

**FY2017 STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE,
RESCUE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES AND COMMUNITY
RISK REDUCTION MASTER PLAN
PRIORITIES**



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INTRODUCTION

The FY2017 Strategic Plan addresses implementation of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's highest priorities that require initiation, continuation (with respect to carryover initiatives from the FY16 Strategic Plan), and/or completion during FY17. These priorities are related to departmental goals found in Section 2 of the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* as well as recommendations and initiatives found in Section 6 of the Master Plan.

FY17 priorities address the major categories of operations, volunteer and community services, human resources, support services, planning, and accreditation. The order in which the categories have been presented is not indicative of their level of importance to the department nor is the order of the individual priorities within each category. All categories and priorities are considered of equal importance and will be pursued concurrently. While many of these priorities could require several years to implement fully, their initiation during FY17 is crucial in order for the department to continue meeting its mission, goals and objectives.

The FY17 operating budget impacts the scope of MCFRS' FY17 initiatives. The Approved FY17 Operating Budget for the department is \$215.9 million; a decrease of about \$6.4 million¹ or about 2.9% compared with the FY16 Approved Operating Budget of \$222.3 million. The FY17 MCFRS Operating Budget, nonetheless, includes limited enhancements to services and programs. The most significant enhancements impacting the FY17 Strategic Plan include the following:

- Improvement of ALS and fire suppression services and associated response time by:
 - Upgrading of three 3-person engines to 4-person paramedic engines at Stations 10, 11 and 26.
 - Increasing career staffing at Burtonsville Station 15 to reduce the number /rate of failures-to-respond of frontline apparatus/units² and to increase Ambulance 715 to 24/7 controlled status.
 - Transitioning of current weekday-daytime career staffing for Medic 741 to an ALS chase unit platform with staffing of one person (paramedic).

¹ The budget decrease is due to two primary factors: Fire Code Compliance having been transferred to DPS, and adjusted pension contribution figures that have been calculated differently for FY17 than in past fiscal years for all County departments.

² Eight additional positions at Station 15, including 2 lieutenants and 6 firefighters on shiftwork, plus conversion of the current daywork lieutenant to shiftwork; thus increasing the in-seat staffing at Station 15 by a total of one lieutenant and one firefighter around the clock (24/7).

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- Hiring of 85 firefighter-rescuer recruits, with a recruit class to begin in mid-December 2016.

Note: No longer included within the MCFRS Operating Budget is the staffing and operation of the [former] Fire Code Compliance (FCC) Section. In January 2016, a decision was made that the FCC would be transferred to the Department of Permitting Services (DPS). The effective date of the transfer was April 3, 2016. The new organizational unit within DPS is known as the [Fire] Code Compliance Section which, along with the Fire Prevention Section, will comprise a new Fire Prevention and Code Compliance Division to be established in July 2016 (FY17Q1). The transfer of FCC was implemented to realize cost and staffing efficiencies; thus reducing reliance on County General Fund resources to cover gaps in FCC operational costs. An additional efficiency to be realized is the provision of a “one-stop shop” within the County Government for all permitting needs to improve customer service and to reduce costs to the County.

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OPERATIONS

A. EMS EXPANSION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Priority in Brief: During FY17, MCFRS will continue implementation of four-person, ALS staffing to increase the number of paramedic engines, and ALS chase unit deployment will be initiated. If funding becomes available, EMS quality improvement will be enhanced by staffing three additional EMS Duty Officer positions and a Captain or Lieutenant position assigned to the EMS Section at MCFRS Headquarters. Likewise, if funding becomes available, BLS capacity will be increased at stations having BLS units with exceptionally high call loads.

Priority's Importance: With approximately 75% of the County's fire-rescue incidents of an EMS nature and the percentage expected to increase as the County population grows and ages, it is imperative that the most effective and efficient EMS deployment model be utilized by MCFRS. A primary element of this model includes paramedic engines and ALS chase units. EMS quality improvement is another important element as it leads to better EMS services for our customers.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (maintaining operational readiness), Goal #5 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), and Goal #6 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs)³.

Explanation of Priority: This priority is comprised of the following elements:

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

During FY17, as part of Phase 1 of the ALS expansion initiative, MCFRS will upgrade three 3-person engines to 4-person paramedic engines using budgeted funds.

³ Departmental goals appear in Section 2 of the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*.

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This will be achieved by adding a firefighter-paramedic to Engines 710, 711 and 726. The remainder of the 4-person staffing initiative is largely dependent upon MCFRS being awarded a federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant in FY17 to fund the hiring of additional firefighters. In its SAFER application, MCFRS is seeking a grant for \$3 million to fund 17 firefighter positions for their initial two years of employment. If awarded to MCFRS, the SAFER Grant would allow for the upgrading of the last two 3-person engines to four personnel (including one firefighter-paramedic) around the clock, including Engines 702 (Takoma Park) and 720 (Bethesda – W. Cedar Lane). With these five engines transitioned to 4-person staffing, all 35 frontline engines would have 4-person staffing, including one firefighter-paramedic. While the addition of a fourth person (firefighter-paramedic) on these 3-person engines will expand ALS capabilities, it will also increase suppression capabilities. Four-person staffing of engines increases effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of firefighting operations and allows faster assembling of the effective response force (ERF) at fire-full assignment incidents.

- **Initiate ALS Chase Unit Service**

During FY17, as the second part of Phase 1 of ALS expansion, MCFRS will initiate ALS chase unit service at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad. This will be implemented by replacing the medic unit with an ALS chase unit, with the former medic unit converted to a BLS transport unit. The ALS chase unit will be operated by one paramedic.

If funding is available during FY17, MCFRS will implement Phase 2 of the ALS expansion initiative by deploying ALS chase units at Stations 3, 8, 23 and 25. This will be achieved by replacing the medic unit at each of these stations (both medic units at Station 8) with an ALS chase unit, with the former medic unit converted to a BLS transport unit. Should additional funding become available during FY17, the department would implement Phase 3 of the ALS expansion initiative by deploying ALS chase units at Stations 1, 12 and 15 by replacing the medic unit at each of these stations in similar manner as done in Phase 2.

