and systems will occur throughout FY20 to ensure familiarity and proficiency of use.

## **5. Dedicated Staffing for Hazmat Team**

During FY20, the Special Operations Section, in coordination with the County's Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security, will work to draft revisions to Executive Regulation 3-12AM ("Hazardous Materials Use Permit" dated 7/24/12) that would change the fee structure and allocate a portion of the collected fees to go directly to MCFRS. The department would then apply these funds toward achieving dedicated staffing for the HazMat Team so that the hazmat unit based in Battalion 3 could have dedicated 24/7 staffing of up to four Hazmat Technicians to negate the current practice of cross-staffing this hazmat unit with an engine.<sup>4</sup> Concurrently, Station 7 (PE707 and HM707) would become a hazmat support station along with Stations 20 and 25. Related to the revised Executive Regulation, the dedicated hazmat staff assigned to the Battalion 3-based hazmat unit would be given the responsibility of performing annual inspections of the highest-use SARA facilities (a.k.a., Tier II facilities) located within the County of which there are approximately 90.

## **6. Swift Water Rescue Capability at Station 14**

Beginning July 1, 2019, the swift water rescue function will be relocated from Station 25 to Station 14 to address the swift water risk present within the upper portion of the Potomac River in the western County. A Chesapeake model Demaree Inflatable Boat (DIB) and a Rescue Sled model DIB will be deployed at Station 14 by that date. Prior

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<sup>4</sup> Presently, the Battalion 3-based hazmat unit is housed at Station 28 and is cross-staffed with PE728. In accordance with the *2016-2022 Fire, Rescue, EMS and Risk Reduction Master Plan*, this hazmat unit may be relocated to Shady Grove Station 36 when that facility has been built/opened. Unlike Station 28, Station 36 will be of sufficient size to house this hazmat unit and its dedicated staff of four along with suppression and EMS units and their dedicated staff. From Station 36, the hazmat unit would be centrally located within the County and would have quick access to MD355, I-370 and I-270 for countywide response.

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to July 1, 2019, the closest swift water rescue assets had to travel from Cabin John stations to the Upper Potomac area. While Station 14 had been equipped with rescue boats for still water rescues, it lacked swift water assets.

Training of Station 14 personnel in swift water rescue will continue throughout FY20 and FY21 so that Station 14 will eventually have two certified Swift Water Boat Operators (SWBOs) and two Swift Water Boat Crew (SWBC) on duty; although, not dedicated minimum staffing on a 24/7 basis as in the case of Stations 10 and 30. It is envisioned that dedicated minimum staffing of swift water assets at Station 14 will not be in place for approximately two years until a sufficient number of personnel have achieved the required training and the SWBO and SWBC certifications.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### **1. Modifying In-service Training to Improve Availability**

During FY20, the PSTA will, to the best of its ability, work to ensure that, whenever possible, large training initiatives are conducted in the field at the battalion level. This approach assists Operations with improving ALS and Fire-Full Assignment response times by reducing the amount of time units spend moving to and from training activities at the PSTA.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **1. Migration of the S-drive.**

The Department of Technology Services (DTS) will eliminate the county-wide S-drive during FY20, with the exact date to be announced. Prior to shut down of the S-drive, the MCFRS IT Section will work with MCFRS managers and staff to migrate folders/files to the MCFRS SharePoint or to delete unwanted folders/files. The IT Section plans to set up an internal (MCFRS) network drive to address shared storage needs that cannot be addressed by Share Point.

#### **2. Rebuilding of Application and Data Teams**

Due to the impending departure of Mr. Wayne Martin (Team Lead for Application Development), the IT Section will rebuild the Application and Data Teams during early-FY20 to re-establish primary and secondary backup capabilities within the IT Section.

#### **3. IT Section Knowledge Transfer**

There will be a major effort to transfer knowledge (both technical and business-related) of all systems managed by Mr. Martin and current IT Section Manager Po Kar Chu (who is retiring in FY20) to the new Application Team lead. The responsibility

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for Application Development will be transferred initially to Senior IT Specialist Lucy Song while the process to select/hire a replacement for Mr. Martin transpires.

