

**FY2016 STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE,  
RESCUE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY  
RISK REDUCTION MASTER PLAN  
PRIORITIES**



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# FY16 MCFRS STRATEGIC PLAN

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# FY16 MCFRS STRATEGIC PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

The MCFRS FY2016 Strategic Plan addresses implementation of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's (MCFRS) highest priorities that require initiation, continuation (with respect to carryover initiatives from the FY14-15 Strategic Plan), and/or completion during FY16. These priorities are related to recommendations and initiatives in the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* and emergent needs that have arisen during the final months of FY15.

Priorities address the major categories of planning, assessment and accreditation; preparedness/readiness, resource deployment, infrastructure and communications; training, wellness and safety, volunteer initiatives, support services, and data analysis. 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, their initiation during FY16 is important in order for the department to meet its mission, goals and objectives.

FY16 budget constraints; however, limit the scope of MCFRS' FY16 initiatives. The Approved FY16 Operating Budget for the department was \$222.3 million; a decrease of about \$2 million or 0.9% compared with the FY15 Approved Operating Budget. All County departments and agencies had been directed during FY15 to submit reduced budgets for FY16 due to lowered County revenue estimates.

Soon after the County's FY16 Operating Budget was approved by County Council in mid-May, further revenue reductions were then projected for FY16 and beyond. Based upon the 5-4 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Wynne v. Maryland State Comptroller of the Treasury* case on May 18, combined with the impact of a shortfall in the County's estimated income tax revenue for FY 15 that became clearer during late May and June, it was determined that County revenues between FY15 and FY17 could be more than \$150 million lower than earlier projected. Following submission of a proposed FY16 Budget Savings Plan by the County Executive on July 8, 2015, the County Council approved a \$54.2 million FY16 Budget Savings Plan for Montgomery County on July 28, comprised of savings within both the Operating and Capital Improvements Program budgets.

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### **INTRODUCTION (cont.)**

The FY16 Budget Savings Plan included savings totaling \$1.4 million within the MCFRS operating budget; thus reducing the department's FY16 Operating Budget to \$220.9 million. These savings included:

- Delay of Recruit Class 41 until FY17 (savings of \$741,422)
- Elimination of EMS recertification for career personnel on overtime (savings of \$380,000)
- Reduction of an Assistant Chief position in the Risk Reduction and Training Division (savings of \$200,000)
- Reduction in volunteer funding (savings of \$75,000)
- Reduction in the station mowing contract (savings of \$25,000).

Additional budget savings plans are anticipated for FY17 and likely beyond due to projected County revenue reductions related to the Wynne case decision as well as other economic factors.

# FY2016 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE, RESCUE, EMS, AND COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION MASTER PLAN PRIORITIES

## PLANNING, ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION

### A. PLANNING INITIATIVES

#### 1. Master Plan

Priority in Brief: During FY16Q1-Q2, the new 5-year *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* will be completed and will replace the existing 10-year plan which will sunset during FY16Q2.

Priority's Importance: In accordance with the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*, the plan will sunset in CY2015 (FY16Q2) and will therefore need to be replaced. In addition to Montgomery County mandating this Master Plan (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: The *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* will need to be replaced by December 31, 2015 when the existing 10-year plan sunsets. 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 master plan by the County Council. Prior to the plan going before the County Council, a public hearing, conducted by the Fire Chief, will be held. Following the public hearing, the plan will require approval by the Fire Chief and County Executive before being transmitted to the County Council. It is anticipated that the Public Safety Committee will review the plan and then make a recommendation to the full Council. Before the County Council approves the plan, revisions may be requested; thus requiring additional work by MCFRS to finalize the plan.

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### 2. FY2017 Strategic Plan

Priority in Brief: Preparation and approval of the MCFRS FY2017 Strategic Plan by June 30, 2016.

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 FY2017 Strategic Plan will be prepared by the Planning Section to replace the FY2016 Strategic Plan which will sunset on June 30, 2016. The FY17 Strategic Plan will include the highest remaining 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 FY16 that require attention during FY17. Carryover initiatives from the FY16 Strategic Plan may also be included in the FY17 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.

### 3. Station Location and Resource Allocation Study – Phases 6 and 7

Priority in Brief: During FY16, the Planning Section will initiate Phases 6 and 7 of the Station Location and Resource Allocation Study addressing the western county and the Norbeck Road corridor, respectively.

Priority's Importance: Phases 6 and 7 of the Station Location and Resource Allocation Study are important in determining future fire-rescue needs of the western county and Norbeck Road corridor. The ensuing Phase 6 and Phase 7 reports will recommend the siting and deployment of future fire-rescue facilities and resources within these study areas, including any potential relocation of existing stations and/or resources.

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) and Goal #6 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs).

Explanation of Priority: The Planning Section should initiate, and, if feasible, complete Phases 6 and 7 of the Station Location and Resource Allocation Study during FY16. Phase 6 will examine future fire-rescue needs of the western county, including Station

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Area 14 in its entirety as well as western portions of Station Areas 9, 22, 31 and 35. This largely rural, low-density area has not been comprehensively studied in recent times to determine its current and future fire-rescue resource needs that would adequately address risks, including fire, rescue, EMS, hazmat, aircraft and water-related risks.