- **EMS Quality Improvement**

To enhance ALS and BLS performance and quality improvement, MCFRS will expand the number of EMS Duty Officers from two to five during FY17 if funding becomes available. Five EMS Duty Officers would allow for the deployment of one per battalion; thus resulting in a more manageable span of control of one EMS Duty Officer per seven stations (on average) instead of the present situation where the ratio is one EMS Duty Officer per 18 stations. Deployment of five EMS Duty Officers would also greatly improve their response time to EMS incidents occurring throughout five battalions across a 500 square mile County.

As an additional enhancement to ALS and BLS quality improvement (QI), the department will establish a new QI position within the EMS Section during FY17 if

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funding becomes available. The new QI position would be filled at the Captain or Lieutenant rank and would be responsible for the following duties:

- Daily auditing of all Echo and ALS2 response for adherence to protocol and MCFRS policies and procedures.
- Auditing of daily EMS patient refusals.
- Auditing of ALS-to-BLS downgrades.
- In collaboration with EMST billing staff, auditing of ePCR completion and ePCR compliance with billing needs.
- Studying patient care treatments on a rotating basis (e.g. spend two months studying our success rates with a particular procedure, whether the procedure is used appropriately, and what we might do to improve our practices; the next two months moving on to another treatment or protocol etc.).
- Providing information regarding trends.
- Providing data/information to the PSTA as needed to address system-wide trends.
- Maintaining the ALS Provider email list/server.
- Managing and maintaining the EMS Blog.

B. FOUR-PERSON STAFFING OF SPECIAL SERVICES

Priority in Brief: Initiate 4-person staffing of special services (i.e., aerial units and rescue squads) beginning with those units having the highest call loads.

Priority's Importance: Four-person staffing of aerial units and rescue squads increases effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations and allows faster assembling of the effective response force (ERF) at fire and rescue incidents and quicker achievement of critical tasks. It also places a firefighter-paramedic aboard these units; thus resulting in additional ALS first-responder apparatus throughout the County.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (maintaining operational readiness), Goal #5 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), and Goal #6 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs).

Explanation of Priority: If funding is available during FY17, MCFRS will begin upgrading three 3-person aerial units⁴ and rescue squads to 4-person units by adding a firefighter-paramedic. While the addition of a fourth person on these 3-person units will expand ALS capabilities, it will also increase suppression capabilities. Four-person staffing of aerial units and rescue squads will increase effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations and will allow faster assembling of the effective response force (ERF) at fire and rescue incidents, and critical tasks will be performed more quickly.

⁴ The lone exception is one aerial unit (i.e., Aerial Tower 708) which had been upgraded to four personnel, including a firefighter-paramedic. The remainder of the special services units have 3-person staffing.

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C. SPECIAL OPERATIONS TRAINING

Priority in Brief: If funding becomes available during FY17, MCFRS will create a new position of Special Operations Training Officer and proceed through the lateral transfer process to fill the position. The Captain filling this position will also have duties associated with planning and operational support for special events and extreme weather events.

Priority's Importance: Having a Captain position dedicated to special operations training will improve the scope and effectiveness of the special operations training program and allow the Special Operations Assistant Chief and Battalion Chief to focus their attention on managing the Special Operations Section without having to divert considerable attention to training and special events responsibilities as well.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (maintaining operational readiness for an all-hazards mission), Goal #10 (training, development, wellness and safety of our personnel), and Goal #12 (workforce development).

Explanation of Priority:

The Special Operations Training Officer position is needed within the Special Operations Section to address the considerable workload associated with planning for and providing specialized training to personnel in the complex disciplines of technical rescue, hazardous materials, explosives, and water and ice rescue. The Captain filling this position via lateral transfer will be dedicated to special operations training but will also have a role in coordinating MCFRS emergency and support services for special events such as charity events, professional golf tournaments, festivals, etc. and extreme weather events.

The primary duties of the Special Operations Training Officer will include the following:

- Coordinating and validating annual special operations training schedules.
- Developing training for Operations personnel on special operations topics.
- Serving as point-of-contact for the Fire-Rescue Training Academy for special operations-specific training for Operations personnel.
- Serving as the point-of-contact for the development, updating and coordination of COPDI topics.
- Developing, updating and coordinating annual recertifications pertaining to special operations.
- Developing and coordinating training involving new special operations equipment
- Coordinating the planning and operational support for special events.

VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

A. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM DELIVERY

Priority in Brief: MCFRS will concentrate community outreach efforts during FY17 on revamping the method of program delivery to involve expanded participation by fire-rescue personnel and to leverage the participation of community partners.

Priority's Importance: Having a successful community outreach program is of great benefit to MCFRS and our customers as it promotes fire safety, injury prevention, protection of property, and overall risk reduction. By revamping the manner in which the program is delivered, the risk reduction message should better reach our customers, resulting in a reduction in the number of fatalities and injuries, minimization of injury severity, and reduction in property damage.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (minimizing deaths and injuries involving our customers) and Goal #8 (sustaining strategic and tactical partnerships for the purpose of preventing and mitigating emergency events).

Explanation of Priority: While the outreach program has been successful for many years, the program should achieve greater success through revamping of the delivery model to involve more MCFRS personnel - both career and volunteer - as well as community partners. During FY17, the Community Outreach Section, with assistance from the overall department, will work to expand and enhance the current delivery model in three specific areas:

1. Expansion of the appointment-based Home Safety Visit and Smoke Alarm Check program.
2. Development of an innovative community-based strategy that directly connects fire-rescue personnel at the station level with community organizations, schools, homeowner associations, civic associations and other community-based partners within each station's first-due area.
3. Implementation of an "Every Call/Every Home" protocol designed to check customers' smoke alarms when fire-rescue units are on-scene during incidents and to document these checks on Fire App incident reports.