### **4. Reclamation of Gear**

During FY20, Property & Supply will implement a dual-faceted approach to retrieving gear from non-affiliated members to address a significant amount of gear that has not been returned. The approach will involve:

- Coordination with the MCVFRA and the LFRDs to collect gear that had been left behind at stations by members no longer affiliated.
- Directing personnel to place their Fire-Rescue Service ID on their gear so the user/wearer can be easily identified. [This action will assist in addressing the first bullet.]

## **FISCAL MANAGEMENT**

### **1. Redundancy for Key Roles in Fiscal Management**

As there is a need for creating redundancy of duties and responsibilities within the Division, Fiscal Management personnel will learn during FY20 to perform each other's duties. When a colleague is on leave or when a position has been vacated, the associated duties of that position will be covered by another Fiscal Management Division employee. 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.

### **2. Developing New Contracts**

During FY20, the Procurement Section will continue to assist the Fleet Support Unit, Fleet Maintenance Unit, and the Facilities Section in identifying new contract opportunities and in 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.

### **3. EMST Compliance with Medicare Regulations**

The EMS Billing Section will continue to ensure the program's full compliance with Medicare regulations during FY20.

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## **4. EMST Cost Recovery**

The EMS Billing Office will make every effort to maximize cost recovery during FY20 by improving documentation within the EMIHS Section. Innovative technologies, including those emerging, will be employed to make ePCR completion by EMIHS providers less arduous and ensure standardization of reporting.

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## **FY20 GOAL #3: MINIMIZE PREVENTABLE DEATHS & INJURIES AND THEIR NEGATIVE IMPACT**

### **OPERATIONS**

#### **1. Expansion of Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH)**

In accordance with recently released federal requirements, the EMIHS Section will apply for participation in the Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport (ET3) Program during FY20. A federally funded pilot program, ET3 is administered by the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation, an organization under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Through this program, MCFRS anticipates expanding its MIH services to include treat and release as well as transport to alternate care facilities (e.g. urgent care facilities). Should our application be approved, implementation would occur later in FY20.

#### **2. Emergency Communications Nurse System**

The Emergency Communication Nurse System (ECNS) is a nurse triage system comprised of over 200 protocols designed to be implemented within an EMS communications center and used in conjunction with IAED's Medical Priority Dispatch System to provide alternative care for callers having low-acuity (i.e., Omega-level) determinant codes. During FY20, MCFRS will assist MCP in planning for the establishment of the ECNS at the County's ECC and working toward the pre-requisite of achieving ACE accreditation. A determination will be made concerning which County department will provide nurses for the ECNS – MCFRS, MCP or HHS. One benefit of ECNS for MCFRS will be the anticipated reduction in the number of EMS transports of patients with low-acuity determinant codes. This may, in turn, offset the need for additional transport units.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### **1. Community Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)**

During FY20, the Fire-Rescue Training Academy, with support from FROMS, will increase its efforts in CPR outreach. Increasing the number of residents able to perform CPR prior to fire department arrival should increase the likelihood that a cardiac arrest patient will be able to attain return of spontaneous circulation. The Training Academy, with periodic support from the Operations Division, will deliver one public CPR event each quarter and, when appropriate, "Stop the Bleed" training.

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## **2. Blood Pressure and Blood Sugar Checks for the Public**

Working with our OHR partners, MCFRS will increase our public presence at malls and other public places during FY20, conducting basic health screening (i.e., blood pressure and blood sugar checks) on the weekends, with two events per quarter. This supports the ROSC priority by having a pre-event impact on general health and wellness of the public. As such, the number of cardiac arrests may decrease.