Phase 7 will examine future fire-rescue needs of the Norbeck Road corridor, from East Gude Drive (Station 3's area) to New Hampshire Avenue (Station 4's area). This corridor, consisting of densities ranging from rural to urban, has likewise not been comprehensively studied in recent years to determine its current and future fire-rescue resource needs in relation to fire, rescue, EMS, hazmat, and water-related risks.

During Phases 6 and 7, the existing distribution and concentration of fire-rescue resources in relation to the overall level of risk and to the department's *Standards of Cover* will be examined. Recommendations will then be made concerning the siting of future fire-rescue facilities and/or deployment of resources within the study areas, including any relocation of stations or resources that may be needed to better serve residents and businesses of the western county and Norbeck Road corridor.

### **B. ASSESSMENT INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: To enhance the department's assessment capabilities, MCFRS will initiate the development of a uniform program appraisal process for all departmental programs and will develop 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.

Explanation of Priority: During FY16, MCFRS will initiate and potentially complete the development of a uniform appraisal process for all departmental programs – both emergency and non-emergency related. 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 addressed in Category 5 – “Programs” of the *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual, 8<sup>th</sup> edition*. 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

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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 FY16 addressing key programs for which headline measures have not yet been developed (e.g., fire code compliance) or for which only a limited number of measures have been developed to date (e.g., community outreach, emergency medical services). 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, if obtained, 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.

### C. ACCREDITATION COMPLIANCE

Priority in Brief: With accreditation status having been awarded in August 2013 to MCFRS for the second time<sup>1</sup> by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), the department will proceed with follow-up actions and reporting requirements to remain in compliance during FY16.

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

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 FY16 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The initial award of agency accreditation for MCFRS occurred in CY2007.

## **PREPAREDNESS/READINESS**

### **A. COMMUNITY OUTREACH INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: MCFRS will concentrate community outreach efforts during FY16 on preventing the 9-1-1 call by enhancing the Safety In Our Neighborhood (SION) Program and continuing other successful community outreach core programs.

Priority's Importance: The primary benefits of preventing the 9-1-1 call include: 1) reduction in the percentage of County residents sustaining injuries, thus requiring MCFRS emergency assistance less frequently; 2) reduction in property damage due to less incidence of fire, and the potential for fire-related injuries will also be reduced; 3) less calls for assistance should result in improved response time<sup>2</sup>; 4) less opportunity for injury to firefighter-rescuers during response and during incident operations; and 5) less wear and tear on vehicles as well as reduced fuel consumption. This priority is associated with MCFRS headline performance measures addressing reduction of civilian fire fatalities/injuries and prevention of injuries to children through properly installed child safety seats in vehicles.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (preventing the 9-1-1 call; minimizing deaths, injuries and property damage; and rendering occupancies safe for inhabitation through a comprehensive risk reduction strategy) and Goal #8 (maintaining strategic partnerships for the purpose of fire and injury prevention and homeland security).

Explanation of Priority: During FY16, the Community Outreach and Public Information Section, in their efforts to prevent the 9-1-1 call, will focus their efforts on enhancing the Safety In Our Neighborhood (SION) Program while continuing other successful core programs, including Risk Watch, Safe Kids, child safety seat inspections, and other fire safety and injury prevention programs as described below.

Enhancement of the SION Program will be comprised of the following elements:

- Introducing season-specific program themes such as summertime safety (e.g., water safety, prevention of heat-related illnesses/injuries, outdoor cooking safety, etc.), wintertime safety (i.e., safe use of heating systems/appliances and fireplaces, prevention of hypothermia and ice-related emergencies, etc.), and winter holiday season safety (e.g., safe use or display of candles, lighting systems/displays, Christmas trees, etc.).

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<sup>2</sup> ECC call processing should be faster due to less call volume, and apparatus travel times will be faster because more units will be available in their first-due areas resulting in shorter travel distances to the next occurring incidents.

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- Expansion of weekend community outreach events whereby career and volunteer personnel interact with large groups of residents by visiting shopping centers and participating in community events to disseminate fire safety and injury prevention information on a person-to-person basis.
- Targeting seniors with emphasis on those at highest risk (i.e., low income, immigrant, and minority portions of the County's senior population).
- Implementation of remaining and/or ongoing recommendations of the *Senior Citizens Fire Safety Task Force Final Report*.
- Partnerships with public and private sector organizations:
  - Partnership with the County's Regional Services Centers to develop and disseminate risk reduction, injury prevention and fire safety outreach to homeowners associations (HOAs) and other community groups. This initiative will also involve the establishment of station officer liaisons with HOAs/community groups within their station first-due areas.
  - Partnerships with the private sector for donations of smoke alarms and batteries to support free installations by MCFRS for qualified residents.
  - Partnership with social service agencies and organizations for dissemination of injury prevention/fire safety literature to at-risk senior clientele. Partner agencies will also be asked to report observations (e.g., fire hazards, unsafe living conditions, etc.) to MCFRS from their in-home visits so that MCFRS and/or social services personnel can visit these residences to provide needed risk reduction services and guidance.

