



# **Report on Escambia County Fire Services Unification**

**Submitted to:**

**Escambia County Board of County Commissioners**

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## **BACKGROUND**

Escambia County's fire service has undergone tremendous change over the past several years. Some of these changes have not come easy, but most local firefighters have continued to move forward and strive to provide effective and efficient services to our residents and visitors.

In January 2007, a newly formed Fire Services Citizens Advisory Committee (FSCAC) was convened to review certain aspects of the county's fire service and report back to the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners. In June 2007, after completion of their review and visiting other combination fire departments in Florida, the FSCAC submitted a list of 34 recommendations to county commissioners.

Of the 34 recommendations, these included; "Implement changes in the organizational structure of Fire-Rescue, placing the County Fire Chief in charge of Fire Services, to include career firefighters and volunteer firefighters"; and, "The Board of County Commissioners direct the County Fire Chief to assume overall authority of the administrative, financial, personnel, and operational functions of Fire-Rescue." Both recommendations clearly indicated the need for a single, consolidated, countywide fire service.

Commissioners spoke at length about their desire to consolidate county fire services when the FSCAC recommendations were delivered to them. Commissioners also expressed a desire to address organizational standardization among the county's volunteer and career firefighters. The Escambia County Fire Chief has stated on numerous occasions, "The county's dual fire protection system breeds problems and promotes an environment of competition, inconsistency, and duplication."

At the January 2008 Committee of the Whole Workshop, commissioners provided the needed leadership and direction to once again move the county's fire service forward. A path was cleared so that all firefighters, volunteer and career, could begin to build a single, unified, combination fire department; a department that would promote unity, consistency, and efficiency.

Direction was given to the County Fire Chief to work with volunteer leadership in forming a plan of action to unify all Escambia County fire service resources and to implement that plan no later than October 1, 2008. Working with Volunteer Firefighters Association President Chief Robert Whitfield, 23 unification items were identified that were considered essential in creating a successful combination fire department. In addition, a timeline for addressing each issue and benchmarking progress was also created.

The County Fire Chief invited all firefighters, volunteer and career, to participate in open weekly Unification Meetings. These meetings provided a forum for

personnel to provide input and feedback on each unification issue. Input was also solicited on a routine basis through weekly e-mails. And, while it was expected that not all personnel would agree on every issue, it did provide a platform where, most often, consensus was gained among meeting participants.

It should be noted that many personnel participated in the Unification Meetings and shared numerous positive and thought-provoking ideas with meeting participants. These meetings required a substantial time obligation and their dedication and commitment to creating a first-class combination fire service is to be commended.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The fire service is organized as a paramilitary organization. Therefore, all personnel operate at an assigned level of responsibility and authority, which is designated by their rank. Rank and organizational structure play a tremendous role in the methods by which rules, policies, and procedures are created, implemented, and enforced. This is true not only on emergency scenes, but also in the many day-to-day activities that must be accomplished in support of fire protection services.

Due to the importance of rank and organizational structure within the fire service, and due to the fact that personnel usually feel strongly about their current rank and standing within the organization, this is almost always the most difficult and emotional issue to address when unifying and/or consolidating fire departments. However, to be successful, there must only be one Fire Chief and a well-planned organizational structure that creates positive results and communication throughout the entire new organization.

Earlier this year, the International Association of Fire Chiefs released a new resource text for combination fire departments. *A Leadership Guide for Combination Fire Departments* was authored by some of the most respected combination fire service leaders in the country. In fact, many of Escambia County's volunteer fire chiefs have traveled to conferences where these authors spoke on volunteer and combination fire department issues. The authors write, "One of the most controversial aspects of designing a combination system is establishing a clear line of authority and chain of command. Avoiding this challenge will breed animosity and mistrust over time, so it is critical that the lines be drawn early in the process."

Unfortunately, a clear line of authority and chain of command was not established prior to hiring the first Escambia County Fire Chief in January 1999. The issue was further exacerbated by the placement of full-time career firefighters and officers into a vague organizational structure in January 2000. Therefore, it can be argued that a tremendous amount of the animosity and

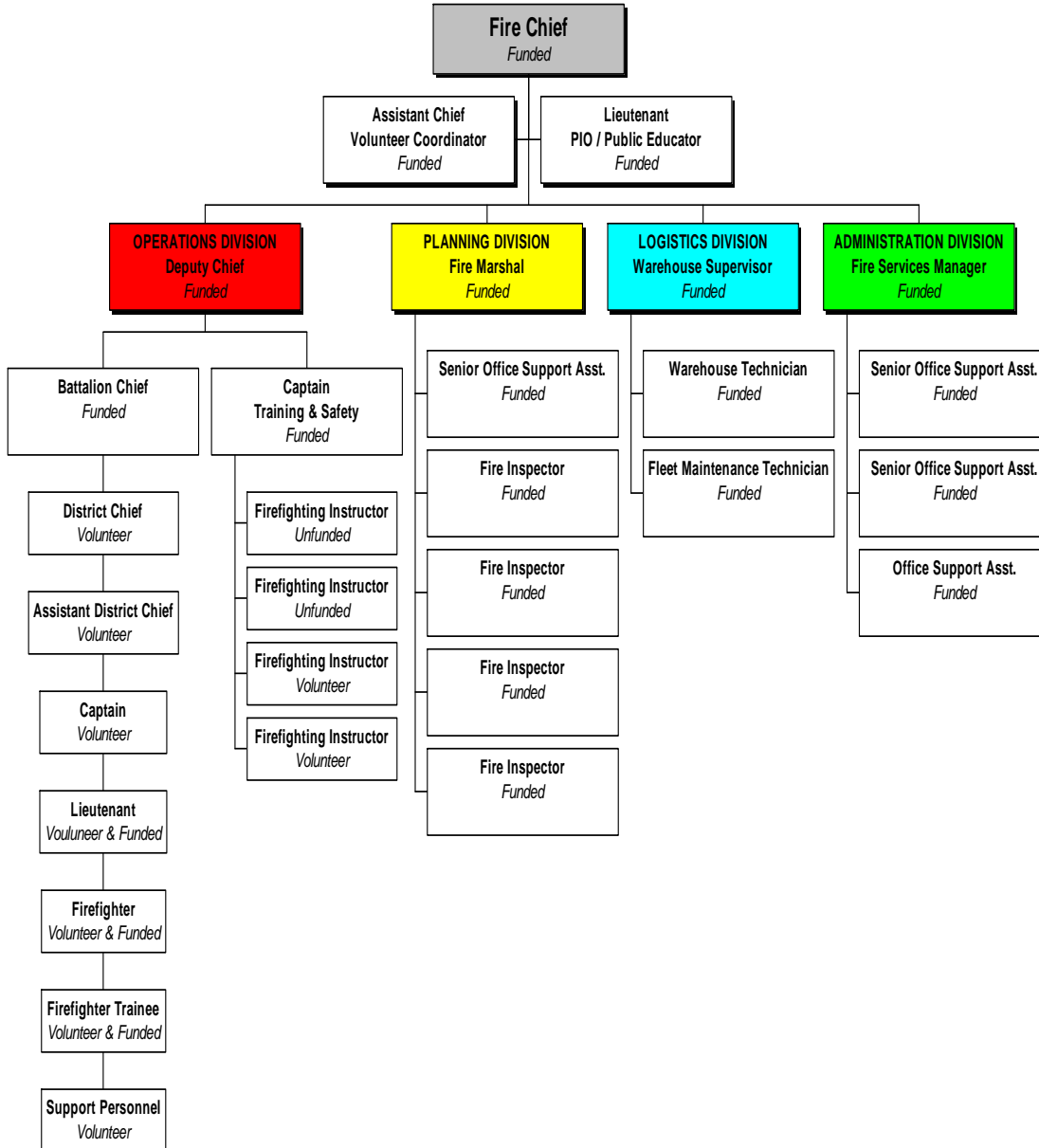
mistrust that has plagued Escambia County's fire service over the past 8 years can be traced back to poor planning and implementation of the county's initial full-time personnel and other early combination fire department elements.

The new organizational structure provides for clear lines of authority and responsibility. The "chain of command" and "unity of command" concepts are important components within the new structure and are easily followed. Also, the new organizational structure crosses all lines and makes no distinction between volunteer and career personnel, as it only addresses positions and responsibilities within the department. Understanding one's position within any organization and how it contributes to that organization's overall success is paramount in producing high personnel morale, quality results, and great internal/external customer service.

In addition, it is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners and the Fire Chief recognize the Escambia County Volunteer Firefighters Association for its many years of service to residents and firefighters in the county; to recognize the association as being representative of the interest of its volunteer membership; and to continue to utilize the talents and experience of its members in future department programs and projects.

## NEW FIRE-RESUCE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

### ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE Unified Organizational Chart



## **JOB SPECIFICATIONS**

All Fire Service personnel, including volunteers, should have an accurate written job specification. At a minimum, each specification should possess a job summary, description of duties, and list minimum requirements for advancement into the position. The absence of standardized written job specifications has left the duties, responsibilities, and required qualifications for the various ranks among the county's volunteer departments and their career counterparts open to variation and inconsistency. This inconsistency has proved to be problematic not only on emergency scenes, but also in the administrative arena.