## **OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF**

### **1. Strategic Focus on High-Risk, Special Needs and Senior Populations**

Montgomery County, much like the nation, will experience an unprecedented growth in the senior population in the coming decades. Senior citizens continue to be overrepresented in fire injury and fire fatality statistics. During FY20, Community Risk Reduction (CRR) staff will continue to direct and focus programs and services for the County's senior and special needs populations. Recognizing the alarming upward trend of senior citizen fire-related deaths and injuries, the department has a dedicated Program Manager who works closely with the County's senior population as well as agencies and organizations that support seniors. During FY20, CRR staff will continue partnering with the County's Senior Centers and "Senior Villages" and collaborating with a growing number of agencies and organizations dedicated to supporting aging residents. With the senior population growing at a rate over seven times faster than non-seniors and projected to comprise over 24% of the County's population by 2020, it is anticipated there will be a corresponding increase in fire deaths and injuries among older adults unless MCFRS and agencies that serve seniors address the increased risks proactively rather than reactively.

CRR staff will continue targeting special needs residents during FY20 for home safety visits, community risk reduction presentations and other CRR events. Included will be the hearing impaired, persons with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, and those who do not speak English well.

### **2. Enhancement of *Safety in Our Neighborhood* Program**

The department continues to restructure and reinvigorate its decades old *Safety in Our Neighborhood* (SION) program to better align with community needs. The Community Risk Reduction Section will be implementing several programs in FY20 that will rely on the support and expertise of Operations personnel to improve the SION Program and other CRR services to the community.

### **3. Use of In-service Companies for CRR/Home Safety Visits**

Home safety visits are a proven way of improving the level of fire safety in the community. During FY20, the department will build upon the momentum of its



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popular and successful Home Safety Visit program. This program will continue to be supported by station personnel through scheduled appointments with homeowners. Direct impact programs such as the Home Safety Visit program have ensured hundreds of homes belonging to the County's most vulnerable residents have up-to-date smoke alarms and that residents possess the knowledge of what to do in the event of a fire; thus, resulting in safer residents and a safer community. In-service companies will continue to assist with CRR presentations and community events.

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## **FY20 GOAL #4: PROVIDE FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE WORKFORCE**

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### **1. Health & Wellness Station Visits**

During FY20, the HR Division will provide at least ten health & wellness station visits every 100 days. Working with partners from INOVA Occupational Health and Montgomery County Office of Human Resources, FROMS personnel will facilitate a series of health & wellness visits designed to ensure that MCFRS personnel are aware of the full range of benefits offered by the County to support health & wellness.

#### **2. Post-Fire Decontamination Training**

During FY20, the Fire-Rescue Training Academy, in partnership with the MCFRS Safety Office, will develop a series of best practices and/or policy initiatives designed to reduce the impact of carcinogen exposure for firefighters.

#### **3. Mental Health Training**

MCFRS will develop a plan for mental health training and will design and deliver this training at the station level during FY20. This training is designed to help personnel recognize the warning signs of suboptimal mental health and provide them with resources for resiliency.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **1. Facility Upgrades (Wellness and Safety-Related)**

During FY20, the following facility upgrades relating to the safety and well-being of the workforce will be initiated:

- Plymovent™ Exhaust Collection Systems\*:
  - Evaluation of Plymovent systems at all stations
  - Retrofits at stations as apparatus changes occur
- HVAC Control Panel Replacement\*: Station 3
- Fire Sprinkler System Pump Replacement\*: Station 14
- Expand Locker Area and Number of Lockers\*: Station 15
- Exterior Stairway Repair/Replacement\*: Station 16 and Community Services Building (Old Station 25)

\* Initiative also under Goal #6 (implementing change to enhance performance).

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## **FY20 GOAL #5: BUILD & MAINTAIN STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH INTERNAL & EXTERNAL PARTNERS**

### **OPERATIONS**

#### **1. Reinstating Use of Customer Service Surveys**

In support of Chief Administrative Officer Andrew Kleine's vision of broadening Montgomery County's focus on accurately measuring customer satisfaction, the MCFRS will be seeking to promote a web-based customer service survey. This tool will replace a paper-based model which has been labor intensive and increasingly cumbersome in applying to modern-day practice (e.g. survey distribution, data collection, statistical aggregation and analysis), demonstrated marginalized utility to effectively measure customer satisfaction, and resulted in a low rate-of-return, historically.