Other core programs of the Community Outreach and Public Information Section will continue in FY16 with enhancements as follows:

- Risk Watch<sup>3</sup> - Enhancing program delivery through:
  - Partnerships - e.g., Department of Recreation's summer camp program where campers receive an overview of the Risk Watch program.
  - Greater assistance provided by firefighters who will first need to be trained in program concepts and delivery.
  - Introducing Risk Watch into the "Excel Beyond the Bell" afterschool program for Title 1 public schools.
  - Expanding the number of participating schools beyond the existing public and private schools taking part.

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<sup>3</sup> Risk Watch is a program delivered at the local level through fire department/school partnerships. The program consists of eight modules, addressing risk reduction, injury prevention and fire safety, offered to students in the Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> grade age-range.

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- Safe Kids and Child Safety Seat Program: Enhancing program delivery through:
  - Training of additional fire-rescue personnel to become certified child passenger safety technicians.
  - Maintaining partnerships with private sector businesses (e.g., Fitzgerald Auto Mall, Criswell Chevrolet, Buy Buy Baby, Great Beginnings).
  - Purchasing additional child safety seats for low income families through the Trust Agency Account.
  - Continued hosting of Safe Kids events in communities county-wide.
- Other Fire Safety and Injury Prevention Outreach:
  - Enhance and grow social media and digital platforms to augment educational efforts.
  - Continuation of the “After the Fire” program whereby firefighters go door-to-door with smoke alarms, batteries, and fire prevention information immediately following a major fire in a neighborhood.

During FY16, the Community Outreach and Public Information Section will attempt to achieve greater participation of career and volunteer personnel in community outreach activities through the following actions:

- Collaboration with the Fire Chief to establish community outreach expectations of career and volunteer personnel within the MCFRS.
- Increased training opportunities for career and volunteer personnel to elevate their level of knowledge and skills pertaining to community outreach. Examples:
  - Time set aside in recruit classes to educate new employees on mission and goals of community outreach and its importance to the departmental mission.
  - Cultural/diversity training that will help personnel in delivering their community outreach message to various populations within the County’s overall diverse population.
  - Make mandatory, as part of a recruit’s one-year probationary package, the completion of NFA’s online Community Safety Educators course (Q118) and/or NFPA’s Life Safety Educators Course taught at the local level.
  - NHTSA’s National Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification Course taught at the local level.

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- Continuation of the community outreach component within the Fire-Rescue Training Academy's Officers Candidate School covering the SION program and outreach activities targeting seniors, children, and immigrants.

To support the efforts described above, the Community Outreach and Public Information Section will work toward achieving standardization of the program and will seek additional funds for programs and additional staff in the FY17 Operating Budget to better accomplish their mission. Components of this strategy include:

- Community Outreach and Public Information Section staff will work toward establishing a community-wide outreach program based upon a consistent approach in both content and delivery across all facets of the MCFRS – career and volunteer. Outreach efforts of the LFRDs would be coordinated and consistent with those of the Community Outreach and Public Information Section. The overall program should also be institutionalized to ensure its maximum effectiveness and longevity.
- Seeking additional funding for Community Outreach and Public Information staff (i.e., additional positions) and programs, including County funding as well as applicable federal, State and private sector grants.

### **B. FIRE CODE COMPLIANCE INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: During FY16, the Fire Code Compliance Section will continue the Multi-Family Inspection Initiative, Automatic Fire Alarm Reduction Initiative, and on-line permit automation project. In addition, the Fire Code Compliance Section will continue coordination with the MCFRS IT Section in the development of a new record management system for use by Fire Code Compliance personnel.

Priority's Importance: These initiatives will collectively improve Fire Code Compliance Section efficiency, increase convenience for customers to file and pay for permits, and address code compliance issues concerning multi-family occupancies and automatic fire alarm malfunctions involving commercial properties.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: This initiative will assist MCFRS in meeting departmental Goal #3 to prevent the 9-1-1 call; minimize deaths, injuries and property damage; and render occupancies safe for inhabitation through a comprehensive risk reduction strategy.

Explanation of Priority: During FY16, the Fire Code Compliance Section will work on the following four major initiatives:

- Multi-Family Inspections Initiative: Work in coordination with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs to perform life safety inspections of thousands of multi-family occupancies located throughout the County, including high-rises, mid-rises and occupancies of 3-stories and less. These include owner-occupied multi-

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family buildings as well as licensed tenant-occupied buildings. This is a continuation of the Multi-Family Inspection Initiative begun in FY15. This initiative will extend beyond FY16, as there are over 73,000 owner-occupied and licensed tenant-occupied garden apartment units to inspect.

- Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Reduction Initiative: Continuation of the initiative to reduce the number of incidents involving AFAs in commercial occupancies due to system malfunctions. The priority will be occupancies having the greatest number of AFAs such as large shopping malls, stand-alone retail businesses (e.g., “big box” stores, home improvement centers), and office buildings. The high number of AFAs each year due to malfunctions have several significant consequences, including the deployment of MCFRS resources that are then unavailable to respond on other incidents, emergency response costs (i.e., personnel, fuel, apparatus wear and tear, etc.), and increased risk of injury to firefighters due to collisions while responding. Another consequence is de-sensitization of building occupants to repeated needless alarms which could lead to an apathetic reaction to an alarm during an actual life-threatening emergency.

Another element of this initiative is focused on alarm systems that are prone to being out of service for extended periods, placing occupants at risk and requiring the building owner to put in place a manual fire watch until the alarm is placed in service.