Historically, the efforts of MCFRS through the Safety in Our Neighborhood (SION) program have involved firefighters visiting communities unannounced on Saturdays, knocking on doors hoping to gain access to inspect the home's smoke alarms. Based on reports filed, the success of this approach has declined over the years. The proposed refocusing of the SION program moves the department from a volume-based approach to

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a targeted approach utilizing a greater number of MCFRS personnel and our community partners.

As an important element of the department's community risk reduction programs, home safety visits have been singled out as one of the most effective measures to improve public safety. A key component of the Home Safety Visit program is the inspection and, when appropriate, installation of smoke alarms. Through an expanded appointment-based model, the department provides scheduled appointments - assigned to stations - and will also begin to use a combination of lifestyle data, fire data, demographic profiling and a range of risk factors (e.g., mobility impairment) to direct education and outreach efforts.

The intention of this targeted approach is to strategically focus upon where the risk of fire is statistically higher. Given the growth and associated aging risk factors of Montgomery County's population, the original Saturday-only SION delivery approach will not keep pace and is likely to only reach a small percentage of households. Targeting of homes based upon risk and through implementation of the Monday-Saturday, appointment-based Home Safety Visit program is projected to have significant impact. The Senior Outreach appointment-based Home Safety Visit program demonstrates the methodology and success on a small scale. This program was recently boosted by the award of a federal grant to promote and support the Home Safety Visit program in the County.

It is anticipated that a refocused SION program that engages personnel at the station level in pre-scheduled home safety visits that connect them with stakeholder organizations in their communities will result in an effective, integrated risk management strategy and a new and improved SION delivery model. While home safety visits are just one component in the incident prevention toolkit, building upon the existing SION program through implementation of a new and improved approach will bring together current and new partners with the goal of reducing the number of home fire deaths and injuries in Montgomery County.

B. EXPANSION OF VOLUNTEER STAFFING, AND REDUCTION OF FAILURES-TO-RESPOND

Priority in Brief: During FY17, the Division of Volunteer and Community Services will focus efforts on assisting the Burtonsville, Laytonsville District, Cabin John Park and Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Departments to achieve fulltime combination staffing on all primary suppression and EMS units (i.e., engine, aerial unit, rescue squad, ambulance and medic unit/ALS chase unit) at Stations 10, 15, 17 and 40.

Priority's Importance: Taking steps to increase volunteer staffing at Stations 10, 15, 17, and 40 will help in reducing failures-to-respond (FTRs), ensuring an appropriate standard of coverage in the County. These stations cover a significant part of the County and are vital to MCFRS' achievement of our Master Plan response time goals as well as NFPA response time standards that we strive to meet.

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MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (maintaining our operational readiness at all times), Goal #5 (ensuring sufficient numbers of personnel, apparatus, equipment, and facilities), and Goal #6 (deploying and leveraging our resources to best serve our customers' needs).

Explanation of Priority: During FY17, the Division of Volunteer and Community Services will work with the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), Laytonsville District VFD, Cabin John Park VFD and Sandy Spring VFD in reducing the failures-to-respond (FTRs) at these stations to less than 2% of station unit responses. Currently, these stations have gaps in staffing for which MCFRS believes there are opportunities for improving performance with combination staffing. The plan of action is to perform a SWOT (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis to analyze the staffing pattern, standby policy, and personnel management plan of each of these four LFRDs.

Based on the results of the SWOT analyses, the Division of Volunteer and Community Services will collaborate with the LFRDs' leadership to:

- Address more efficient use of existing personnel in meeting staffing needs.
- Identify training needs and a training plan that will lead to the filling of all riding positions (e.g., unit officer, master firefighter, firefighters, EMS provider, etc.) with qualified personnel.
- Address the recruiting and mentoring of additional volunteer members.
- Develop a dashboard for use by these LFRDs for tracking their FTR data over regular intervals. Using the dashboard results, perform an evaluation of these LFRDs' capabilities to reduce their FTRs below 2%.
- Develop SMART⁵ goals and objectives to guide success in achieving desired staffing levels.

C. RETENTION OF CERT PERSONNEL

Priority in Brief: During FY17, the Division of Volunteer and Community Services will implement actions to increase the retention of deployable CERT members (i.e., "CERT Go Team" members).

⁵ "SMART" – Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-dependent

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Priority's Importance: It is in the CERT Program's best interest to increase efforts to retain and enhance the services of its "Go Team" members in order to keep these volunteers engaged, trained, and ready to respond on short notice.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #7 (maximizing the utilization of our volunteer and career resources to achieve our mission), Goal #11 (recruiting and retaining personnel), and Goal #12 (workforce development).

Explanation of Priority: During FY17, the CERT Program Manager and the program's volunteer leadership will focus on retention of CERT Go Team members through the following efforts:

- Increasing training opportunities such as participation in:
 - High-rise evacuation drills (e.g., evacuation drills conducted by the Senior Outreach Program Manager at senior-living high-rises).
 - "Windshield" damage assessment surveys.
 - Grid pattern searches such as those used for locating a missing child.
- Participation in multi-jurisdictional emergency exercises such as CERT CON, WMATA exercises, etc.
- Participation in Emergency Management Institute courses.
- Seeking funding for uniforms and equipment.
- Increasing recognition and rewards for CERT Go Team members, including an awards ceremony, quarterly events (e.g., picnics), etc.

HUMAN RESOURCES

A. NEW TRAINING ACADEMY OPERATIONS

Priority in Brief: Upon completion of the new Public Safety Training Academy (PSTA), fire-rescue training staff, apparatus, equipment, and paper files will need to be moved during August 2016 from the existing PSTA in Rockville to the new PSTA located in Gaithersburg. Following the move and settling-in process, training operations will need to commence one month later in September.

Priority's Importance: The August 2016 move of the Fire-Rescue Training Academy (FRTA) to the new PSTA campus must be achieved quickly, efficiently and seamlessly, with minimal disruption to the MCFRS training program, as classes will resume in September.

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MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #10 to provide for and enhance the training, development, wellness, and safety of our personnel.