Instituting an online format would enable customers receiving emergency medical services provided by MCFRS personnel to be asked to complete the evaluation tool. Aggregated data would be periodically analyzed to gauge perceived performance by the MCFRS, affect service improvements, and streamline reporting obligations to stakeholders (e.g. CountyStat).

To facilitate the survey approach, MCFRS is actively exploring the feasibility of leveraging our Emergency Medical Services Transport (EMST) billing vendor's ability to solicit customers (e.g. patients) to complete the online surveys. This approach maximizes the opportunities for securing timely and detailed customer feedback, in standardized fashion, readily retrievable format, and with minimal impacts on overhead.

### **OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF**

#### **1. Partnering with MCPS on CRR Efforts**

By partnering with MCPS programs targeting the most vulnerable in the community, the department can quickly provide key services and educational programs to enhance community safety. During FY20, MCFRS will continue working with the County's Title 1 public schools and Linkages-to-Learning program in providing CRR outreach activities. Title 1 schools are those located in low-income, high-density areas having a

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high percentage of affordable housing. These children and their families are at high-risk of experiencing fires, injuries, and illnesses and should, therefore, benefit greatly from CRR outreach efforts. Firefighter-rescuers will visit Title 1 schools within their first-due areas to teach students about fire and life safety, injury prevention, CPR, and general CRR topics.

### **2. Community-Based Initiatives**

Partnering with community organizations provides MCFRS an unprecedented opportunity to not only meet the community members they serve but to share safety-related best-practices and to increase awareness of fire safety and injury prevention through neighborhood meetings and events. During FY20, the department will identify and establish community-based initiatives that connect station personnel with homeowner associations, civic associations and other community organizations.

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## **FY20 GOAL #6: IMPLEMENT CHANGE TO ENHANCE PERFORMANCE**

### **OPERATIONS**

#### **1. Expanded Use of FirstWatch™**

During FY20, the EMIHS Section will expand its use of the FirstWatch application for EMS deployment analyses. Grant monies will be pursued to make possible the purchase of one or more additional module(s) allowing for greater analytical capabilities.

Also during FY20, the ECC will continue leveraging the capabilities of FirstWatch as it pertains to EMD, EFD and overall call-taking protocols. Use of the Academy Analytics Dashboard will allow for live monitoring of call-takers and the setting of triggers to flag performance benchmarks so that performance can be monitored. FirstWatch products in use by MCFRS are funded through a Maryland ERS grant.

#### **2. Improvement of Call-Processing Times**

During FY20, the ECC will continue implementing strategies identified during FY19 to reduce call-processing times, starting with those least challenging to implement with existing resources (e.g., shortening the paging and notification process). Another example would be a quality improvement strategy that would target ECC personnel who lack the desired level of proficiency and provide additional training for them while giving them more practice through supervised repetition.

#### **3. Achievement of ACE Accreditation**

Efforts will continue during FY20 toward achieving the accreditation requirements of the Accreditation Center for Excellence (ACE) of the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch (IAED). A more robust quality assurance (QA) of quarterly call-taking and dispatch data, using AQUA software, will be the FY20 focus. As ACE accreditation is largely a self-assessment process, preparation of required paperwork will be another FY20 focus to demonstrate proficiency to the IAED and adherence to the IAED Code of Ethics. This will be a joint effort with MCP which has the primary responsibility for achieving ACE accreditation. Achievement of ACE accreditation should result in improved performance and efficiency in call-processing and dispatch. ACE accreditation is also a pre-requisite for establishing the desired Emergency Communications Nurse System at the ECC.