The overall AFA Initiative on the part of Fire Code Compliance personnel involves analysis of the root causes of AFAs and out-of-service alarm systems as well as consultations with building owners and alarm companies to resolve these problems. Repeat offenders can also be served with notices of violation and/or civil or criminal citations and directed to the Department of Permitting Services for permitted abatement.

- On-line Permit Automation: Now that fire protection system permits can be viewed and printed on-line as of FY15, the next step during FY16 is to create the capability within the automated program for invoicing and on-line payment. To achieve this capability, MCFRS will need to work closely with stakeholder departments, including the Department of Finance and Department of Technology Services. It is anticipated that this additional capability will be ready for use by FY16Q4.
- New RMS: The Fire Code Compliance Section will work closely with the IT Section during FY16 to coordinate development of the Code Compliance Section’s new record management system. The system will encompass licensing, inspections, invoicing, reconciliation of payments, and quality assurance. It is anticipated that the new system will be completed and ready for use during FY16Q1.

## **RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT**

### **A. EMS DEPLOYMENT INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: During FY16, MCFRS will continue limited implementation of four-person/ALS staffing to increase the number of paramedic engines. MCFRS will also purchase and deploy additional automated CPR devices for apparatus.

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 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 equipped with the latest in ALS technology including automated CPR devices.

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).

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

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

During FY16, MCFRS will upgrade one 3-person engine to a 4-person paramedic engine. This will be achieved by adding a firefighter-paramedic to Engine 740 beginning in Quarter 3. With the exception of Engine 740 staffing which will be addressed with County funding (see "Additional or Reallocated Resources" below), the remainder of the 4-person staffing initiative is largely dependent upon MCFRS being awarded a federal SAFER Grant in FY16 to fund the hiring of additional firefighters. In its 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 FY16 SAFER Grant would allow for the upgrading of four engines to four personnel around the clock, including Engines 702 (Takoma Park), 705 (Kensington – Plyers Mill Road), 720 (Bethesda – W. Cedar Lane ) and 726 (Bethesda – Democracy Boulevard).

- **Deployment of Additional Automated CPR Devices**

Purchase and deploy 20 additional automated CPR devices (e.g., Lucas 2 devices™) to finish equipping each frontline engine, EMS Duty Officer's vehicle, and the Fire-Rescue Training Academy. This will bring the total number of automated CPR devices deployed within MCFRS to 41. The anticipated funding source will be EMS-T revenues.

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### **B. ADDITIONAL OR REALLOCATED RESOURCES**

Priority in Brief: During the second half of FY16, MCFRS will increase the level of career staffing at Station 40. In addition, if MCFRS is awarded SAFER Grant funding during the first half of FY16, continued implementation of four-person staffing could occur during the latter half of FY16, potentially increasing career staffing from three to four personnel on up to four down-county engines.

Priority's Importance: Four-person staffing of engines increases effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of fire fighting operations and allows faster assembling of effective response forces (ERFs) at fire incidents. Increased career staffing at Station 40 will place a fourth person (i.e., firefighter-paramedic) on Engine 740, initiating ALS first-responder capability at Station 40 and also helping to address the failures-to-respond problem at Station 40.

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: This priority is comprised of the following two elements:

- **Increasing Career Staffing at Station 40**

MCFRS will increase career staffing at Fire Station 40 during the second half of FY16 by one Firefighter position Monday-Friday, 0700-1700 hours and by three Firefighter positions on nights and weekends. This will result in the reduction of the number of failures-to-respond at Station 40 by ensuring minimum staffing for two of the three primary units (i.e., ambulance, engine, aerial unit). It will also allow for the deployment of a fourth person (i.e., firefighter-paramedic) on Engine 740 resulting in the initiation of ALS first-responder service from Station 40 and bringing MCFRS closer to its goal of deploying four-person staffing, including a firefighter-paramedic, on all frontline engines throughout the County.

- **Continued Implementation of Four-Person Staffing**

With the exception of Engine 740 staffing (see above) which will be addressed with County funding, the remainder of the four-person staffing initiative is dependent upon MCFRS being awarded a federal SAFER Grant in FY16 to fund the hiring of additional firefighters. In its FY16 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 FY16 SAFER Grant would allow for the upgrading of four down-county engines to four personnel around the clock, including Engines 702 (Takoma Park), 705 (Kensington – Plyers Mill Road), 720 (Bethesda – W. Cedar Lane ) and 726 (Bethesda – Democracy Boulevard).

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Increasing the minimum level of staffing on suppression apparatus from three to four personnel is of primary importance as it will increase effectiveness, safety, and efficiency<sup>4</sup> of fire fighting operations and allow faster assembling of effective response forces (ERFs) at fire incidents, thus minimizing fire casualties and property loss. Four-person staffing of engines also makes possible full implementation of the department's 1 and 1 ALS strategy; thus increasing department-wide ALS capacity. Implementation of this priority will help in reducing ALS and fire-related response times county-wide.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. FLEET AND EQUIPMENT INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: During FY16, the Fleet Section will purchase several suppression and rescue apparatus and will take delivery of 32 frontline apparatus ordered during FY15 to replace aged units due for replacement. Additional staffing will be hired for the Fleet Section to allow the Section to keep pace with the growing workload.