In constructing job specifications, it was important to match duties and qualifications, as much as possible, between volunteer and career personnel. Therefore, duties and qualifications for each rank are based upon a standardized job specification, regardless of one's volunteer or career status. Based upon multiple combination fire department resources, equality and consistency throughout each rank is essential in building a successful combination system and this can be accomplished by standardized job descriptions for all personnel.

In addition, it was realized that an implementation period would be necessary to establish any new training and education requirements for the various positions within the department. Therefore, volunteer firefighters that are active in Escambia County prior to October 1, 2008 and remain active with no break in service are exempt from any new education and training requirements until October 1, 2011. At that time, no personnel may advance in rank without meeting all new qualifications. All personnel joining Escambia County Fire-Rescue on or after October 1, 2008 are not exempt and will be required to meet all new qualifications and standards for the position sought.

However, as established by the Board of County Commissioners, no personnel, regardless of tenure, shall be considered as a firefighter in Escambia County unless they have obtained certification through the Florida State Fire Marshals Office as a Firefighter I, or Firefighter II. Effective October 1, 2008, Letters of Exemption and the "Trained Commensurate with Duties" clause in the Florida Administrative Code shall not apply in Escambia County.

The following pages present new and updated job specifications for positions within the organization:

## Firefighter Trainee

<p>Depending on prior experience and certification performs either actual firefighting duties or fire service support duties while participating in a training program leading to certification as a firefighter. Supervision and instruction are received from higher-level personnel.</p>
<p><b>Examples of Duties:</b></p>
<p>Participates in fire department training and/or fire department sponsored training sessions. Participates in housekeeping and maintenance of fire station and fire station grounds to include all facilities, equipment, and apparatus. Participates in fire department programs such as company inspections, business surveys, pre fire planning, home safety surveys, blood pressure, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid training, and other public education activities. Under supervision prepares reports as required regarding the status of fire department equipment and/or property. Participates in the established Fire Department physical fitness program and is evaluated annually to ascertain the employee's ability to participate in the program. May participate with other firefighters and rescue personnel in responding to fire alarms, rescues, or other emergency and non-emergency assignments. May perform firefighting/fire rescue duties providing protection of life and property and operating fire and rescue equipment as emergencies and conditions require. Performs other duties as required.</p>
<p><b>Minimum Qualifications:</b></p>
<p><b>Education and Experience:</b> High school diploma or equivalent; or actively enrolled in a school or program to obtain such diploma or equivalent within one year.</p>
<p><b>Licenses and Certification:</b> A Trainee will be advanced to Firefighter without further examination upon obtaining certification as Florida Firefighter I or II.</p>
<p><b>Special Requirements:</b> Must be 18 years of age. Successful completion of a physical examination that meets or exceeds the requirements of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1582, Standard on Medical Requirements for Firefighters. Successful completion of a drug-screening test. Successful completion of an entry-level physical ability test and maintenance of a continued level of physical fitness as required by Escambia County Fire Rescue. Successful completion of an annual physical, which is required for compliance with existing federal and state regulations for firefighting personnel.</p>
<p><b>KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:</b> Knowledge of: Basic firefighting/rescue techniques.</p>

Fire and rescue equipment, operation, and maintenance.  
Fire prevention, suppression, and extinguishment techniques.  
Applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.  
Traffic regulations governing emergency vehicle operations.

**Skill in:**

Planning daily activities and completing tasks within assigned time frames.  
Operating an emergency vehicle safely and defensively.  
Preparing required reports and forms.

**Mental & Physical Abilities:**

Communicate effectively with groups of people of all ages to provide public education programs on fire and accident prevention.  
Understand and follow oral and written instructions.  
Communicate with the public and peers effectively, tactfully, and persuasively in difficult situations.  
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with co-workers and supervisors.  
Work as a team and accomplish organization and/or team goals.  
Work varying hours for extended periods of time.  
Operate complex technical equipment requiring mechanical aptitude, strength, and the ability to perform equipment functions under adverse conditions.

**ADA Requirements:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; talk, hear, taste, and/or smell; lift and/or move up to 100 pounds; is frequently required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms; and is occasionally required to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and lift and/or move in excess of 100 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

**Working Conditions:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is frequently exposed to outdoor weather conditions, moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, wet conditions, extreme cold or heat, risk of electrical shock, explosives, risk of radiation, and vibration and is occasionally exposed to high precarious places.

While performing the essential functions of this job personnel are frequently required to be available and on call 24 hours a day and must be able to respond within 30 minutes from residence as required.

The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet, but may occasionally be loud.



## Firefighter

<p>This class stays in constant preparation for and responds to medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials accidents, and fire emergencies; performs public education services; and practices and trains for emergency situations.</p>
<p><b>Examples of Duties:</b></p>
<p>Responds to all types of fires and other emergencies; extinguishes fires and performs related life and property protection; provides emergency medical care at a basic and advanced life support level.</p> <p>Participates in training opportunities and physical fitness activities.</p> <p>Ensures the proper condition, maintenance, and appearance of apparatus and equipment; prepares apparatus for immediate response.</p> <p>Assists in completing and maintaining records related to personnel, incidents, and/or other related items.</p> <p>Drives emergency vehicles and operates related apparatus in order to respond to emergency calls and scenes.</p> <p>Participates in the daily functions of the fire station, which may include: housekeeping, cooking, making crew assignments, and/or performing other related duties.</p> <p>Participates in fire department programs, such as pre-fire planning and fire hydrant checks.</p> <p>Participates in and/or facilitates training sessions to the public on fire related topics.</p> <p>Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.</p>
<p><b>Minimum Qualifications:</b></p>
<p><b>Education and Experience:</b> High School Diploma or equivalent; Basic Life Support &amp; CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification</p> <p><b>Licensing Requirements:</b> Florida Certified Firefighter I or II as issued by the Florida State Fire Marshal's Office;</p> <p><b>Special Requirements:</b> Must be 18 years of age. Successful completion of a physical examination that meets or exceeds the requirements of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1582, Standard on Medical Requirements for Firefighters. Successful completion of a drug-screening test. Successful completion of an entry-level physical ability test and maintenance of a continued level of physical fitness as required by Escambia County Fire Rescue. Successful completion of an annual physical, which is required for compliance with existing federal and state regulations for firefighting personnel.</p> <p><b>Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (position requirements at entry):</b> Knowledge of: Fire suppression techniques; Modern firefighting and rescue principles and tactics;</p>

Emergency medical care;  
Physical fitness principles;  
Vehicle, equipment, and apparatus maintenance principles and techniques.

Skills (position requirements at entry):  
Providing emergency medical care;  
Suppressing fires;  
Using a computer and related software applications;  
Maintaining vehicles, buildings, equipment, and apparatus;  
Driving emergency response vehicles;  
Conducting flow testing and service on hydrants;  
Maintaining physical fitness;  
Preparing and maintaining reports;

Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

**ADA Requirements:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; talk, hear, taste, and/or smell; lift and/or move up to 100 pounds; is frequently required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms; and is occasionally required to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and lift and/or move in excess of 100 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

**Working Conditions:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is frequently exposed to outdoor weather conditions, moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, wet conditions, extreme cold or heat, risk of electrical shock, explosives, risk of radiation, and vibration and is occasionally exposed to high precarious places.

While performing the essential functions of this job personnel are frequently required to be available and on call 24 hours a day and must be able to respond within 30 minutes from residence as required.

The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet, but may occasionally be loud.

## Fire Lieutenant

This class supervises a crew of firefighters and apparatus in emergency response situations; may serve in a full time staff capacity performing community relations, education, inspections, investigations, and fire prevention initiatives.

### Examples of Duties:

Supervises staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; ensuring that employees follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.

Performs daily readiness checks of equipment, apparatus, and personnel to ensure compliance with applicable operational standards.

Responds to and mitigates all types of fires and other emergencies; extinguishes fires and performs related life and property protection; provides emergency medical care at a basic and advanced life support level; serves in a command role at emergency and non-emergency scenes.

Prepares, reviews, and maintains a variety of paperwork, reports, and documents to ensure accuracy and completeness of information.

Conducts on-duty training evolutions consisting of practical, hands-on, and lecture type scenarios to ensure operational cohesiveness among crewmembers.

Conducts pre-fire plan surveys to prepare and orient crew members of risk factors associated with commercial structures that pose a unique danger to firefighting crews.

Participates in training and continuing education initiatives and opportunities.

Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.

### Minimum Qualifications:

#### Education and Experience:

High school diploma or equivalent and a minimum of three years of progressively responsible fire/rescue experience; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Completion of 16 hour Emergency Vehicle Operations course;  
Basic Life Support & CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification;  
Completion of 40 hour Company Officer Leadership course;  
Completion of 40 hour Firefighting Tactics I course;  
Completion of 40 hour Building Construction Course;  
Completion of I-100; Introduction to the Incident Command System  
Completion of I-200 ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents;  
Completion of I-700 National Incident Management System, an Introduction  
Completion of Anti-Terrorism Course (8 Hours)

#### Licensing Requirements (positions in this class require):

Florida Certified Firefighter I or II as issued by the State Fire Marshal's Office;  
Associate Degree or two-year technical certificate is highly desirable;  
Florida Fire Officer I Certification is highly desirable;

Completion of other job related certification programs offered by the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training and certification as an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic are highly desirable.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (position requirements at entry):**

Knowledge (position requirements at entry):

- Supervisory principles;·
- Fire suppression techniques;·
- Modern firefighting and rescue principles and tactics;·
- Emergency medical care;·
- Hydraulic concepts;·
- Physical fitness principles;·
- Vehicle, equipment, and apparatus maintenance principles and techniques;·
- Occupational hazards and safety precautions;·
- Applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·
- Building construction concepts.