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### **4. CAD2CAD/CAD2GIS**

Testing of the Motorola CAD to CAD (“CAD2CAD”) and CAD to GIS (“CAD2GIS”) systems, which began in FY19, will continue into FY20. CAD2CAD with our automatic mutual aid partners will enhance and expedite automatic aid processes and resource deployment. Its companion technology – CAD2GIS – will leverage automatic vehicle locator (AVL)/Automatic Routing Logic (ARL) capabilities. The systems are expected to go live by FY20Q2. While CAD2CAD and CAD2GIS will be operational between MCFRS and several nearby jurisdictions in the Washington Metropolitan Area (e.g., Fairfax County, Prince William County), Prince Georges County will be the MCFRS’ primary partner due to the daily automatic mutual aid interaction between the two counties.

### **5. Live MUM™**

During FY20, Deccan’s “Live MUM” (Move-up Module) will become fully operational at the ECC. Live MUM will assist ECC personnel in transferring units to areas temporarily lacking adequate coverage due to one or more long-duration events in progress. For example, move-up of an engine and aerial unit to a station whose regularly assigned apparatus are deployed at a working structure fire.

### **6. Protocol 37 Interfacility Transports**

EMD Protocol 37 is an interfacility transport protocol adopted by the ECC in June 2019 and will become fully operational during FY20. The protocol will allow for the dispatch of fewer EMS resources to medical events occurring at approved healthcare centers (e.g., skilled nursing facilities, Kaiser Medical buildings) where certified medical professionals are on the premises 24/7 to provide immediate emergency care to patients with emergent medical needs. In addition to requiring a reduced EMS response, ECC call-takers should spend less time on the phone in cases where Protocol 37 applies. Under EMD Protocol 37, a medical event of this nature occurring at an approved healthcare facility can be handled as an interfacility transport to a higher-level medical facility.

### **7. CALEA Accreditation for FEI**

During FY20, the Special Operations Section will work toward attaining accredited status for Fire & Explosives Investigations (FEI) from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). Firstly, a qualified individual – an MCFRS employee or a contractor - must be chosen to lead the effort. While MCFRS funding has been approved to pay the fee that will be due to CALEA (i.e., \$8,000 based on jurisdictional size), personnel costs for the accreditation manager and others assigned to perform the work will still need to be funded. The Special Operations Section will seek accreditation guidance from the Montgomery County Police (MCP) accreditation manager, as MCP is currently accredited by CALEA.

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## **8. Live SharePoint Dashboards for Special Operations**

As of FY19, FEI has a SharePoint site but other Special Operations programs do not. During FY20, MCFRS will work to set up SharePoint sites for the Water-Ice Rescue, Hazmat, and Technical Rescue programs. When all programs are on a SharePoint site, live dashboards will be created to allow Special Operations data to be viewed and analyzed at any time. Through FY19, Special Operations' dashboards were prepared quarterly and presented to MCFRS managers during quarterly management briefings.

## **9. Staffing Initiatives:**

### **A. Implement Staffing Ratio of 5.0 to 1.**

As many positions assigned to fire and rescue stations are not staffed at the desired coefficient of 5.0 fulltime equivalents (FTEs) per 24-hour position (i.e., 5.0 to 1) and 2.0 FTEs per 10-hour position, efforts will continue during FY20 to address this significant deficiency. Presently, MCFRS is approximately 180 FTEs short in achieving proper staffing based upon current service demand. The County Executive's FY20 Operating Budget Request includes 20 new FTEs to begin addressing this shortfall. The department plans to address this issue in a similar manner incrementally each year thereafter.

### **B. FTEs at Stations 15 and 40**

Nine (9) additional FTEs are needed at Station 40 and two (2) FTEs at Station 15 to address failures-to-respond (FTRs) at these stations. Both stations have special services that are frequently cross-staffed with another special service (e.g., Truck 715 cross-staffed with Rescue Squad 715) or with some other primary unit in the station; thus, leading to FTRs at times. Should funding become available during FY20, these staffing needs at Stations 15 and 40 will be addressed wholly or partially, depending upon the amount of funding allocated.