Priority's Importance: The importance of addressing this priority is paramount to MCFRS having the physical capability to deliver emergency services through efficiently operating and dependable vehicles and equipment. Absent a robust program for repair and replacement of equipment and apparatus, the MCFRS fleet and its equipment will wear down with age/use and experience breakdowns, leading to an inability to operate at maximum capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency during emergency incidents.

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 FY16, the Fleet Section will purchase 4-5 engines, several all-wheel drive engines and/or brush trucks (specific number to be determined), two aerial towers, and one rescue squad. A CIP project will fund these purchases. Also during FY16, the Fleet Section will take delivery of 32 frontline apparatus (i.e., 29 ambulances and 3 tractor-drawn aerials) ordered during FY14-15 to replace aged units due for replacement.

Also during FY16, additional staffing will be hired, trained and acclimated to the Fleet Section to allow the Central Maintenance Facility (CMF) to keep pace with the high

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<sup>4</sup> As demonstrated in the April 2010 National Institute of Standards and Technology publication titled *Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments*. One of the primary findings of the field experiments was that four-person crews completed the same 22 fireground tasks for a "low-hazard" structure fire 5.1 minutes (nearly 25%) faster, on average, than three-person crews.

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demand for apparatus/equipment repairs as well as preventative maintenance of a large, growing department. To achieve this capability, five additional FTEs will be hired to work on the CMF staff, including an Operations Manager, an Emergency Vehicle Maintenance Crew Chief, two Emergency Vehicle Maintenance Technicians, and a Senior Supply Technician.

### **B. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: During FY16, MCFRS will continue efforts to improve emergency communications and station alerting systems through continued participation and input to the Public Safety System Modernization (PSSM) Project.

Priority's Importance: Existing communications systems are based on 2000 or older technology and are therefore obsolete. The computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system, station alerting system, and radio infrastructure need replacing with state-of-the-art systems to meet present day and future needs.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will assist the department in achieving departmental Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including communications systems) and Goal #14 (evaluating, developing and implementing new technologies and innovations).

Explanation of Priority: This priority addresses the Public Safety Systems Modernization (PSSM) project as described below.

While PSSM is a Department of Technology Services (DTS) project, MCFRS will continue having a key role in the planning, design, implementation and oversight of the system as a primary user of the overall system.

- 1. Computer-aided Dispatch (CAD):** Provisioning of the new CAD system will occur during FY16Q1-Q2, and training of CAD users will also occur during FY16Q2. Implementation of the new CAD system is anticipated by January 2016 (FY16Q3).
- 2. Radio Infrastructure:** During FY16, MCFRS will participate in negotiations with the selected contractor followed by pre-installation coordination. This will lay the groundwork for the new radio system being installed during FY17 and becoming operational in FY18.
- 3. Station Alerting System Replacement:** Design of the new Fire Station Alerting (FSA) system will be underway by the contractor in the beginning of FY16 and installation is anticipated to begin during the middle of FY16. Completion and County acceptance of the FSA is anticipated by late FY17.

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### C. FACILITIES INITIATIVES

Priority in Brief: This initiative addresses construction of the new Training Academy and new Fire Station 18, system upgrades and replacements for several existing facilities, and relocation of logistical functions to the CMF/Warehouse Facility. This initiative also involves the development of Project Description Forms (PDFs) and Program of Requirements (PORs) for new-additional fire stations and MCFRS participation in facility planning and site evaluation (led by DGS).

Priority's Importance: Timely construction of facilities (e.g., fire stations, training academy) ensures that public services provided by MCFRS (e.g., emergency response) meet the needs of County residents and businesses and that internal services within the department itself (e.g., logistics, training) meet the needs of our personnel. The relocation of logistical-related functions from leased facilities to the CMF/Warehouse Facility will consolidate related functions in a single facility which should save money in the long-term and create a “one-stop shop” for the sake of efficiency and convenience. Timely replacement of aged building systems and the installation of building upgrades ensures continued usability of fire stations, ensures the safety and comfort of occupants, and extends 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).

Explanation of Priority: This initiative includes new facilities, station upgrades and system replacements or repairs, logistics consolidation, and preliminary planning for new-additional stations as described below.

- **New Facilities**

Several existing facilities are scheduled to be rebuilt/relocated over the next 6 years, including the Public Safety Training Academy (PSTA), Kensington (Glenmont) Station 18, and Rockville Station 23. In addition, a new Clarksburg Fire Station will be built to replace interim Station 35. While some of these facilities will not be under construction during FY16, planning and design for them will continue during FY16.

The new PSTA, for which construction began in FY15Q3 on the Webb Tract (located at 8751 Snouffer School Road), will be under construction throughout FY16 and completed in FY17. This is a DGS-managed CIP project; however, MCFRS and MCP will have ongoing input and oversight throughout the construction.

Construction of Station 18, begun in FY15Q4, will continue throughout FY16 and will be completed in early FY17. The new four-bay station will be located across Georgia Avenue from former Station 18 on the site of the former Glenmont

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Elementary School. This is a DGS-managed CIP project; however, MCFRS will have ongoing input, guidance and oversight throughout construction.