Skills (position requirements at entry):

- Monitoring and evaluating subordinates;·
- Delegating and prioritizing work;·
- Providing emergency medical care;·
- Suppressing fires;·
- Leading a crew in emergency and non-emergency situations;·
- Assessing risks;·
- Operating applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·
- Using a computer and related software applications;·
- Maintaining vehicles, buildings, equipment, and apparatus;·
- Driving emergency response vehicles;·
- Conducting flow testing and service on hydrants;·
- Maintaining physical fitness;·
- Preparing, analyzing, and maintaining reports;·
- Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

**ADA Requirements:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; talk, hear, taste, and/or smell; lift and/or move up to 100 pounds; is frequently required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms; and is occasionally required to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and lift and/or move in excess of 100 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

Working Conditions:

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is frequently exposed to outdoor weather conditions, moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, wet conditions, extreme cold or heat, risk of electrical shock, explosives, risk of radiation, and vibration and is occasionally exposed to high precarious places.

While performing the essential functions of this job personnel are frequently required to be available and on call 24 hours a day and must be able to respond within 30 minutes from residence as required.

The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet, but may occasionally be loud.

### **Fire Captain**

This class supervises multiple crews and apparatus in non-emergency and emergency response situations; may serve in a staff capacity performing community relations, education, inspections, training, investigations, and fire prevention initiatives.

#### **Examples of Duties:**

Supervises staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; ensuring that employees follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.

Performs daily readiness checks of equipment, apparatus, and personnel to ensure compliance with applicable operational standards.

Responds to and mitigates all types of fires and other emergencies; extinguishes fires and performs related life and property protection; provides emergency medical care at a basic and advanced life support level; serves in a command role at emergency and non-emergency scenes.

Prepares, reviews, and maintains a variety of paperwork, reports, and documents to ensure accuracy and completeness of information.

Conducts on-duty training evolutions consisting of practical, hands-on, and lecture type scenarios to ensure operational cohesiveness among crewmembers.

Conducts pre-fire plan surveys to prepare and orient crew members of risk factors associated with commercial structures that pose a unique danger to firefighting crews.

Participates in training and continuing education initiatives and opportunities.

Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

##### **Education and Experience:**

High school diploma or equivalent and a minimum of five years of progressively responsible fire/rescue experience; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Must meet all qualifications for Fire Lieutenant, and;  
Basic Life Support & CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification  
Completion of 40 hour Firefighting Tactics II course;  
Completion of 40 hour Fire Cause and Origin course;  
Completion of 40 hour Fire Protection Systems I course;  
Completion of I-300 ICS for Expanding Incidents and Supervisors;  
Completion of Anti-Terrorism Course(s) (Total 16-Hours)

##### **Licensing Requirements (positions in this class require):**

Florida Certified Firefighter I or II as issued by the State Fire Marshal's

Office;

Associate Degree or two-year technical certificate is highly desirable;

Florida Certified Fire Officer I is highly desirable;

Florida Fire Service Instructor Certification is highly desirable;

Completion of other job related certification programs offered by the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training and certification as an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic are highly desirable.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (position requirements at entry):**

Knowledge (position requirements at entry):

Supervisory principles;·

Fire suppression techniques;·

Modern firefighting and rescue principles and tactics;·

Emergency medical care;·

Hydraulic concepts;·

Physical fitness principles;·

Vehicle, equipment, and apparatus maintenance principles and techniques;·

Occupational hazards and safety precautions;·

Applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·

Building construction concepts.

Skills (position requirements at entry):

Monitoring and evaluating subordinates;·

Delegating and prioritizing work;·

Providing emergency medical care;·

Suppressing fires;·

Leading a crew in emergency and non-emergency situations;·

Assessing risks;·

Operating applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·

Using a computer and related software applications;·

Maintaining vehicles, buildings, equipment, and apparatus;·

Driving emergency response vehicles;·

Conducting flow testing and service on hydrants;·

Maintaining physical fitness;·

Preparing, analyzing, and maintaining reports;·

Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

**ADA Requirements:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; talk, hear, taste, and/or smell; lift and/or move up to 100 pounds; is frequently required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms; and is occasionally required to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and lift and/or move in excess of 100 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

Working Conditions:

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is frequently exposed to outdoor weather conditions, moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles. toxic or caustic chemicals. wet conditions.

extreme cold or heat, risk of electrical shock, explosives, risk of radiation, and vibration and is occasionally exposed to high precarious places. While performing the essential functions of this job personnel are frequently required to be available and on call 24 hours a day and must be able to respond within 30 minutes from residence as required. The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet, but may occasionally be loud.

### **Assistant District Fire Chief**

This class assists the District Chief in supervising station activities, multiple fire companies and apparatus in non-emergency and emergency response situations; may serve in a staff capacity performing community relations, education, inspections, investigations, and fire prevention initiatives. Performs under the general supervision of the District Fire Chief, develops, implements, and administers programs and activities designed to maximize the contribution of assigned volunteer firefighters. Responds to emergency incidents and operates as assigned.

#### **Examples of Duties:**

Supervises staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; ensuring that personnel follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.

Performs daily readiness checks of equipment, apparatus, and personnel to ensure compliance with applicable operational standards.

Prepares, reviews, interprets, and analyzes a variety of information, data, and reports; makes recommendations based on findings.

Proactively addresses a variety of operational and/or routine problems associated with day-to-day and/or strategic issues; conducts applicable investigations and makes recommendations based on findings.

Monitors and coordinates response to emergency and non-emergency calls. Responds to and mitigates all types of fires and other emergencies; extinguishes fires and performs related life and property protection; provides emergency medical care at a basic and advanced life support level; serves in a command role at emergency and non-emergency scenes.

Prepares, reviews, and maintains a variety of paperwork, reports, and documents to ensure accuracy and completeness of information.

Assists District Fire Chief with budget preparation and administration;

Conducts on-duty training evolutions consisting of practical, hands-on, and lecture type scenarios to ensure operational cohesiveness among crewmembers.

Conducts pre-fire plan surveys to prepare and orient crew members of risk factors associated with commercial structures that pose a unique danger to firefighting crews.

May serve as the Commanding Officer at fires, hazardous material, and rescue incidents.

Participates in training and continuing education initiatives and opportunities.

Serves as District Fire Chief in his/her absence.



Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.

**Qualifications:**

**Education and Experience:**

High school diploma or equivalent and a minimum of seven years of progressively responsible fire/rescue experience; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Must meet all qualifications of Fire Captain, and;  
Basic Life Support & CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification  
Completion of 40 hour Fire Service Course Delivery Course;  
Completion of 40 hour Fire Prevention Practices Course;  
Completion of 40 hour Public Information Officer Course;  
Completion of I-400 ICS for Command and General Staff and Complex Incidents

**Licensing Requirements (positions in this class require):**

Florida Certified Firefighter I or II as issued by the State Fire Marshal's Office;  
Associate Degree or two-year technical certificate is highly desirable;  
Florida Certified Fire Officer I highly desirable;  
Florida Fire Service Instructor I Certification is highly desirable;  
Completion of other job related certification programs offered by the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training and certification as an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic are highly desirable.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (position requirements at entry):**

Knowledge (position requirements at entry):  
Supervisory principles;·  
Fire suppression techniques;·  
Modern firefighting and rescue principles and tactics;·  
Emergency medical care;·  
Hydraulic concepts;·  
Physical fitness principles;·  
Vehicle, equipment, and apparatus maintenance principles and techniques;·  
Occupational hazards and safety precautions;·  
Applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·  
Building construction concepts.

Skills (position requirements at entry):

Skill in:·  
Monitoring and evaluating subordinates;·  
Delegating and prioritizing work;·  
Providing emergency medical care;·  
Suppressing fires;·  
Leading a crew in emergency and non-emergency situations;·  
Assessing risks;·  
Operating applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·  
Using a computer and related software applications;·  
Maintaining vehicles, buildings, equipment, and apparatus;·  
Driving emergency response vehicles;·  
Conducting flow testing and service on hydrants;·



Maintaining physical fitness;·  
Preparing, analyzing, and maintaining reports;·  
Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

**ADA Requirements:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; talk, hear, taste, and/or smell; lift and/or move up to 100 pounds; is frequently required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms; and is occasionally required to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and lift and/or move in excess of 100 pounds.  
Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.  
Working Conditions:  
While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is frequently exposed to outdoor weather conditions, moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, wet conditions, extreme cold or heat, risk of electrical shock, explosives, risk of radiation, and vibration and is occasionally exposed to high precarious places.  
While performing the essential functions of this job personnel are frequently required to be available and on call 24 hours a day and must be able to respond within 30 minutes from residence as required.  
The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet, but may occasionally be loud.