Explanation of Priority: As the new PSTA is scheduled for completion in August 2016 and MCFRS classes are to resume in September, it is imperative that the plan to move staff and assets to the new PSTA is finalized and then implemented successfully during the first quarter of FY17. It will be a significant undertaking to relocate personnel, equipment, apparatus, and files to the new campus. Following the August move, the set-up process will need to occur quickly and efficiently so that operations may resume one month later as seamlessly as possible. A well-coordinated effort will be needed between MCFRS, DGS and MCP in order for the move and set-up to occur with minimal issues.

B. IN-SERVICE TRAINING DELIVERY

Priority in Brief: During FY17, a new approach to providing in-service training will be initiated whereby training will be brought to the individual stations by the Fire-Rescue Training Academy (FRTA) staff utilizing a POD delivery platform.

Priority's Importance: By offering in-service training at individual stations, MCFRS personnel will no longer have to travel with an entire battalion's complement of apparatus to the PSTA. This approach will allow resources to remain in their battalion/station's response area available to run calls and will also reduce travel costs and time spent traveling to and from the PSTA.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #10 (providing for and enhancing the training, development, wellness, and safety of our personnel) and Goal #12 (addressing the need for workforce development and leadership, including adequate training programs).

Explanation of Priority: Due to the move from the present PSTA to the new PSTA during FY17Q1, the delivery model for in-service training will change. The FRTA purchased a roll-off container (i.e., POD – “portable on delivery” storage container) and has outfitted it for “Managing the Mayday” training to include a mask confidence maze, forcible entry props and security bars. Managing the Mayday is designed to evaluate the department's rapid intervention methods, including air management, personnel accountability, and firefighter rescue.

Per schedule, the POD will be dropped off at a fire station for use by the entire battalion. Using the station's apparatus room and the POD, firefighters will practice managing a mayday event with missing firefighters. This delivery model will allow the FRTA staff to run in-service training through September 2016 without being disrupted by the move to the new PSTA. After the new PSTA becomes operational in September, many types of in-service training will be offered at that facility, but the POD will remain available for use in the battalions for “Managing the Mayday” refresher training; thus allowing crews to remain in service within their battalion/station response area while training.

C. MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATIONS FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS

Priority in Brief: The Fire-Rescue Training Academy (FRTA) will address accreditation maintenance requirements for its three training program accreditations pertaining to fire, rescue, EMT and Paramedic training.

Priority's Importance: In order to offer its fire, rescue, EMT and Paramedic training programs, the FRTA must maintain three separate accreditations from MIEMSS, MFSPQB and COAEMSP and must be reaccredited at 5-year intervals for each program.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #10 (providing for and enhancing the training, development, wellness, and safety of our personnel) and Goal#15 (evaluating progress, measuring performance, and striving for continual improvement).

Explanation of Priority: During FY17, the FRTA will address annual requirements for maintaining the three training-related accreditations for its core training programs – fire and rescue, EMS and Paramedic as described below.

- **Overall Fire, Rescue and EMS Program:** The FRTA is recognized as an Accredited Training Review Agency (ATRA) by the Maryland Fire Service Personnel Qualifications Board (MFSPQB). During FY17, preparations must be made by the FRTA for an anticipated site assessment⁶ by the Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board (“Pro Board”) in July 2017. As a member of the MFSPQB, the MCFRTA will participate in peer assessments of neighboring jurisdictions in Maryland and will be assessed by our peers prior to the expected Pro Board site visit to the FRTA in 2017.

Related actions to be taken by the Training Section during FY17 include:

- Updating documentation in the Accredited Training Review Agency book (i.e., self-assessment document).
- Visiting the Maryland Fire-Rescue Institute (another ATRA) and mirroring their recommendations, policies and procedures at the FRTA.

⁶ This visit by the Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board (“Pro Board”) to the FRTA is not guaranteed, as the Pro Board randomly picks 3-4 jurisdictions in Maryland to visit as part of their assessment of the Maryland Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board. The MCFRTA is the largest in Maryland and certifies hundreds of firefighter-rescuers each year, so the Pro Board assessors typically select the FRTA as one of the sites to visit.

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- Ensuring in-house test security process and procedures meet the MFSPQB process and procedures which are compliant with both the Pro Board and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC).
- Ensuring in-house record keeping of Pro Board applications are up to date with MFSPQB standards that are Pro Board and IFSAC-compliant.
- **Emergency Medical Services Program:** This FRTA program is accredited by the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMMS) and runs on a 5-year cycle. To maintain this accreditation, the FRTA must submit to MIEMMS annually EMS training data and related documentation, including an annual report with required information and statistics about classes held during the past year.
- **Paramedic Program:** To maintain its accreditation for its Paramedic training program, the FRTA must submit paramedic training information annually to the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (COAEMSP) – a committee of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Reaccreditation is required every five years, with the next COAEMSP site visit to the FRTA scheduled for March 2020.

Reporting requirements to COAEMSP are extensive and are intended to demonstrate ongoing compliance with all benchmarks and related requirements. An annual report due in December each year is used to evaluate the Paramedic Program's continued compliance with enrollment and retention thresholds, outcome benchmarks, appropriate funding, access to clinical and field sites, and assessment of resources. A Standardized Progress Report (SPR) is due in March each year if the program had failed to meet established assessment criteria.⁷ For any criterion not met, a SPR Form for that criterion must be completed and submitted to COAEMSP. The form provides an analysis addressing why the criterion was not met and what remedial actions will be taken to achieve needed improvements.

D. REDUCTION OF INJURIES AND COLLISIONS

Priority in Brief: Safety and wellness initiatives for FY17 include reducing the number/severity of injuries to MCFRS personnel and reducing the number/severity of collisions involving MCFRS vehicles.

⁷ The COAEMSP assessment criteria include: 1) Written national or state credentialing examinations – threshold of 70%; 2) Programmatic retention – threshold of 70%; 3) Positive [job] placement – threshold of 70%; and 4) Graduate satisfaction survey – threshold of 100%.