While construction of the relocated Station 23 will not likely begin until FY18 or later, interagency planning and design, with MCFRS as a primary participant in support of DGS, will continue during FY16. Design alternatives under consideration for the 5-bay station include a stand-alone building or a multi-story facility that would house the fire station at ground level, Urban District offices on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, and residential units above. Regardless of the chosen design alternative, Station 23 will be located on County-owned property at the intersection of Montrose Parkway and Maple Avenue (later becoming an extension of Chapman Avenue) in the Pike District (formerly known as “White Flint”).

While construction of permanent Station 35 in Clarksburg will not begin until FY18 or later, site acquisition and facility planning/design will continue throughout FY16, with MCFRS as a primary participant in support of DGS. The four-bay station will be centrally located within Clarksburg east of Interstate 270 and will house a paramedic engine, ALS chase unit, ambulance, aerial unit, tanker and brush unit.

During FY16, MCFRS, in coordination with DGS, will develop a PDF and POR for each of the following new-additional fire-rescue stations (shown in priority order):

- Montgomery Village Station 39
- Shady Grove Station 36
- East County Station 37

These station projects have been included in the MCFRS FY17-22 CIP Budget request for facility planning and site selection. Station 37 had been assigned a CIP Project number in previous CIP budgets.

- **Facility Renovations/Expansions**

The design phase will be completed during FY16 for the project to renovate and expand Station 25. This is a DGS-managed CIP project; however, MCFRS will continue providing input concerning the specific requirements. Construction is scheduled for FY17.

Also during FY16, an area of the CMF will be modified to accommodate additional employees, including five new FTEs to be hired during FY16 (ref. “Fleet and Equipment Initiatives” above).

- **Station Upgrades and System Replacements**

During FY16, “Level of Effort” CIP projects (i.e., facility upgrades and system replacements) listed below are planned/funded for implementation. These are DGS-

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managed projects; however, MCFRS will have ongoing coordination, guidance and oversight responsibilities in support of DGS.

- Life Safety Systems Replacement: Stations 3, 5 and 31
- HVAC System Replacement: Stations 8\* (design only) and 15
- Generator Replacement: Stations 5 and 14
- Roof Replacement or Repair: Stations 7, 8\* (design only), 13 and 33
- Female Facilities: Station 8\* (design only)
- Parking/Access Ways Resurfacing: Station 30, plus two other stations (TBD)

\*Consolidated project at FS8 encompassing HVAC, roof, and female facilities

### • **Logistics Consolidation/Relocation**

During FY16Q1, several logistical-related functions will be relocated from existing locations to the CMF/Warehouse Facility located in Rockville. Moving to this facility will be the clothing storeroom, logistics warehouse, EMS supplies, SCBA shop, and MCFRS radio shop. These functions should be fully operational from this new location during the first half of FY16, most by September 2015.

## **D. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: MCFRS has several IT needs that require attention during FY16, including replacement of several IT systems, equipment and software applications. Other needs are to migrate the Telestaff database engine to “MS SQLServer” and to complete 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 information technology systems) and Goal #14 (evaluating, developing and implementing new technologies).

Explanation of Priority: The following IT initiatives for FY16 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 carry over into FY17 or FY18; although many will be completed during FY16 .

- 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. It is possible that this may be accomplished through the PSSM Project and its replacement of mobile data computers (MDCs).

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- Provide Tablets to all Battalion Chiefs: Use of tablets could negate the need for several devices for each Battalion Chief as tablets could also function as MDCs.
- Replace RMS for Fire Code Inspections: The new Fire Code Inspection System will replace the current, antiquated record management system used by Fire Code Compliance inspectors. It is being developed in-house by the MCFRS IT Section.
- Replace Property Tracker and SCBA Tracker with Integration to PosiChek: The new PosiChek system will streamline the management of property, including SCBA, and eliminate dependency on the MS Access database.
- 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.

## **TRAINING AND WELLNESS/SAFETY**

### **A. TRAINING INITIATIVE**

Priority in Brief: The training initiative for FY16 involves MCFRS oversight of the Public Safety Training Academy (PSTA) construction. Note: Recruit Class 41, originally planned for initiation in May 2016, will be delayed as an element of the FY16 Budget Savings Plan approved by County Council on July 28, 2015.

Priority's Importance: Maintaining close oversight of the PSTA construction and maintaining close coordination with the DGS project manager and partner public safety agencies are imperative to ensuring the best interests of MCFRS are addressed throughout the construction phase of the project. With the importance that MCFRS places on training, it is vital that the new Academy meets all of the design requirements so that students receive the best possible training with state-of-the-art training facilities that had been carefully planned by the MCFRS Training Section.

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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: While the PSTA is a DGS-managed CIP project, MCFRS will have ongoing input and oversight throughout construction concerning portions of the overall Academy to be used exclusively by MCFRS or shared with other public safety partner agencies. Construction will continue during FY16 and is scheduled for completion in early FY17. During FY16, MCFRS expects to continue using the contract services of the retired, former head of the Fire-Rescue Training Academy, who had substantial input during the planning and design phases of the new PSTA, to provide coordination and oversight for this project on behalf of MCFRS.

### **B. WELLNESS AND SAFETY INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: The wellness and safety initiatives for FY16 include implementing recommendations of the Collision Reduction Committee, and improving FROMS' data collection process.

Priority's Importance: The wellness and safety initiatives included in this priority are important to maintaining personnel safety and wellness in order to minimize the incidence of injury and illness affecting productivity and healthy living.