**District Fire Chief**

This class supervises station activities, fire companies and apparatus in non-emergency and emergency response situations; may serve in a staff capacity performing community relations, education, inspections, investigations, and fire prevention initiatives. This class assists with long-range plans and strategic goals, directs the actions of personnel, and provides administrative and technical direction to fire/rescue personnel regarding many aspects of the operations. In a staff capacity, under the general supervision of the Assistant Fire Chief, develops, implements, and administers programs and activities designed to maximize the contribution of assigned volunteer firefighter personnel and to enhance the smooth interface of volunteer and County staff. Responds to emergency incidents and operates as assigned

**Examples of Duties:**

Supervises staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; ensuring that employees follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.  
Performs daily readiness checks of equipment, apparatus, and personnel to ensure compliance with applicable operational standards.  
Prepares, reviews, interprets, and analyzes a variety of information, data, and reports: makes recommendations based on findings.

Proactively addresses a variety of operational and/or routine problems associated with day-to-day and/or strategic issues; conducts applicable investigations and makes recommendations based on findings.

Monitors and coordinates response to emergency and non-emergency calls. Responds to and mitigates all types of fires and other emergencies; extinguishes fires and performs related life and property protection; provides emergency medical care at a basic and advanced life support level; serves in a command role at emergency and non-emergency scenes.

Prepares, reviews, and maintains a variety of paperwork, reports, and documents to ensure accuracy and completeness of information.

Assists Fire Chief with budget preparation and administration; prepares cost estimates for budget recommendations; submits justifications for budget items; monitors and controls expenditures

Participates in preparing policies, procedures, and long-range and strategic goals for the department; implements policies and procedures.

Conducts on-duty training evolutions consisting of practical, hands-on, and lecture type scenarios to ensure operational cohesiveness among crewmembers.

Conducts pre-fire plan surveys to prepare and orient crew members of risk factors associated with commercial structures that pose a unique danger to firefighting crews.

Serves as the Commanding Officer at complex fires, hazardous material, and rescue incidents.

Participates in training and continuing education initiatives and opportunities.

Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.

**Qualifications:**

**Education and Experience:**

High school diploma or equivalent and a minimum of ten years of progressively responsible fire/rescue experience; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Must meet all qualifications of Assistant District Fire Chief and;  
Basic Life Support & CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification  
Completion of 40 hour Fire Service Administration course;  
Completion of 40 hour Fire Service Legal and Ethical Issues course;

**Licensing Requirements (positions in this class require):**

Florida Certified Firefighter I or II as issued by the State Fire Marshal's Office;  
Associate Degree or two-year technical certificate is highly desirable;  
Florida Certified Fire Officer I highly desirable;  
Florida Fire Service Instructor I Certification is highly desirable;  
Completion of other job related certification programs offered by the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training and certification as an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic are highly desirable.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (position requirements at entry):**

Knowledge (position requirements at entry):

Supervisory principles;  
Fire suppression techniques;·  
Modern firefighting and rescue principles and tactics;·  
Emergency medical care;·  
Hydraulic concepts;·  
Physical fitness principles;·  
Vehicle, equipment, and apparatus maintenance principles and techniques;·  
Occupational hazards and safety precautions;·  
Applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·  
Building construction concepts.

Skills (position requirements at entry):  
Monitoring and evaluating subordinates;·  
Delegating and prioritizing work;·  
Providing emergency medical care;·  
Suppressing fires;·  
Leading a crew in emergency and non-emergency situations;·  
Assessing risks;·  
Operating applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·  
Using a computer and related software applications;·  
Maintaining vehicles, buildings, equipment, and apparatus;·  
Driving emergency response vehicles;·  
Conducting flow testing and service on hydrants;·  
Maintaining physical fitness;·  
Preparing, analyzing, and maintaining reports;·

Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

**ADA Requirements:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; talk, hear, taste, and/or smell; lift and/or move up to 100 pounds; is frequently required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms; and is occasionally required to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and lift and/or move in excess of 100 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

**Working Conditions:**

While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is frequently exposed to outdoor weather conditions, moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, wet conditions, extreme cold or heat, risk of electrical shock, explosives, risk of radiation, and vibration and is occasionally exposed to high precarious places.

While performing the essential functions of this job personnel are frequently required to be available and on call 24 hours a day and must be able to respond within 30 minutes from residence as required.

The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet, but may occasionally be loud.

## Battalion Chief / Operations Division

Under the general supervision of the Deputy Fire Chief, this class supervises assigned personnel within the operations division of the department. This class ensures the readiness of fire equipment; the training of personnel; and provides management and oversight to the response and deployment of personnel to emergency and non-emergency incidents.

### Examples of Duties:

Supervises staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; ensuring that personnel follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.

Plans, leads, supports, maintains, and controls emergency and non-emergency calls, including the coordination of mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities.

Prepares, reviews, interprets, and analyzes a variety of information, data, and reports; makes recommendations based on findings.

Serves as the Commanding Officer at complex fire, hazardous material, and rescue incidents

May serve as a liaison with employees and external organizations; represents the County at a variety of meetings, public events, training sessions, on committees, and/or other related events.

Conducts regular meetings with assigned personnel to relay and receive information and communicate policies and directives.

Supervises and facilitates training sessions.

Supervises the work program involving grass cutting, janitorial duties, and manual labor performed by inmates.

May act as Deputy Fire Chief in his/her absence.

Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.

### Qualifications:

#### Training and Experience (positions in this class require):

A minimum of ten years of Fire Service experience, three of which were in a supervisory and leadership role; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

#### Licensing Requirements (positions in this class require):

Florida Certified Firefighter II as issued by the State Fire Marshal's Office;

Must meet all qualifications of District Fire Chief and;

Basic Life Support & CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certification

Florida Certified Fire Officer I;

Florida Certified Fire Service Instructor I, II, or III.

Completion of other job related certification programs offered by the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training and certification as an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic are highly desirable.

Knowledge (position requirements at entry):

Knowledge of:

Management principles;·  
Fire service principles, practices, and methods;·  
Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, codes, and/or statutes;· Volunteer management principles;· Hazardous materials principles;·  
Automotive and mechanical repair principles and methods;·  
Fire suppression techniques;·  
Modern firefighting and rescue principles and tactics;·  
Emergency medical care;·  
Vehicle, equipment, and apparatus maintenance principles and techniques;·  
Occupational hazards and safety precautions;·  
Applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting.

Skills (position requirements at entry):

Skill in:

Monitoring and evaluating subordinates;·  
Delegating and prioritizing work;·  
Coordinating and facilitating meetings;·  
Assessing risks;·  
Procuring, maintaining, and operating applicable tools and equipment associated with firefighting;·  
Interpreting and applying applicable laws, rules, and regulations;·  
Using a computer and related software applications;·  
Driving emergency response vehicles;·  
Preparing, analyzing, and maintaining reports;·  
Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

#### **ADA Requirements:**

Physical Requirements:

Positions in this class typically require: climbing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching, standing, walking, pushing, pulling, lifting, fingering, grasping, feeling, talking, hearing, seeing and repetitive motions.

Very Heavy Work: Exerting in excess of 100 pounds of force occasionally, and/or in excess of 50 pounds of force frequently, and/or in excess of 20 pounds of force constantly to move objects. Incumbents may be subjected to moving mechanical parts, electrical currents, vibrations, fumes, odors, dusts, gases, poor ventilation, chemicals, oils, extreme temperatures, inadequate lighting, work space restrictions, intense noises and travel.

## **RULES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

Escambia County's fire service provides a variety of emergency and non-emergency services to the residents and visitors of the county. Some of these services include fire suppression, fire prevention, public safety education programs, rescue, hazardous materials first response, and emergency medical response. Having rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines that are standardized throughout the entire organization is paramount in providing a safe cohesive working environment.

The organization's rules, policies, and guidelines are developed and continually revised to guide all personnel in the performance of their assigned duties. They address and document organizational structure, personnel roles and responsibilities, administrative functions, emergency operations, standing orders and programs, and other related department issues. These rules, policies, and guidelines serve as the basis for general rules of conduct expected of all personnel and inform them of the directions their actions should follow in most instances.

All rules, policies, and guidelines implemented by the department are in good faith and designed to maintain consistency, efficiency, and standardization throughout the organization and provide a safe working environment for all personnel. All guidelines are intended to support Federal, State, and local laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to an organized fire service agency.

In reviewing established guidelines and policies, several minor changes were implemented so that they were easily followed and supported by all volunteer and career personnel. Due to the number and complexity of all current policies, procedures, and guidelines of the department, they are not included as part of this report, but are available by request. However, in order to better understand how new and existing guidelines are to be established and updated, SOG 1105.003 is included for your review:

**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1105.003**

**SOG Implementation**

Implemented: 01-03-05

Revised: 05-12-08

Page 1 of 1



**PURPOSE**

It is of the utmost importance that emergency response agencies possess written guidelines and policies that influence the actions and decisions of personnel within that agency. Operating under general operating guidelines and policies will help ensure that all personnel carry out their duties in a manner that is consistent throughout the organization.

**OBJECTIVE**

To provide personnel with information that defines how the organization's rules and standard operating guidelines are to be created, submitted, implemented, and utilized.