### **C. EMS Duty Officers**

MCFRS utilizes the EMS Duty Officers to supervise on-duty personnel, liaison with hospital emergency rooms (8 in-county, 4 major ERs out-of-county), handle quality assurance matters (both investigative and education-related) and respond to high-priority EMS events. These individuals also serve as a ready resource for handling emergent issues involving controlled medications restocking and biomedical equipment malfunctions. Currently, this supervisory workload is handled by only two EMS Duty Officers per shift. By adding three EMS Duty Officers per shift to the existing two (resulting in one per battalion), the workload would be more efficiently distributed and would allow the EMS Duty Officers to more routinely respond to high-priority EMS events.

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To enhance ALS and BLS performance and quality improvement, MCFRS will, if funding becomes available during FY20, expand the number of EMS Duty Officers from two to five.

### **D. Battalion 3 Relief**

Presently, the department has Battalion 1/4 and Battalion 2/5 Relief Battalion Chief positions to staff the Battalion 1, 2, 4 and 5 Battalion Chief (B/C) positions when the regularly assigned B/Cs are on their Kelley Days. However, when B/C 703 is on Kelley Day, the position is staffed using overtime funds. If funding becomes available during FY20, a Relief B/C 703 would be created and filled. Should Battalion 6 be established along with the B/C 706 position, the relief B/C for Battalion 3 would also include relief for Battalion 6.

### **E. Medical Director**

Should funding become available during FY20, the department will proceed with the process of converting the Medical Director position – currently a 40 hour per week contract position - to a fulltime equivalent (FTE) position. This will ensure the longevity of this key position and aid in retaining the same qualified individual for long-term employment to maintain continuity within the EMS program.

### **F. Special Operations Positions**

As of FY19, the Special Operations Section had only four personnel overseeing and managing the department's Special Operations resources, including an Assistant Chief, two Battalion Chiefs and a Master Firefighter. Personnel hired on overtime provide necessary support on a regular basis and for special events/projects. To address the need for additional FTEs, two new positions have been identified as described below.

- **Logistics Captain:** If funding becomes available during FY20, a Logistics Captain position would be created and filled. This FTE would be responsible for establishing and maintaining a cache of equipment to resupply Special Operations units. Having a single individual handle this function would improve Special Operations logistical management and eliminate duplicate equipment purchases.
- **Training/Planning/Records Management Captain:** If funding becomes available during FY20, this Captain position would be created and filled. This FTE would be responsible for coordinating and tracking all training for Special



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Operations personnel, planning for the Special Operations Section, and handling of all records management for Special Operations.

### **G. Single-Role Providers**

During FY20, MCFRS will continue studying the use of uniformed personnel for singular roles within the department such as EMS-only providers. This initiative is related to a directive from the Chief Administrative Officer to explore alternative cost-savings approaches to staffing. One scenario under study involves the designation of up to ten specific EMS transport units that would be staffed during certain days and hours by part-time or fulltime EMS-only providers. If such an alternative staffing approach was found to be advantageous and was approved/funded, implementation could be initiated in late-FY20.

### **H. 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion and Battalion Chief 706**

There is a compelling need to reconfigure the County from five fire-rescue battalions to six, staff a new 24-hour (shift) Battalion Chief position, and strategically site a battalion chief's office at one of the fire stations in the proposed 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion. From a management perspective, the recommended span-of-control of 5 to 7 subordinates (i.e., in this case, stations and their personnel) could then be achieved rather than the existing span-of-control averaging over 7 stations per battalion chief. The addition of a 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion and the Battalion Chief 706 position will allow for greater efficiency administratively as well as for incident command.

Should funding become available during FY20, the five existing battalions will be reconfigured into six and a shift Battalion Chief position will be created and filled. Additionally, a Battalion 6 office will be strategically established at a station located within the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **1. Ensuring Correctness of HR-related Links on Quicklinks**

During FY20, the HR Division will ensure that all HR-related links on MCFRS Quicklinks are correct. Using personnel from throughout the Division, our presence on Quicklinks will be scrubbed to identify gaps and develop solutions that will keep our personnel both interested and informed.