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:

- Implement recommendations of the interagency Collision Reduction Committee appointed by the Fire Chief in CY2014. The committee was tasked with studying MCFRS' poor record of at-fault vehicle collisions and making recommendations on preventing future collisions.
- Improve the FROMS' data collection process by updating the current computer system to efficiently track results of physicals and related data, including individualized blood testing results, cardiac risk factors, immunization schedules, appointment times for future physicals and follow-up visits.

## **VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES**

### **A. LFRD-RELATED INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: During FY16, the Volunteer Services Division will focus its efforts on reducing the failures-to-respond at Sandy Spring Station 40 and expanding volunteer resources at two local fire and rescue departments (LFRDs), including the Damascus and Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Departments.

Priority's Importance: Station 40 has one of the highest failure-to-respond (FTR) percentages in the County which must be addressed to better serve the residents of Sandy Spring, Olney and nearby communities. Taking steps to increase volunteer staffing at Station 40 will help in reducing the FTRs. Expanding volunteer resources at stations in Damascus and Takoma Park will likewise minimize FTRs at these stations and ensure that riding positions normally staffed by volunteers during nights and weekends can be maintained or potentially increased to allow response of both frontline and secondary apparatus.

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 are in place), and Goal #6 (deploying and leveraging our resources to best serve our customers' needs).

Explanation of Priority: During FY16, the Volunteer Services Division will work on reducing the failures-to-respond (FTRs) at Sandy Spring Station 40 to <1% of all Station 40 unit responses. The plan of action is to perform a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis to analyze the staffing pattern, standby policy, and personnel management plan of the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department (SaSVFD). Based on the results of the SWOT analysis, necessary changes to SaSVFD's personnel management plan will be made 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, firefighter, EMS provider, etc.) with qualified personnel.
- Address the recruiting and mentoring of additional volunteer members.

A dashboard will then be developed for use by the SaSVFD's to track their FTR data over regular intervals. Using the dashboard results, an evaluation of SaSVFD's capability to reduce its FTRs below 1% will be performed.

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Also during FY16, the Volunteer Services Division will work on expanding volunteer resources at the Damascus and Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Departments. This will consist of placing additional trained members on all frontline units currently staffed 5 nights per week at Stations 2 and 13. The second step will be adding staff that would allow deployment of secondary units such as an additional EMS unit, second engine, or tanker as applicable.

### **B. CERT INITIATIVES**

Priority in Brief: Growth of Montgomery County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)<sup>5</sup> is expected to continue during FY16. The top priorities of the CERT Program for FY16 include leveraging of CERT resources and capabilities to assist MCFRS with areas of need, and conducting at least one "Storm Camp" event.

Priority's Importance: It is in the County's and MCFRS' best interest to take full advantage of volunteer CERT members and resources to assist with areas of need that coincide with CERT capabilities. Teaching County residents the basics of emergency preparedness via CERT's Storm Camp will help them to better prepare for emergency events which will minimize their level of risk by reducing the consequences of these events should they occur.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #6 (leveraging our resources to best serve our customers' needs) and Goal #7 (maximizing the utilization our volunteer and career resources to achieve our mission).

Explanation of Priority: During FY16, the CERT Program leadership will work to leverage CERT resources and capabilities to the maximum extent by comparing CERT capabilities to MCFRS areas of need and then using trained CERT volunteers to assist MCFRS with those needs. Areas of need that have been identified include the Safety in Our Neighborhood (SION) Program and assistance following large-scale events such as tornados and tropical storms, including damage assessment, welfare-of-residents checks, accountability of evacuees, triage assistance, and logistical support.

Also during FY16, CERT personnel will conduct at least one Storm Camp event for County residents. Storm Camp allows residents age 4 and above to learn basic preparedness and emergency measures they can take to prepare themselves, their homes and work places for fires, weather events, gas leaks, etc. CERT efforts will involve promoting, conducting and evaluating each Storm Camp offering.

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<sup>5</sup> The Montgomery County CERT Program is comprised of 550 trained/qualified members as of 2015.

## DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS & APPLICATION

Priority in Brief: Development of a plan during FY16 for improving the department's identification of needed/desired data, its collection and analysis, and how it will be reported and used. In addition, MCFRS will purchase and begin using FirstWatch™ software, including the FirstWatch QA add-on module, within the EMS Section.

Priority's Importance: MCFRS must develop a data collection, analysis and application plan to ensure that all required and desirable data is collected/recorded, mined, analyzed, reported and used to its maximum benefit by all divisions and sections. The plan will also ensure that data mining efforts are coordinated so that similar data sets needed by multiple sections are mined together and then shared among those needing the data rather than in piecemeal fashion based on individual, uncoordinated requests as often done prior to FY16. In addition, use of the FirstWatch™ software program will enhance the EMS Section's data analysis, application and reporting capabilities.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #9 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including information technology systems) and Goal #15 (measuring performance, evaluating progress, and striving for continual improvement).

### Explanation of Priority:

- **Data Collection, Analysis and Application Plan**

During FY16, MCFRS will develop a plan for improving the department's identification, collection, analysis, application and reporting of data. The plan will address:

- Identification of all required and desired data sets
- Improved data collection processes
- Improved data analysis capabilities
- Improved and expanded data reporting and data sharing
- Improved and expanded use/application of data throughout MCFRS.