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Priority's Importance: The initiatives included in this priority are important to maintaining MCFRS personnel safety and wellness to minimize the incidence of injury affecting productivity and healthy living. A secondary benefit relating to collision reduction is cost savings in terms of less property damage, lower apparatus insurance premiums, and less need for reserve apparatus while damaged apparatus is being repaired or replaced.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #10 to provide for and enhance wellness, safety, training, and development of our personnel.

Explanation of Priority: To reduce the number/severity of injuries to MCFRS personnel and number/severity of collisions involving MCFRS vehicles, the Wellness and Safety Section, with assistance from the Training Section, will implement several initiatives during FY17 as presented below.

In an attempt to reduce the number and severity of injuries as well as to encourage healthy lifestyles, the Wellness and Safety Section will implement the initiatives described below during FY17. Overall, firefighters who maintain an ideal weight and live a healthy life style have been scientifically proven to have less work-related injuries and illness.

- Continued provision of nutritional guidance and support for uniformed personnel will occur. The FROMS physician will continue to monitor the overall health of uniformed personnel through the yearly physical examination process. During this examination, the FROMS physician will discuss key aspects of nutrition and overall health if a service member's weight is at issue during a nutritional intervention conversation. One key component of nutritional intervention will be guidance on ways to lose weight and live a healthy lifestyle. In addition, the FROMS physician will recommend that the individual meet with a MCFRS fitness instructor to discuss proper lifting and exercise techniques for the purpose of weight loss reduction and injury prevention among other beneficial outcomes.
- To enhance cardiac disease prevention, the Wellness and Safety Section has re-evaluated the physical exam process. In discussion with several cardiologists, the Section will be recommending to expand the bloodwork panel to include additional tests that may help determine whether a firefighter needs earlier and more aggressive cardiac risk reduction intervention. Also related to cardiac disease prevention, the former "heart lung scan" program offered by Washington Adventist Hospital has been updated. The current technology is better, less expensive, and is now called a "Calcium Scoring CT." It is an appropriate screening tool for personnel over 40 years of age who are not currently under the supervision of a cardiologist. FROMS will offer a prescription for the Calcium Scoring CT to firefighter-rescuers 40 years of age and older. It is hoped that the addition of screening tests and more intensive education about cardiac risk reduction will reduce missed time from work and prevent line-of-duty deaths due

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to vascular causes.

- MCFRS will develop a wellness-fitness blog with the intent of promoting overall wellness and injury reduction. The blog will assist MCFRS in reaching all personnel within the department. The blog content will have topics including wellness, injury reduction, nutrition, cancer prevention, and job-specific exercises with the goal of reducing the number and severity of work-related injuries. The content of the blog will be updated periodically to address emerging health and wellness topics regarding firefighter-rescuers, including prevention of on-the-job injuries.

In an attempt to reduce the number and severity of collisions involving MCFRS vehicles, the Wellness and Safety Section, in cooperation with the Training Section and Division of Operations, will implement the following initiatives during FY17:

- Institute an annual driver recertification program focused on critical thinking skills and the role that effective leadership plays in reducing collisions.
- Design and deliver battalion-based driver training with a focus on critical thinking and decision-making as it relates to collision reduction.
- Develop and deliver an EVOG recertification course for all apparatus drivers every 3 years.
- Issue monthly “Just in Time” driver training communiques addressing critical errors or documented trends.

To address the gap⁸ in collision investigation training, MCFRS has developed the following approach for implementation during FY17:

- VFIS will conduct a 3-hour Introductory MCFRS [Collision] Incident Investigation training program developed by VFIS. This training program concentrates on what should be investigated, the investigative process, and leadership and staff roles.
- The updated online Risk Management Accountability Program (RMAP) will provide formal training to personnel having RMAP permissions. The program

⁸ As there has been no required formal training in the use of the RMAP for collision investigators in recent years, it has led to a decay in the quality and content of information entered in RMAP reports which, in turn, has led to slower claim submittal and processing as clarity or additional collision information is obtained. RMAP users responsible for investigating potential claims lack minimum training to conduct, analyze and complete an RMAP report in a thorough and accurate manner and to make meaningful recommendations.

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addresses the importance of accurate, timely, and comprehensive information as it relates to completing an associated RMAP Report and the process used by MCFRS in handling collision claims.

The audience for this beta training program will consist of the following 23 designated risk managers within MCFRS: Safety Officers (4), back-up Safety Officers (13), EMS Officers (4), EMS Battalion Chief (1), Training Battalion Chief (1), and Driver Training Coordinators (2).

Once the beta training has been delivered, evaluated, and adjusted, a recommendation to offer this 5-hour delivery platform to all certified chief officers and those with RMAP permissions will be offered. This will be in the form of a COPDI class focused on risk management, similar to that done for command competencies. A mechanism to institutionalize this training and associated certification would be required for new certified chief officers; thus bringing incumbent users and new users to a minimum level of proficiency when conducting a collision investigation and completing insurance claim reports.

- Once the above 5-hour training program has been achieved, VFIS will conduct the next phase of investigative training focused on root-cause analysis. This 3-hour program is designed for those personnel identified as key risk managers and any certified chief officer having RMAP permissions.

E. REVAMPING OF HIRING PROCESS

Priority in Brief: During FY17, the Division of Human Resources will complete the development of and will implement changes to the career firefighter hiring process to better recognize and evaluate the complete set of knowledge, skills, abilities and experience of each applicant. In addition, MCFRS will complete the development and implementation of an improved diversity outreach program that should result in greater diversity among the pool of career firefighter-rescuer applicants.

Priority's Importance: It is vitally important that MCFRS attract and hire the most qualified firefighter-rescuer applicants that are also representative of the County's diverse population. It is likewise important that the hiring process fully recognizes and credits each applicant's complete set of knowledge, skills, abilities and experience to ensure selection of the most qualified personnel.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #11 (recruiting and retaining personnel) and Goal #13 (embracing diversity and ensuring that our membership is reflective of the community served).