**SCOPE**

All Personnel

**APPLICATION & USE**

It is the policy of ECFR to recognize the department's SOGs as the basis of general rules of conduct expected from all career and volunteer members. These SOGs are to be used by all personnel when contemplating a standard type of operation, either emergency or non-emergency in nature.

In addition, ECFR shall strive to operate with the highest possible levels of safety for all personnel. The prevention of accidents, injuries, exposures, and occupational illnesses are goals of the organization and shall be primary considerations at all times. This concern for safety and health applies to all members of the organization, and to any other personnel that may be actively involved in ECFR activities.

**NEW & REVISED GUIDELINES**

Any member of the organization can submit a recommendation for the implementation or revision of a standard operating guideline. However, personnel must follow the proper procedure in submitting such recommendations.

**SUBMISSION OF NEW OR AMENDED SOGS**

Written recommendations for new or revised guidelines shall be initially submitted to the Deputy Chief of Operations. Initial drafts, containing the new or revised material, will be distributed to all ECFR personnel. A 14-day review period of the SOG will begin after the date of dissemination. Suggested amendments to the SOG must be forwarded back to the Deputy Fire Chief's Office. If the Deputy Chief does not receive any suggested amendments prior to the end of the review period, the SOG will be considered implemented and final copies will be forwarded to all stations. If amendments are suggested, they will be reviewed and considered by the Fire Chief. The new or amended SOG will then be forwarded to all fire stations for implementation.

## **STANDARDIZED TRAINING**

The ability of an emergency organization to function safely and effectively at emergency scenes is directly related to the quality of the department's training program. In today's emergency response environment, firefighters are expected to carry out many duties that are far from that of firefighters 20 years ago. Responding to hazardous materials spills/releases, emergency medical calls, water rescue incidents, and heavy/technical rescue events are just a few expectations of the modern-day firefighter.

In a combination fire department, training opportunities must be readily available and equal in content for both volunteer and career personnel. In addition, volunteer and career firefighters must train together both in the classroom and in the field. Training together brings a spirit of camaraderie and trust between personnel and sets the foundation for high morale and competence throughout all ranks of the organization.

To address the training needs of Escambia County's new combination fire department, the following Department Training Program will be implemented October 1, 2008:



**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1220.005**  
**Department Training Program**  
Implemented: 10-01-08  
Revised:  
Page 1 of 3



**PURPOSE**

The effectiveness of any fire department largely depends on its training program. Proper and regular fire service training also helps keep firefighters and other responders safe and efficient while performing their duties. It is imperative that all fire department personnel train on a regular basis, and that personnel are taught standardized methods and techniques that will be applied on most all emergency scenes.

**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an outline and training structure that helps ensure all personnel are receiving quality and routine training that is standardized throughout the department, and stresses the importance of effectiveness and safety

**SCOPE**

All Personnel

**OVERVIEW**

ECFR will strive to provide quality and diversified training to all personnel. As much as possible, internal training opportunities shall be scheduled at such times and locations as to be convenient for attending personnel. ECFR will strive to ensure that only qualified and knowledgeable instructors are utilized in the provision of training content, and that they provide a positive learning environment for all students.

This document serves as an outline of those courses and classes that are considered mission essential and shall be scheduled on a regular annual basis. However, extenuating circumstances or lack of enrollment may be cause to cancel or alter certain classes or courses throughout the year.

**SEMI-ANNUAL DEPARTMENT TRAINING CALENDAR**

The Department Training Officer shall publish a semi-annual training calendar, similar to the training calendar published by the Florida State Fire College. This calendar shall contain a six-month listing of all courses, dates, times, locations, and syllabuses for training offered by the department.

The training calendar shall be made available each year to all personnel by September 1<sup>st</sup>, for all courses beginning in the months October through March, and by March 1<sup>st</sup>, for all courses beginning in the months April through September.

**MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS**

**VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

In accordance with Florida Statutes, all volunteer firefighters that engage in active fire suppression and control activities, and are subject to Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) conditions, or act as a member of "2-in-2-out" personnel, at a minimum, shall be certified as a Firefighter I by the Florida Division of State Fire Marshal. Escambia County does not recognize Firefighter I Letters of Exemption and shall not consider personnel that possess such letters as meeting the Firefighter I requirement. Also, Escambia County does not consider that any personnel is trained commensurate to duty as a firefighter unless the Florida Firefighter I certification is obtained

**CAREER FIREFIGHTERS**

In accordance with Florida Statutes, all career firefighters, full or part-time, at a minimum, shall be certified as a Firefighter II by the Florida Division of State Fire Marshal within one year of employment.

**VOLUNTEER AND CAREER FIRE OFFICERS**

Minimum training standards for the various ranks of fire officers within the organization are listed in each individual job/rank specification.

**FIREFIGHTER I TRAINING**

Firefighter I training will be offered quarterly through department instructors. Classes shall begin in October, January, April, and July. However, this schedule may be altered due to extenuating circumstances, and classes may be canceled due to lack of enrollment. Most often, class will be held 2 nights each week and every Saturday. Class location will vary in order to accommodate personnel throughout all of Escambia County.

**FIREFIGHTER II TRAINING**

Firefighter II training is offered locally through Pensacola Junior College and Midway Fire District. With the approval of the Fire Chief, department funds may be utilized for tuition and related costs for these training facilities.

In addition, the department will attempt to provide a Firefighter II "bridge class" each year. This course will provide certified Firefighter I personnel with additional basic firefighter training. This additional training will allow them to test for Firefighter II certification.

**ADVANCED TRAINING**

**APPARATUS DRIVER/OPERATOR**

- The Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) shall be offered quarterly
- The department shall offer a 24-hour Pump Operator Course semi-annually

**FIRE OFFICER**

- Various Florida Fire Officer I and II curriculum courses shall be offered quarterly

- 24-Hour Advanced Tactics and Strategy courses shall be offered semi-annually
- 16-Hour Command and Control courses shall be offered semi-annually

**SPECIAL OPERATIONS**

- 24-Hour Hazardous Materials Operations/Refresher shall be offered semi-annually
- 16-Hour Special Operations Awareness course shall be offered semi-annually
- 24-Hour Vehicle Extrication course shall be offered semi-annually

**IN-SERVICE/ISO TRAINING**

Each career company officer and each District Chief will ensure that the minimum ISO training requirements are completed annually for all personnel. These training requirements include:

- Half-day (3 hours) drills, 8 per year
- Half-day, multiple company drills, 4 per year
- Night drills (3 hours), 2 per year
- Company training at fire stations, firefighting topics only, 20 hours per member per month for career personnel, 10 hours per member per month for volunteer personnel
- Officer training, Full-day (6 hours), all officers, 2 per year
- Driver operator Training, half-day sessions, all drivers, 4 per year
- New driver operator training, all new driver operators, 40 initial hours
- Hazardous Materials, half-day session, all members, 1 per year

**EXTERNAL TRAINING**

The department affords volunteer and career personnel the opportunity to take advantage of external resources for professional growth and development. These external resources may include, but are not limited to:

- The National Fire Academy
- The Florida State Fire College
- Pensacola Junior College
- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- Florida Fire Chiefs' Association
- Various fire service conferences, seminars, and training meetings

Personnel must follow established procedures to gain authorization when any department funds will be expended for education, training, or any travel associated with such education and training.

## **STANDARDIZED AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

The duties of firefighting personnel, volunteer or career, are the same. Firefighters are expected to place themselves in harms way to protect the lives and property of others. And, on occasion, personnel carry out their duties in such a manner that special recognition is warranted.

Recognizing and rewarding personnel for exemplary behavior and acts above and beyond the normal call of duty is a long-standing tradition within the fire service. Even though many firefighters may shy away from receiving awards and recognition, and most consider fire department tasks a team effort, it is also a fact that most firefighters feel an increased sense of value and appreciation when recognized for outstanding performance of their duties.

To address a standardized method for rewarding and recognizing deserving members of Escambia County's fire service, the following guidelines have been implemented:

**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1135.005**  
**Awards and Recognition**  
Implemented: 10-01-08  
Revised:  
Page 1 of 2



***PURPOSE***

Personnel should be rewarded for actions beyond their normal job description, and for service given to Escambia County Fire/Rescue. This is intended to build morale and promote an environment of worth and appreciation within the work environment.

***OBJECTIVE***

To establish a standard for the eligibility, placement, wearing of, and criteria associated with medals and citation bars.

***SCOPE***

All Personnel

**MEDALS, AWARDS, AND CITATIONS**

***Medal of Valor***

Awarded to a firefighter for performance above and beyond the call of duty at extreme personal risk having been instrumental in rescuing and saving another's life. Eligible recipients require a majority vote from the Board of County Commissioners. This medal is automatically awarded to a firefighter who dies in the line of duty.

***Medal of Gallantry***

Awarded to a firefighter who, at great personal risk, has been instrumental in rescuing and saving another from possible death.

***Medal of Courage***

Awarded to a firefighter who was involved in an act of true bravery or who shows significant initiative and capability.

***Distinguished Service Medal***

Awarded to those persons whom have performed acts of heroism or significant accomplishment, which may have not been fire service related.

***Service Recognition Medal***

Awarded to those firefighters in acknowledgement of their long and faithful service.

***Final Alarm Medal***

Presented to the family of a deceased firefighter during a wake call. Awarded to a firefighter who is laid out, weather in full dress uniform or not, or one who was an active member of ECFR.