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## **VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

### **1. Filling of LOSAP Administrator's Position**

The vacant Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) administrator's position (Administrative Specialist II, Grade 21) will be filled during FY20. The position has been vacant for over two years. During that time frame, the LOSAP administrator's duties have been handled by another Volunteer Services Division employee as collateral duties funded with overtime monies.

## **OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF**

### **1. Annual Departmental Performance Report**

During FY20Q1, the annual performance report – begun in June 2019 - will be completed/finalized for FY19 and submitted to the CountyStat Office by the established deadline (to be announced). The content and format will be in accordance with criteria established by the new County Executive and Chief Administrative Officer. The update will focus upon the department's top three headline measures, including return-of-spontaneous-circulation (ROSC), 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response time for ALS incidents, and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response time for Fire-Full Assignment incidents. The report will also include an Effective Leadership Addendum with approximately ten elements of leadership to be addressed.

### **2. Updating of Division/Section Goals & Objectives**

During FY20, each MCFRS Division and Section, as well as the Office of the Fire Chief, will comprehensively review its latest, published set of goals and objectives and make appropriate updates (i.e., edits, deletions, and additions). These updates will be consistent with the *2016-2022 Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* as well as the FY20 Strategic Plan.

### **3. FY21 Strategic Plan**

The MCFRS FY21 Strategic Plan will be prepared by the Planning & Accreditation Section to replace the FY20 Strategic Plan which will sunset on June 30, 2020. The FY21 Strategic Plan will include the highest priorities of the *2016-2022 Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*, as identified by the Fire Chief and Division Chiefs, plus any emergent priorities arising during the final months of FY20 that require attention during FY21. Carryover initiatives from the FY20 Strategic Plan may be included in the FY21 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 with the Master Plan.

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## **4. Additional Headline Measures**

During FY20, the Planning & Accreditation Section will work with the five Divisions to develop additional performance measures to capture more of the services that MCFRS provides to our customers. Potential areas of attention could include Emergency Medical & Integrated Health Services, Community Risk Reduction, Fire & Explosive Investigations, and possibly others. Any new performance measures would be coordinated with the CountyStat Office and would require approval by the Fire Chief.

## **5. Annual Compliance Report for CFAI**

By July 15, 2019, 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 CY2019 ACR will have been completed during FY19Q4, so only the finalization of the report, including any edits requested by the Fire Chief plus the Fire Chief's approval and signature, will need to be completed within the first two weeks of July 2019.

During FY20Q4, the 2020 ACR will be drafted and reviewed by the Division Chiefs. Based upon reviewers' feedback, the final draft will then be prepared and submitted to the Fire Chief. When approved by the Fire Chief, the 2020 ACR will be submitted to CFAI in July 2020.

## **6. Recommendations of 2018 Peer Assessment Team**

During FY20, the department will continue addressing remaining recommendations of the CFAI Peer Assessment Team that had conducted a site visit in April 2018. Their report contained four strategic recommendations (relating to core competencies) and eleven specific recommendations (relating to non-core competencies).

Recommendations addressed the following CFAI criteria:

- 2A. Documentation of Area Characteristics
- 2C. Current Deployment and Performance
- 5A. Community Risk Reduction Program
- 6C. Apparatus, Vehicles, and Maintenance
- 6F. Safety Equipment
- 7A. Human Resources Administration
- 8A. Training and Education Program Requirements
- 9A. Water Supplies
- 9B. Communications Systems
- 9C. Administrative Support Services and Office Systems
- 10A. External Systems Relationships
- 10B. External Agency Agreements

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## **7. Annual Appraisals for SAM Category 5 Programs**