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Explanation of Priority: During FY17, the Division of Human Resources will complete the development and implementation of changes to the career firefighter-rescuer hiring process to better recognize and evaluate the complete set of knowledge, skills, abilities and experience of each applicant. The current hiring process is rigid and has the unintended consequence of disqualifying some of the qualified candidates. For example, an applicant may have excellent qualifications but happens to perform poorly during the interview portion of the process; therefore, he/she may fare poorly in comparison to a less qualified applicant who performs well during his/her interview. Potential changes to improve the hiring process could include the following:

- Modifying the class specification to include additional hiring criteria.
- Modifying background disqualifying criteria to ensure no adverse impact upon qualified candidates.
- Modifying the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) program to facilitate greater and consistent participation, resulting in a higher success rate.
- Ensuring that the selection process is a holistic approach that targets desirable qualities in firefighter-rescuer applicants.

Also during FY17, MCFRS will complete the development and implementation of an improved diversity outreach program that should result in greater diversity among the pool of career firefighter-rescuer applicants. The improved program will encompass a wider range of sources to be approached for potential applicants, including organizations and schools having large numbers of diverse members or students. In addition, the program will include an expanded effort to utilize broadcast and social media to reach out to diverse populations in the County and the region.

SUPPORT SERVICES

A. STATION PROJECTS

Priority in Brief: This initiative addresses planning for a new fire station, major expansion/renovation of existing stations, and system upgrades/replacements for several existing facilities.

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

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #5 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services) and Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including facilities).

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Explanation of Priority: This initiative includes final planning, design and renovation /expansion of Station 25; renovations at several facilities; planning for new Station 39; and system replacements or repairs at existing stations as described below.

- **Facility Renovations/Expansions**

The design phase will be completed during FY17 for the CIP project to renovate and expand Station 25. Construction is scheduled to begin in late FY17. This is a Department of General Services (DGS) managed CIP project; however, MCFRS will continue providing input concerning specific requirements.

Renovations to Sandy Spring Station 40, overseen by the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department, will be completed during FY17. State 508 funds and EMST funds from the County are being used to fund renovations to the entire 2nd floor of the station, including the bunkroom, locker room, bathrooms and offices. Existing bathrooms will be replaced by six individual bathrooms, each having a toilet, wash basin and shower; thus allowing for equal accommodation of both male and female personnel. The bunk room will include a general/common bunk area plus two separate rooms for live-in volunteer personnel.

During FY17, renovation of Silver Spring Station 16 will be completed. Renovations include a new bunk room and new fitness room. Bethesda Station 26 will likewise have a new bunk room completed during FY17. These renovations are being overseen and funded by the respective LFRDs – Silver Spring Fire Department and Bethesda Fire Department.

Also during FY17, an area within MCFRS Fleet Operations at the Public Safety Logistics facility will be modified to accommodate additional employees to be hired (see Section B below under “Support Services.”)

- **New Fire Station**

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

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- **Station Upgrades and System Replacements**

During FY17, “Level of Effort” CIP projects (i.e., facility upgrades and system replacements) listed below are planned/funded for implementation. These are DGS-managed projects; however, MCFRS will have ongoing coordination, guidance and oversight responsibilities in support of DGS.

- Life Safety Systems Replacement: Stations 23 and 33
- HVAC System Replacement: Station 15
- Generator Replacement: Stations 1 and 40
- Roof Replacement or Repair: Stations 33 and 40
- Female Facilities: Station 8 (design only)
- Parking/Access Ways Resurfacing: Stations 7, 33 and 40.

B. FLEET AND FACILITIES MAINTENANCE STAFFING

Priority in Brief: Increase staffing for Fleet Operations and for Facilities Maintenance to ensure that apparatus maintenance demand can be met and demand for facility repairs and replacement of facility systems/equipment can be met on a timely basis.

Priority’s Importance: To keep pace with the demand for fleet maintenance services, Fleet Operations will need to fill two funded positions in order to implement extended hours at the MCFRS Central Maintenance Facility. To keep pace with the workload in the Facilities Maintenance Section, the Administrative Specialist II position needs to be filled to assist with CIP project management.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (maintaining operational readiness), Goal #5 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), and Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure).

Explanation of Priority: During FY17, MCFRS will fill two positions within Fleet Operations - an additional Emergency Vehicle Technician and a Senior Supply Technician. These additional personnel would complete the FY16-approved complement of personnel; thus allowing Fleet Operations to keep pace with the high demand for apparatus/equipment repairs as well as preventative maintenance associated with a large and growing department. Fleet Operations will also evaluate the best implementation of the planned extended hours of operation during FY17.

If funding becomes available during FY17, MCFRS will fill an Administrative Specialist II (Grade 21) position within the Facilities Maintenance Section. The duties of this position are shown below.

- Process transactions involving timely receipt and payment of vendor invoices and maintain consistent communication with vendors.

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- Schedule appointments with contractors, and maintain Section project schedules and appointment calendar.
- Assist with writing reports/correspondence and reviewing ordinances /regulations.
- Maintain and interpret data, and create related tables and charts from the work order system.
- Prepare, catalog, organize and maintain a comprehensive, department wide, facilities archive consisting of both paper and electronic files.

C. PROPERTY & SUPPLY INVENTORY SYSTEM

Priority in Brief: Selection and implementation of a new inventory system for the Property & Supply Section that covers all equipment (i.e., clothing, protective gear, SCBA) in a single system instead of multiple systems.

Priority's Importance: Integrating the Property & Supply inventory system with the SCBA inventory system will improve efficiency and make possible the implementation of enhancements and new features within a single inventory system.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #6 (leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs) and Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including information technology systems).

Explanation of Priority: A new inventory management system is needed for the property/supply and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) programs. The new system will enhance the ability to produce reports and enable desired upgrades such as barcoding and paperless files. The new system will integrate Property and SCBA systems into one, allowing the issuing of items to be managed from one central location. The system will also be interfaced with PosiChek.

D. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS

Priority in Brief: MCFRS has several IT needs that require attention during FY17, including replacement of several IT systems, equipment and software applications. Other needs include implementing the CAD-RMS interface, migrating the Telestaff database engine to "MS SQLServer," and completing development of the Online Analytical Processing (OLAP) application.