*Firefighter of the Year Medal*

Awarded annually to the firefighter that has demonstrated the greatest amount of commitment and dedication to the job.

*Officer of the Year Medal*

Awarded annually to the fire officer that has demonstrated the greatest amount of commitment and dedication to the job.

*Life Saving Award*

Presented to members for personal actions taken that directly and significantly contributed to the saving of a human life.

*Company Citation*

Presented to members for unequalled team effort in overcoming unusual difficulties and obstacles in the performance of their duties to affect a successful outcome at an emergency incident

*Civilian Life Saving Award*

Presented to a member of the public who's personal actions directly and significantly contribute to the saving of a human life.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Any member of the department is eligible to nominate any other member for an award. Personnel may nominate others by forwarding a detailed memorandum to the Fire Chief. Based upon the recommendation of the Awards and Recognition Committee, the Fire Chief may approve personnel to receive special recognition for their actions.

All medals, awards, and citations shall be awarded to personnel at the Annual Escambia County Firefighters' Banquet before their peers and family members.

**PLACEMENT AND WEARING OF MEDALS AND CITATION BARS**

Award medals and ribbons are to be worn on the uniform in accordance with SOG 1205.015 Uniform Regulations.

**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1205.015**  
**Uniform Regulations**  
Implemented: 09-25-01  
Revised: 09-03-08  
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***PURPOSE***

All Fire-Rescue personnel are expected to project a professional and uniformed appearance while on-duty and representing the department. Most always, the public considers the appearance and condition of a firefighter's uniform an indication of the department's professionalism, competence, and pride.

***OBJECTIVE***

To provide all personnel with guidelines that define the proper and authorized use of the department uniform, define the different classes of uniform, and define the proper wearing of the uniform.

***SCOPE***

All Personnel

**AUTHORIZED USE**

Uniformed members of the department shall report for duty in the prescribed uniform and remain in uniform while on-duty.

Only uniforms approved by the department shall be worn while on-duty.

Uniforms shall not be worn off-duty except as provided in this guideline.

No part of a uniform shall be worn with non-uniform garments, nor shall non-uniform items be worn with the uniform.

Uniforms shall be kept clean, neat, and in a proper state of repair. Faded, frayed, and worn-out items shall not be worn.

Jacket and shirt pocket flaps shall be buttoned at all times. Pockets shall be free of objects that create bulges or that otherwise detract from a professional appearance.

A member in uniform shall at all times wear a belt. Only department-approved belts may be worn with the uniform.

Shoes and boots shall be kept clean and polished. Only department approved shoes and boots shall be worn by members with emergency response duties.

When wearing long sleeve uniform shirts, the sleeves shall be buttoned at the wrist and shall not be rolled up.

**UNIFORM STANDARDS**

Personnel must set and maintain a high standard of pride in uniform appearance. The image projected by attention to detail, while wearing the uniform, is a key element in the public image of the department.

No articles shall protrude from or be visible on the uniform (i.e. jewelry, combs, large wallets, or similar items) with the exception of writing pens.

If a member wears glasses to correct vision problems, he/she shall wear prescription glasses without eccentric or faddish designs. Personnel are allowed to wear sunglasses when appropriate. The sunglasses shall follow the protocol for prescription glasses.

Uniforms shall be pressed, and at no time be worn with excessive wrinkles.

Uniforms may be tailored to provide a well-fitting, professional bearing. They shall not be altered to the extent of detracting from a uniform appearance, nor shall they be tailored to the point of presenting an excessively tight form fit.

All uniforms shall be kept clean and in good condition. If uniforms are not clean and presentable, officers have the authority and duty to require subordinates to clean, press, or replace unsatisfactory uniform items. Personnel will not be allowed to participate in any formal fire service activity unless they can properly represent the department in accordance with the uniform standard.

Uniforms shall not be worn in establishments where the reputation or moral standard of the organization could be compromised (except while responding on emergency incidents).

Personnel shall not allow any unauthorized individual to wear official uniform items. However, the department may make specialized t-shirts and other clothing available to family members and the public.

In special circumstances, personnel may dress in "street clothes" when representing the department at special events, conferences, or meetings. Always be aware of the clothing you are wearing, the message it sends, the graphic presentation it makes, etc. Pornographic material, beer logos, pictures of drug paraphernalia, nudity, or offensive language shall not be worn at any time while representing the department, on or off-duty.

The Fire Chief may authorize the wear or use of other items not specifically listed in this guideline.

**CLASSES OF UNIFORM**

**Class "A" Uniform (Formal):**

Shall consist of a medium blue long sleeve uniform shirt (white for chief officers) with appropriate patches and designations, designated metal badge, collar devices (officers only), service awards, year awards, black tie, black belt, designated dress coat, (with appropriate striping) designated hat, matching pants or skirt, shined black shoes, and black or navy socks. Class "A" uniforms shall be worn for funerals, formal public events, and other activities designated by the Fire Chief.



**Class "B" Uniform (Working Dress):**

This uniform is also known as the working dress uniform. It shall consist of a French blue uniform shirt (white for chief officers) long or short sleeve, work t-shirt (white for Chiefs), designated metal badge, collar devices (for officers only), name tag, service awards, year awards, black belt, uniform pants, shined black shoes or boots, and black, white, or navy socks. Class "B" uniforms shall be worn during pre-fire planning, prevention/education presentations, and other activities where personnel interact with the public in a non-emergency fashion.

The Class "B" uniform has three styles of pants available. All styles of pants are navy blue in color. These pants are the standard uniform long pants, the optional "BDUs", and the optional uniform short pants. Shorts will not be worn at public presentations. Officers are urged to use discretion when utilizing these uniform styles. Personnel will not wear the short pants as an outer garment on any fire or hazardous materials scene. When responding to such incidents, standard bunker gear will be donned.

**Class "C" Uniform (Working):**

Shall consist of the Fire-Rescue t-shirt (optional polo shirt for staff officers) with appropriate department logo, black belt, uniform pants (long and short), shined black shoes or boots, and black, white, or navy socks. Class "C" uniforms are the normal work uniform for ECFR personnel.

**Jumpsuits and Jackets**

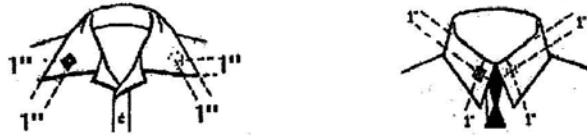
The wearing and use of jackets and jumpsuits (volunteer personnel), with appropriate logos, is permitted. This includes the attachment of patches, certification patches, nametags, etc. Jackets shall be dark blue or navy in color.

**WEARING OF COLLAR DEVICES**

The following collar devices are authorized for use with ECFR uniforms. They are listed by rank and position. No other devices are allowed.

Fire Chief	5 Crossed Gold Bugles
Deputy Fire Chief	4 Crossed Gold Bugles
Assistant Fire Chief	3 Crossed Gold Bugles
Fire Marshal	3 Crossed Gold Bugles
Battalion Chief	2 Crossed Gold Bugles
District Chief	2 Crossed Gold Bugles
Assistant District Chief	2 Parallel Gold Bugles
Captain	2 Parallel Silver Bugles
Lieutenant	1 Silver Bugle

Collar devices shall be worn on the collar points of shirts. Officers wear the rank insignia on both collars. Center the insignia 1" from the front and lower edges of the collar and position the vertical axis of the insignia along an imaginary line bisecting the angle of the collar point. This procedure applies whether the collar is worn open or closed. Refer to the figure below for specific information and orientation.



**SERVICE PINS**

Service pins may be presented to ECFR personnel to thank them for their service and represent the length of time the individual has served with the department. Service pins may be awarded for service in five-year increments (i.e. 5, 10, 15, etc.). Service pins are worn ¼" below the top of the right breast pocket flap on the outside of the flap.

**DRESS UNIFORM STRIPING**

Dress uniforms (Class "A") shall have the appropriate striping sewn on the lower sleeves of the coat. An insignia composed of ½" gold or silver stripes identifies the rank for personnel. The stripes encircle the sleeve with the lower edge of the first stripe 2" from the cuff of the coat. Multiple stripes have ¼" intervals between each stripe.

The stripes shall be worn as follows:

Fire Chief	Wear 5 gold stripes
Deputy Fire Chief	Wear 4 gold stripes
Assistant Fire Chief	Wear 3 gold stripes
Fire Marshal	Wear 3 gold stripes
Battalion Chief	Wear 2 gold stripes
District Chief	Wear 2 gold stripes
Assistant District Chief	Wear 1 gold stripe
Captain	Wear 2 silver stripes
Lieutenant.	Wear 1 silver stripe

**NAMETAGS**

Nametags shall be centered directly above the right breast pocket of the class B shirt.

**WEARING OF HATS**

The ball cap/hat is an optional part of the uniform. Uniform hats are not required except on specific ceremonial occasions specified by senior officers. Personnel can wear their ball caps/hats except during certain religious services, invocations, or burials, etc. Ball caps shall not be worn with the Class "A" or "B" uniform.

#### **WEARING OF DECORATIONS & AWARDS**

Personnel are authorized to wear ribbons and decorations on their uniform. Decorations should only be those awarded by ECFR or other organizations authorized by the Fire Chief.