During FY20, the Operations Division and Office of the Fire Chief, Community Risk Reduction Section will complete annual written appraisals for departmental programs addressed in Category 5 – “Programs” and in 9B – “Communications Systems” of the CPSE/CFAI *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, including: Public Education Program, Fire Suppression, EMS, Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Water/Ice Rescue, Wildland Fires, Urban Search & Rescue, and Fire & Explosives Investigations (including Bomb Squad Response). Section Chiefs and/or subject matter experts will utilize the standard template developed in FY18 or an updated version as applicable. MCFRS will also work closely with the Department of Permitting Services, Fire Prevention & Code Compliance Division to explain the need and importance of them conducting an annual appraisal. Program appraisals will be reviewed by the Accreditation Manager and approved by the Operations Division Chief and the Community Risk Reduction Section Manager.

## **8. Organizational Realignment**

During FY20Q1, the Community Outreach Section will move from the Volunteer and Community Services Division to the Office of the Fire Chief (OFC) and will become the “Community Risk Reduction Section.” The name change better describes and encompasses the function and responsibilities of the Section; although, community outreach will remain an important element of this Section’s service delivery model. The move to the OFC will reunite this Section with the OFC to enhance its ability to interact with the Regional Services Centers and associated community groups having direct relationships with the Fire Chief (e.g., Citizen Advisory Boards) as well as to enhance collaboration with the department’s PIO in delivering safety educational messages to the public. The move to the OFC will also strengthen ties between the Community Risk Reduction Section and the Planning & Accreditation Section, as community risk reduction is an important component of departmental planning and agency accreditation.

## **9. Completion/Implementation of CRR Data Tracking System**

During FY19, the Community Outreach Section developed and began pilot-testing an App that will automate the Section’s data collection process. The App will provide the technological foundation to automate data collection and dynamically create reports using geo-based mobile computing. During FY20, the pilot-testing will be completed and use of the App within the department will begin.

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## 10. Expansion/Modification of Social Media Platforms

During FY20, the MCFRS PIO will continue re-evaluating, modifying and expanding social media platforms that he uses, including Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and others. The use of various social media platforms has proven to be a low-cost, efficient means of keeping the public informed and, at the same time, educating the community about safety programs and initiatives. Social media tools can help MCFRS communicate with the public during emergencies, build situational awareness, and assist in recovery efforts. The PIO will expand the use of a micro-blog to provide incident-centric information as well as to expand dialogue regarding MCFRS events and activities. In coordination with CountyStat and the County PIO, the MCFRS PIO will explore and develop additional uses for nextdoor.com.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### 1. Facility Maintenance/Upgrade Projects

The projects listed below pertaining to facility maintenance and upgrades will be addressed during FY20 to the greatest extent possible based on allocated funding. The remainder of the projects will be addressed should additional funding become available.

- a. Plymovent™ Exhaust Collection Systems\*:
  - o Evaluation of Plymovent systems at all stations
  - o Retrofits at stations as apparatus changes occur
- b. HVAC Control Panel Replacement\*: Station 3
- c. Fire Sprinkler System Pump Replacement\*: Station 14
- d. Expand Locker Area and Number of Lockers\*: Station 15
- e. Apparatus Room Floor Repair: Station 14
- f. Exterior Stairway Repair/Replacement\*: Station 16 and Community Services Building (CSB – “Old Station 25”)
- g. Interior Lighting Retrofit: Stations 3 and 12
- h. Kitchen Expansion/Upgrading: Station 31
- i. Cleanout/Service of Oil & Grit Separators: All stations
- j. Cleanout/Service of Grease Pits: Stations having grease pits
- k. Buildout of Facility Maintenance Warehousing Capacity: Station 32 and CSB
- l. Interior Painting (certain areas): Stations 5 and 6
- m. Projects Recommended in Overall Building Evaluation: Station 26
- n. Develop and Implement Work Order System for Facilities (separate from Apparatus Defect & Reporting System currently used for reporting facility maintenance issues)

\* Denotes a personnel well-being and safety initiative (see FY20 Goal #4).