Priority's Importance: IT equipment, systems and applications must be periodically updated or replaced to ensure that MCFRS has appropriate IT tools in place to meet its IT needs and improve its operational and administrative efficiency.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including

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information technology systems) and Goal #14 (evaluating, developing and implementing new technologies).

Explanation of Priority: The following IT initiatives for FY17 have been included in the County's Technology Strategic Plan (TSP) prepared by DTS with MCFRS input. Considering that the TSP extends to FY18, some of these initiatives will span both FY17 and FY18.

- Implement Fire RMS/Motorola CAD Interface: This new interface will enable the data feed from the Motorola Computer-Aided Dispatch system to FireApp.
- Replace Mobile Devices for eMeds: The new mobile devices will replace the CF-19 "tough book" computers that have been in use for over six years and are collectively in poor condition.
- Replace Property Tracker and SCBA Tracker, with Interface to PosiChek: The new system will integrate Property and SCBA systems into one, with interface to PosiChek. This system will streamline the management of property, including SCBA, and eliminate dependency on the MS Access database. [See "C" above]
- Migrate Telestaff Database Engine from SQLAnywhere to MS SQLServer: This migration will facilitate better integration with the current MCFRS data warehouse and future MCFRS staff management system.
- Implement Fire Station Network Security Enhancement: This enhancement, if found to be feasible by DTS, would allow MCFRS to move around those computing devices on an approved list from work site to work site without the existing network port locking problem. The current port locking mechanism only allows one specific computing device per network port.
- Implement Online Analytical Processing System: The OLAP system will enable the department to analyze multidimensional data interactively from multiple perspectives. Upon DTS rolling out Office 365, MCFRS will assess the possibility of leveraging SharePoint technology as the visualization layer for users to mine data.

PLANNING AND ACCREDITATION

A. PLANNING INITIATIVES

1. 2016-2022 Master Plan

Priority in Brief: If not adopted by the County Council during FY16Q4, the new 6-year *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*

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will (presumably) be adopted during FY17Q1. The new plan will replace the existing 2005-2015 plan.

Priority's Importance: The 2005-2015 *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* reached its sunset status in CY2015; therefore, the plan will need to be replaced during CY2016. In addition to Montgomery County mandating this master plan in County Code, Chapter 21, Section 12, the Commission on Fire Accreditation International requires that a comprehensive, up-to-date master plan or strategic plan be in place for a fire department to earn or maintain its accreditation status.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #1 (performing strategic planning) and Goal #2 (reassessing and refining the MCFRS vision, mission and guiding principles).

Explanation of Priority: Montgomery County Code, Chapter 21, Section 12 mandates that a fire-rescue master plan be in place and that it be reviewed and amended as needed. Section 12 also requires adoption of the fire-rescue master plan by the County Council. It is anticipated that the Public Safety Committee will have completed their review of the plan and made a recommendation to the full Council by FY17Q1. Before the County Council adopts the plan, revisions/edits may be requested; thus requiring additional work by the MCFRS Planning & Accreditation Section to finalize the plan.

2. FY2018 Strategic Plan

Priority in Brief: Preparation and approval of the MCFRS FY2018 Strategic Plan by June 30, 2017 so that it may be implemented beginning July 1, 2017.

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

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the department in achieving departmental Goal #1 to perform strategic planning.

Explanation of Priority: The MCFRS FY2018 Strategic Plan will be prepared by the Planning & Accreditation Section to replace the FY2017 Strategic Plan which will sunset on June 30, 2017. The FY17 Strategic Plan will include the highest priorities from the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* as identified by the Fire Chief, plus any emergent priorities arising during the final months of FY17 that require attention during FY18. Carryover initiatives from the FY17 Strategic Plan may be included in the FY18 plan at the direction of the Fire Chief. The

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annual strategic plan requires the approval of the Fire Chief but does not require the approval of the County Council as occurs regarding the Master Plan.

3. Site Evaluation for Station 39

Priority in Brief: During FY17, the Planning & Accreditation Section will take the Fire-Rescue Service's lead role⁹ in working collaboratively with the Department of General Services (DGS) to initiate and complete the site evaluation process for new-additional Fire Station 39 in Montgomery Village.

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

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #5 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), Goal #6 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs), and Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure).

Explanation of Priority: Following completion of the Program of Requirements (POR) for Station 39, the site evaluation process will be initiated and potentially completed during FY17. Section Managers of both the Planning & Accreditation Section and Facilities Maintenance Section, plus a Division of Operations representative, will represent MCFRS on the site evaluation committee led by DGS. Site suitability criteria published in the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* will be explained to committee members by the MCFRS representatives and then used by the committee in identifying and evaluating candidate sites for Station 39.

4. Mass Transit Design Input and Coordination

Priority in Brief: During FY17, MCFRS will participate in planning work groups led by State and County transportation agencies that are coordinating planning and design of major mass transit projects in Montgomery County. Projects include the Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway, and Bus Rapid Transit system.

Priority's Importance: It is important that MCFRS provide technical input for the design of mass transit systems in the County to ensure that fire-rescue needs and concerns are adequately addressed in the design so that MCFRS resources can better serve system users when emergency events occur and can use the road-based systems (vs. track based) to their advantage to bypass congested traffic to improve response time.

⁹ Assisted by representatives of the MCFRS Facilities Maintenance Section and Division of Operations

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MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the department in achieving departmental Goal #1 (performing strategic planning) and Goal #8 (sustaining strategic partnerships with County, regional, State and federal agencies).

Explanation of Priority: During FY17, the Planning & Accreditation Section, with assistance from the Division of Operations, will participate in planning/coordination work groups led by State and County transportation agencies (i.e., Maryland Mass Transit Administration, County Department of Transportation) that are coordinating planning and design of major mass transit projects in Montgomery County. Projects include the Purple Line (light-rail system that will run between Bethesda and New Carrollton¹⁰), Corridor Cities Transitway or “CCT” (bus rapid transit system that will run from Shady Grove to Clarksburg), and Bus Rapid Transit system (ten BRT routes within high-density areas of southern, eastern and central Montgomery County).