Upon completion of the plan, the department will, to the greatest extent possible, begin plan implementation during FY16.

- **Implementation and Use of FirstWatch™**

Using UASI grant monies, MCFRS will purchase FirstWatch™ software, including the basic software program plus the FirstWatch ProQA Dashboard™ add-on module. FirstWatch allows users to convert raw data into meaningful information that can be used

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to improve situational awareness and operational performance. The system utilizes a set of “triggers<sup>6</sup>” to draw data from data sources such as CAD, EPCR and ProQA systems.

The EMS Section will begin implementation of the FirstWatch software during FY16, using it with a feed from the department’s EPCR system (i.e., eMEDs). Using FirstWatch with a feed from the CAD system will likely occur in FY17. The EMS Section expects to use FirstWatch for a variety of purposes, including completion of EMS reports, tracking of surges in EMS incident activity, and near real-time calculation and reporting of data in terms of fractiles and averages. Other uses of FirstWatch will be identified and implemented in future fiscal years as well.

## HUMAN RESOURCES INITIATIVES

Priority in Brief: During FY16, MCFRS will develop and 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 develop and implement an improved diversity outreach program resulting in greater diversity among the pool of career firefighter applicants.

Priority’s Importance: It is vitally important that MCFRS attract and hire the most qualified 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).

Explanation of Priority: During FY16, MCFRS will develop and 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. 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:

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<sup>6</sup> A FirstWatch™ “trigger” is a representation of data based upon a set of user-defined data filter criteria using one or more FirstWatch analytical methods.

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- Modifying the class specification to include additional hiring criteria
- Modifying background disqualifying criteria to ensure no adverse impact on qualified candidates
- Modifying CPAT 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 FY16, MCFRS will develop and implement 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 employ the assistance of broadcast and social media to reach out to diverse populations in the County and region.

## TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION INITIATIVES

### A. EVOLVING TECHNOLOGIES

Priority in Brief: During FY16, MCFRS will seek to identify and leverage evolving technologies and will provide adequate training to personnel in the use of new technologies to be employed by the department.

Priority's Importance: It is important that MCFRS stay abreast of new and developing technologies for consideration and potential adoption by the department. New apparatus, equipment, systems and applications coming onto the marketplace could improve MCFRS effectiveness, efficiency, safety and performance should they be obtained and employed by the department.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #14 to evaluate, develop and implement new technologies and innovations.

Explanation of Priority: The department will seek to identify and leverage evolving technologies throughout all aspects of the Fire-Rescue Service. Evolving technologies may include or be related to the categories listed below as well as others:

- EMS technologies
- Fire suppression technologies
- Technical rescue technologies
- Explosive device detection, analysis and mitigation technologies
- Hazardous materials detection, analysis and mitigation technologies
- Surveillance technologies for fire, rescue and special operations reconnaissance

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- Emergency communications systems/devices for operational use
- IT systems and applications for operational, administrative and management uses.

Where appropriate and if funding is available, a prototype or a single unit/device (possibly multiple units/devices) will be obtained /acquired for pilot-testing within MCFRS. If found to meet MCFRS needs, additional units/devices will be purchased for regular use if funding is available. Once technologies are acquired, MCFRS will develop and provide adequate training to targeted employees in their use. This will ensure that such technologies are applied to their fullest potential to maximize their benefits and used effectively and safely by MCFRS personnel.

### **B. INNOVATIONS**

Priority in Brief: During FY16, MCFRS will seek to develop and implement innovative concepts, policies and procedures to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and safety within the department.

Priority's Importance: It is important that MCFRS stay abreast of innovations within the public safety arena for consideration and potential adoption by the department. In addition, it is important that the department encourage innovation from within to take advantage of its in-house expertise. Adopted innovations should result in improved effectiveness, efficiency, safety and performance within MCFRS.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #14 to evaluate, develop and implement new innovations and technologies.

Explanation of Priority: Develop and implement innovative concepts, policies and procedures to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and safety within all functional areas of the MCFRS. This applies not only to operational areas but also to administrative and technical support areas of the department. Innovations could be developed for any functional area and by any section, office or individual within the MCFRS. Coordination between MCFRS and the County's Innovation Program will help to identify and develop innovations for pilot-testing and eventual use.

Where appropriate, a pilot-test of the innovation may be performed and evaluated before the innovation is implemented on a wider scale within a section, division or throughout the department. There are two planned pilot tests for FY16 as described below and others may emerge as the year progresses.

- “Alternative Destinations” Pilot: In cooperation with local hospitals, MCFRS will pilot test the transportation of patients to alternative destinations such as urgent, express or primary care. The intent is to get the patient appropriate care at the optimal time while alleviating hospital Emergency Department overcrowding and improving EMS cycle times. MCFRS will run this pilot during FY16 on a

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small scale to determine whether this idea is practical and leads to improvements in patient outcomes.

- “Super User” Pilot: MCFRS will work with County’s Department of Health and Human Services and other allied providers to devise action plans to address the unmet needs of the top ten 9-1-1 callers each month (by frequency of calls for assistance) reporting medical emergencies (i.e., EMS “super users”). This pilot project will also look at 9-1-1 utilization by local nursing homes with the intent of preventing 9-1-1 calls and encouraging the use of alternative resources that may be more appropriate for the particular needs of an individual super-user or nursing home.