##### **Ribbons**

Ribbons are worn on the shirt of the Class "B" uniform and on the coat of the Class "A" uniform. Personnel may wear up to three ribbons in a single row. When more than three ribbons have been awarded, wear them in horizontal rows of three each. If ribbons are not in multiples of three, the top row contains the lesser number, and the center of this row sits over the center of the one below it. Wear ribbons without spaces between ribbons or rows of ribbons. Wear ribbons with the lower edge of the bottom row centered directly above the nametag above the right breast pocket. Ribbons shall be arranged in order of precedence in rows from top down, right to left.

##### **Medals**

Medals are worn on the coat of the Class "A" uniform for very formal events. When wearing more than one medal, suspend them from a holding bar that supports the medals' weight and aligns the top edge of the medals.

Medals are worn on the right breast of the dress coat. Multiple rows should be grouped in multiples of three, with the lesser number in the top row if necessary. Medals should be arranged with no overlap. Mount the medals so that they cover the suspension ribbons of the medals below. Arrange medals in order of precedence in rows from top down, right to left.

#### **SPECIAL UNIFORM SITUATIONS**

##### **Maternity Uniforms**

Maternity uniforms are mandatory for all pregnant women in ECFR when a uniform is prescribed, and regular uniforms no longer fit. Personnel are expected to wear regular uniforms as soon as practical upon return from maternity leave.

##### **Retired Personnel**

Retired officers and personnel that are in good standing and are not actively working in the fire service may wear the uniform, insignia, and qualifications corresponding to the rank achieved at the time of retirement.

Retired personnel may wear uniforms at formal ceremonies or official functions when the occasion dictates. Retired personnel are prohibited from wearing the uniform in connection with personal enterprises, business activities, or while attending or participating in any demonstration, assembly or activity for the purpose of furthering personal or partisan views on political, social, economic, or religious issues.

Retired personnel must comply with the grooming and uniform standards contained herein, but uniforms and equipment may either be those prescribed here or those authorized at the time of their retirement.

## **NEW MEMBER SELECTION PROCESS**

The type of work performed by firefighters places them into both dangerous and responsible positions on emergency and non-emergency scenes. Everyday, civilians place their trust, and many times the lives of themselves, their loved ones, and their property in the hands firefighters. Due to the nature of their duties, firefighters often interact with individuals that are at their most vulnerable or they may find themselves alone in someone's home.

Every year, surveys across the world find that firefighters rank at the top of professionals that are most trusted. This is indeed an honor, but an honor that also comes with great responsibility and liability. A comprehensive candidate assessment must be instituted to ensure that individuals wishing to join Escambia County's fire service have a proper background and possess the proper mental and physical attributes necessary to become and remain a firefighter.

For years, in processing for new volunteer fire department members has varied widely from fire station to fire station in Escambia County. However, to standardize the process, and to ensure that a fair and proper assessment process is in place, the following steps have been implemented for suppression firefighters:

1. Electronic application is received. **(Fire Headquarters)**
2. Initial NCIC/FCIC check. **(Fire Headquarters)**
3. Application goes to district for review and interview. **(District)**
4. Recommendation received from district. **(District)**
5. Physical Agility Test **(Fire Headquarters)**
6. Complete background check conducted. **(Fire Headquarters)**
7. Medical Physical Exam scheduled and completed. **(Fire Headquarters)**
8. In processing paperwork completed (emergency contact, equipment issue forms, identification cards, insurance beneficiary, etc.) **(Fire Headquarters)**
9. All personal protective equipment and gear issued through the central warehouse. **(District)**
10. Complete department safety and orientation class. **(Fire Headquarters)**
11. Assign a fire department mentor. **(District)**
12. Enroll member in the next available Firefighter I Course. **(District)**

Non-suppression applicants must complete steps 1,2,3,4,8, and 10.

## **IDENTIFICATION AND REDUCTION OF DUPLICATE/EXCESSIVE RESOURCES**

Escambia County's Fire Service was born out of multiple independent volunteer fire departments. Originally, these departments usually operated autonomously with little interaction and/or sharing of personnel or firefighting resources. Therefore, each department secured assets that were necessary to effectively operate within their own response area and little consideration was given to the idea of regional emergency planning.

However, as small communities within the county continued to grow and eventually abut each other, and as the number of emergency calls continued to increase, more and more consideration was given to mutual aid responses and "backing up" neighboring fire departments. Changes also included improved communication between departments and eventually a formal association was born between all Escambia County departments; the Escambia County Volunteer Firefighters' Association.

Even though cooperation between the volunteer departments continues to increase today, some of the original autonomous methods of providing fire protection can still be seen. Independent ISO districts, single fire stations located within large outdated response boundaries, and redundant resources found among neighboring fire stations are some of the remnants that still remain. This is not intended to be a negative remark regarding the volunteer fire departments within the county, but simply identification of some of the historical fire protection methodology that needs to be changed.

To tackle the issue of duplicated resources among fire stations, the reduction and reclassification of fire apparatus and vehicles was considered to be one of the most significant in reducing operating cost, and fairly easy to address. In identifying vehicles to be retired or reclassified to reserve, it was important not to adversely affect the response capabilities of any of the county's fire stations.

One of the most significant changes is the reduction of fire department staff vehicles. Presently, up to 3 vehicles may be assigned to a single fire station and are usually assigned to a single user. Staff vehicles are passenger vehicles primarily used by volunteer chief officers for response to emergencies, but they are also used for travel to conduct official fire department business.

While the availability of these vehicles can enhance the response capability of senior officers and provide limited transport of emergency equipment, a more efficient use of assigned vehicles is recommended. The sharing of vehicles by volunteer chiefs that are immediately available in their assigned district for response, will most likely reduce the need for 3 vehicles in each station.

However, if the Volunteer District Chief can make adequate justification to the Fire Chief as to why more than 2 vehicles are required, an additional staff vehicle may be allowed to remain.

The following information identifies apparatus and vehicle status changes within the department:

Bellview

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Beulah

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Brent

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Change 1991 E-One pumper to reserve status

Cantonment

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Retire 1986 GMC mini-pumper

Century

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Change 1985 Tele-Squirt to reserve status

Change 1997 Spartan Pumper to reserve status

Ensley

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Ferry Pass

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Change 1988 E-One Pumper to reserve status

Retire 1993 Ford F150 (utility)

Innerarity Point

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Retire 1993 Jeep Cherokee

Transfer 1 waverunner to Pleasant Grove

McDavid

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Molino

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Myrtle Grove

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Pleasant Grove

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Walnut Hill

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Retire 1981 Rescue Truck

Warrington

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Retire 1979 Rescue Truck

West Pensacola

Reduce to 2 staff vehicles

Retire 1997 Ford F250 (utility)

**CENTRALIZED WAREHOUSING**

Implementing a central warehousing program was a recommendation from the original Fire Service Citizens Advisory Committee. The committee recommended to employ an additional warehouse technician so that the warehouse facility could become a “one-stop shop” for all of the department’s logistical requirements; that bar-coding and better tracking of assets be implemented; and that routine internal audits be established.

Escambia County Fire-Rescue consists of approximately 400 personnel, operating a fleet of over 100 response vehicles from 21 facilities. In order to support the mission of the department, a tremendous amount of operating supplies, gear, and equipment must be processed on a daily basis. Standardizing and centralizing the logistics element of the county’s fire service will provide increased efficiency and provide greater accountability for logistical purchases and requests.

In addition, the committee recommended that surplus tools, equipment, and bunker gear from all fire stations be collected, cataloged, and made available for reissue from the central warehouse. This will maximize the use of assets currently available and reduce the immediate need to purchase additional new equipment. Most savings is likely to be realized in the reduced need to purchase new personal protective clothing. Currently, this resource is not being readily shared among fire stations.

The central warehouse program will be located at the department’s current warehouse facility on Pine Forest Road. An additional warehouse technician is

currently being sought, and central warehousing is expected to be implemented by October 1, 2008.

### **CENTRALIZED APPARATUS AND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE**

The fire department operates a large fleet of specialized fire suppression apparatus and support vehicles. In order to ensure that these vehicles are properly maintained and ready to respond to emergencies, a comprehensive vehicle maintenance program must be in place. Over the years, the lack of full-time centralized fleet management has contributed to inconsistency, excessive out-of-service times, and unnecessary costs associated with maintaining the fleet.

The original Fire Services Citizens Advisory Committee made several recommendations concerning fleet maintenance. These included:

- i. The BOCC authorize Fire-Rescue to assume responsibility, management, and oversight of emergency vehicle repairs for cost efficiencies and to expedite repair(s) in order to prevent prolonged downtime.
- ii. The BOCC establish dedicated repair shops for Fire-Rescue emergency vehicles.
- iii. The BOCC hire emergency vehicle mechanics.
- iv. The BOCC establish a mobile preventive maintenance vehicle for on-site services.

Currently, the fire department utilizes 2 main vendors for fleet maintenance; Escambia County Area Transit and the Escambia County Road Department. Each station is allowed to use either vendor. However, their data systems are not meshed and warranty work and other services may go unnoticed or unrecorded by the independent fire stations. This leads to unnecessary expense and unnecessary out-of-service time on primary response vehicles.