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

B. ACCREDITATION INITIATIVES

1. Annual Accreditation Compliance Reporting

Priority in Brief: With accreditation status having been awarded in August 2013 to MCFRS for the second time¹¹ by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), the department will proceed with follow-up actions and reporting requirements (i.e., Annual Compliance Report) to remain in compliance during FY17.

Priority’s Importance: It is the expectation of the County Executive, Chief Administrative Officer and the Fire Chief that MCFRS remain an accredited fire department¹².

¹⁰ The Purple Line segment within Montgomery County will run between Bethesda and Takoma Park.

¹¹ The initial award of agency accreditation for MCFRS occurred in CY2007.

¹² Accredited by the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

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MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #15 to evaluate progress, measure performance, and strive for continual improvement.

Explanation of Priority: MCFRS will work diligently on follow-up actions and reporting requirements to remain in compliance during FY17 and beyond. Follow-up actions will be related to strategic and specific recommendations made by the CFAI Team Leader for further improvement, plans for improvement appearing in MCFRS' Self-Assessment Manual, updates to the MCFRS Standards of Cover document, and periodic evaluation of all emergency and non-emergency programs. In July 2016 and July 2017, annual compliance reports will be completed and submitted to CFAI, along with annual fees, to meet annual reporting and fee requirements to maintain accreditation status.

2. Accreditation Documents

Priority in Brief: During FY17, MCFRS must conduct a renewed self-assessment of the department, utilizing the model presented in the CPSE/CFAI's *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9th edition, and prepare an updated version of the department's Self-Assessment Manual (SAM). In addition, the department must complete a renewed community risk analysis and an updated version of the Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover document based upon that new analysis.

Priority's Importance: In preparation for the department's 2018 reaccreditation assessment by CFAI, MCFRS must prepare several required documents, including an updated Self-Assessment Manual based upon a renewed self-assessment of the entire department, an updated Standards of Cover document based upon a renewed community risk analysis, and a strategic/master plan (rewritten by Planning Section during FY15).

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #1 (performing strategic planning) and Goal#15 (to evaluate progress, measure performance, and strive for continual improvement).

Explanation of Priority: During FY17, the MCFRS Accreditation Manager will lead the department through the process of preparing an updated MCFRS Self-Assessment Manual (SAM) and an updated MCFRS Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC) document.

The updated SAM will be based upon performance criteria presented in the *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9th edition, which includes some changes compared to the 8th edition FESSAM used by MCFRS to prepare its last SAM in 2012. During FY17, the FESSAM's ten self-assessment categories¹³ will be assigned to

¹³ CFAI Self-Assessment Categories include: 1 - Governance and Administration, 2 - Assessment and Planning, 3 - Goals and Objectives, 4 - Financial Resources, 5 - Programs, 6 - Physical Resources,

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a designated group of MCFRS managers, with each of these managers given the responsibility to oversee the completion of one or multiple categories. Each category is comprised of several criteria, with each criterion comprised of several performance indicators (a.k.a., competencies).

The manager of each category will coordinate the completion of a required narrative for each performance indicator within the category that includes: a description of what is being done to meet the performance indicator, an appraisal of how well the intent of the indicator is being met, a plan describing what will be done to achieve improvement and/or to overcome challenges/gaps identified in the appraisal, and a list of departmental references supporting that which has been included in the description, appraisal and plan. Each category manager will have one or more subject matter experts (SMEs) to assist in preparing the narratives; although the manager may need to prepare some or most of the narratives himself/herself while serving the dual role as a SME. Periodically during the development of each category's documentation, the manager of each category will report progress to the Accreditation Manager. The first draft of the MCFRS SAM will be completed by the end of FY17Q4.

The updated MCFRS Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC) document will be based upon the CPSE/CFAI technical guide titled *MCFRS Community Risk Assessment: Standards of Cover, 6th edition*. This recently published guidebook will assist MCFRS in performing a renewed community risk assessment for Montgomery County upon which departmental standards of response coverage will be re-examined and updated as needed. A team of SMEs from within the department will be assembled to perform the renewed community risk assessment, re-examine the department's standards of cover, and prepare the updated CRA-SOC document. The first draft of the department's updated CRA-SOC document will be completed by the end of FY17Q4.

3. Program Appraisal

Priority in Brief: To enhance the department's assessment capabilities, MCFRS will continue the development of a uniform program appraisal process for all departmental programs and will continue development of additional headline performance measures to be reported at regular intervals to the CountyStat Office.

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

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal#15 to evaluate progress, measure performance, and strive for continual improvement.

7 - Human Resources, 8 - Training and Competency, 9 - Essential Resources, and 10 - External Systems Relationships.

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Explanation of Priority: During FY17, MCFRS will continue development of a uniform appraisal process for departmental programs addressed in “Category 5 – Programs” in CFAI’s *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9th edition. The process will, to the greatest extent possible, be based upon standardized criteria and uniform record keeping practices and reporting format. Performing a periodic appraisal (at least annually) of each MCFRS program is a requirement of the CFAI accreditation process. Each Section Manager will be responsible for developing an appraisal for each program within their Section using, to the greatest extent possible, the standardized criteria and reporting format that will be developed by the department or an equivalent alternative approved by their Division Chief. Upon development of the appraisal, the Section Manager will then be responsible for performing an appraisal of each program at least annually and reporting the results to their Division Chief for submission to the Fire Chief.

Also related to assessment, MCFRS will develop additional headline performance measures during FY17 addressing key programs for which headline measures have not yet been developed or for which only a limited number of measures have been developed to date (e.g., community outreach). It is important to develop, use and periodically update additional performance measures so that performance can eventually be reported for all major MCFRS programs for review by the Division Chiefs, Fire Chief, CountyStat Manager, CAO, elected officials and the public. While positive performance will illustrate successful service delivery and effective and efficient use of resources; poor performance can point to needed resources that could lead to improved performance, or could point to the need for improved effort, procedures, methods, management practices, and/or efficiencies that could improve performance over time.