To address the need of full-time fleet management, the department is consolidating its fleet management program with EMS. The current EMS fleet manager is very capable and has experience with the many intricacies and details of fire apparatus repair and maintenance. He will have authority for all apparatus and vehicle repairs and maintenance.

Also, an additional fleet mechanic will be hired by Fire-Rescue to assist the fleet manager in maintaining accurate maintenance records and managing the department's apparatus and vehicles. EMS has saved thousands of dollars in




vehicle maintenance since implementing their fleet manager. The fire department expects to experience similar savings.

### **FIRE SERVICE EQUIPMENT TESTING AND SCHEDULING**

The National Fire Protection Association and the Insurance Services Office (ISO) require routine testing of certain fire department equipment. The testing of fire department resources is essential in confirming operational readiness and helping to ensure personnel safety for those that operate the equipment. In addition, the lack of documented testing can adversely affect the ISO rating for fire departments.

Unfortunately, fire stations throughout the county have not been utilizing a standardized testing schedule and some required testing has not been accomplished. Again, this is a result of many years of operating as independent organizations with little countywide standardization. To ensure that required equipment testing is being accomplished, and so that the department is on a standardized schedule that will allow for easier coordination with all county fire stations, the following guideline has been implemented:

<b>ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE</b> <i>Standard Operating Guidelines</i>	<b>1225.030</b> <b>Annual Equipment Testing Schedule</b> Implemented: 06-23-08 Revised: Page 1 of 1	
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**PURPOSE**

The department must ensure that vital equipment, apparatus and resources are in working order and ready for emergency service. In addition, the ISO Grading Schedule requires regular testing and servicing of certain fire service resources.

**OBJECTIVE**

To ensure that all stations and companies are completing standardized annual testing and maintenance of fire hydrants, hose, apparatus pumps, and ladders.

**SCOPE**

All Personnel

**ANNUAL EQUIPMENT TESTING**

All department personnel and companies shall follow the established equipment testing schedule:

- |            |   |                              |
|------------|---|------------------------------|
| NOVEMBER   | - | HYDRANT TESTING              |
| FEBRUARY   | - | HOSE TESTING                 |
| MAY        | - | HYDRANT TESTING              |
| MAY & JUNE | - | APPARATUS PUMP TESTING       |
| AUGUST     | - | AERIAL/GROUND LADDER TESTING |

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND TERMINATION**

To achieve success in a combination fire department, the rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines of the organization must be equally applied to all personnel; volunteer or career. And likewise, disciplinary action and termination must be equally applied to those personnel that fail to abide by those written orders. Creating a fair and impartial disciplinary process for volunteer members is a crucial element in creating a single unified department.

Career firefighters have a defined disciplinary process that is established through the Board of County Commissioners and the Human Resources Division. However, the disciplinary process varies from station to station when dealing with volunteer personnel. Many times, the independent boards of directors for the volunteer fire departments are the final authority in disciplinary actions and appeals.

To establish a standardized and consistent disciplinary process for all department personnel, the following guideline has been implemented:

**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1110.005**

**Progressive Discipline**  
Implemented: 08-01-04  
Revised: 07-07-08  
Page 1 of 5



**PURPOSE**

Personnel that fail to follow established ECFR rules, policies, or guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action.

**OBJECTIVE**

To provide personnel with a policy that outlines the progressive disciplinary actions that will be taken against personnel in the event that disciplinary action is warranted.

**SCOPE**

All Personnel

**PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Disciplinary action will be taken against personnel when a rule, policy, or guideline of the County or ECFR is violated, when work performance is not satisfactory, or when other inappropriate behavior is exhibited. The progressive discipline policy of ECFR shall exhibit promptness, impartiality, consistency, and fairness, where personnel know what to expect as the result of certain behaviors pertaining to their job.

The ECFR progressive discipline policy is designed to prevent future occurrences of the same behavior by personnel. Disciplinary actions taken against personnel are expected to be the least serious needed to prevent future occurrences of inappropriate behavior. However, individuals that continue to exhibit inappropriate behavior or performance can expect further and more serious discipline.

The Escambia County policy on "Discipline" is hereby incorporated into this document by reference, and except where noted, that policy shall be in effect for all personnel.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

The following types of disciplinary actions may be taken against personnel. In order of severity, they are:

**LETTER OF COUSELING** – A Letter of Counseling is the least severe type of disciplinary action and may be used to admonish personnel for committing a minor violation when verbal counseling, correction, and/or guidance has failed to provide the necessary corrective action. A "Notice of Letter of Counseling" shall be completed and provide documentation that the counseling occurred. The Notice of Letter of Counseling shall outline deficiencies and/or violations and offer recommendations for improvement to the violator. A Letter of Counseling shall be forwarded to Headquarters and will be maintained at the department level.

WRITTEN REPRIMAND – A Written Reprimand is admonishment given to personnel in writing, and is always placed in their county personnel file. This form of discipline is more serious than a Letter of Counseling, but less serious than a suspension. A Written Reprimand often serves as the type of discipline given for a repeated offense or minor violations or for the first offense of a more serious violation. A "Notice of Reprimand" shall be completed by the supervisor and forwarded to headquarters. If a Letter of Counseling has been previously issued concerning a like violation, a copy shall be attached as supporting documentation.

SUSPENSION (Volunteer Personnel) – Suspension is a severe form of discipline and involves time off. It is used when a Written Reprimand has not corrected the inappropriate behavior or when an offense is more serious than that warranting a reprimand. A suspension may last from one (1) to thirty (30) days depending on the seriousness of the infraction. Any recommendation for suspension shall utilize a "Notice of Pending Disciplinary Action" and will be forwarded to headquarters.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE (Volunteer Personnel) – If the Fire Chief or Deputy Chief determines that volunteer personnel pose a severe threat to the health or safety of themselves or co-workers, or if it is suspected that an extremely serious violation has occurred, personnel may be placed on Administrative Leave pending an investigation.

SUSPENSION WITHOUT PAY (Career Personnel) – Suspension is a severe form of discipline and involves time off without pay. It is used when a Written Reprimand has not corrected the inappropriate behavior or when an offense is more serious than that warranting a reprimand. A suspension may last from one (1) to thirty (30) days depending on the seriousness of the infraction. Any recommendation for suspension shall utilize a "Notice of Pending Disciplinary Action" and will be forwarded to headquarters.

SUSPENSION WITH PAY (Career Personnel) – If the Fire Chief or Deputy Chief determines that career personnel pose a severe threat to the health or safety of themselves or co-workers, or if it is suspected that an extremely serious violation has occurred, personnel may be suspended with pay pending an investigation.

INVOLUNTARY DEMOTION – Demotion is a severe form of discipline. Personnel may be demoted when recurring disciplinary problems or a serious single incident indicates that personnel are not willing and/or able to conform to the expected standards of the position held. Termination may be sought without consideration of this form of disciplinary action.

TERMINATION – Termination is the most severe form of discipline. It is normally used when personnel have been disciplined repeatedly yet continue to commit violations or infractions. It may also be used when the employee has committed a very serious infraction, regardless of disciplinary history. Recommendations for termination will be submitted to headquarters on a "Notice of Pending Disciplinary Action".

The frequency and severity of infractions committed by personnel will dictate what disciplinary actions will be taken. However, uniformity will be maintained when addressing disciplinary actions with all personnel.

**PERSONNEL RECORDS**

Letters of Counseling and Written Reprimands may be removed from an individual's personnel folder after two (2) years. However, suspensions, demotions, directed reassignments, unsatisfactory performance appraisals, and performance improvement plans are permanent actions and shall be retained in one's personnel file indefinitely.

**APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Letters of Counseling and Written Reprimands cannot be appealed. However, personnel may appeal recommendations for suspension, demotion, or termination.

Personnel shall receive a Notice of Pending Disciplinary Action when the possibility of suspension, demotion, or termination exists. The notice shall contain information detailing the alleged violation and the consequences being considered if the allegation is supported by an investigation.

Personnel shall be afforded five (5) working days to provide a written response to the initiating supervisor, showing cause as to why disciplinary action should not be taken. In order to remain timely, the disciplinary action shall move to each higher level for approval or disapproval within five (5) working days of the signature of the previous authority.

Volunteer Personnel may request that the matter be referred to a Disciplinary Review Board. This board will be comprised of two (2) personnel selected by the member and two (2) personnel selected by Fire Administration. Collectively, they will select a fifth member who shall serve as the Board Chairperson. When this board is convened, they shall objectively hear all of the evidence in the case and make a fair and impartial decision and make a written recommendation to the Fire Chief or his / her designee within 5 working days.

**PUNISHABLE OFFENSES**

All ECFR personnel are expected to thoroughly review and understand all rules, policies, directives, and guidelines that affect him/her in the performance of their duties. Failure to comply will most likely result in personnel being charged with a punishable offense.

Most offenses will fall into one (1) or more of the following categories:

**INCOMPETENCE**

- Inability to perform up to accepted work and/or performance standards
- Habitual tardiness, absenteeism, lack of participation, and/or abuse of leave privileges
- Failure to maintain license, certification, or other credential required for employment

**INSUBORDINATION**

- Violation of county, department, or division rules, directives, orders, or guidelines
- Disregard for or repeated failure to follow the instruction or direction of a supervisor or superior officer
- Disorderly or inappropriate physical or verbal conduct

- Inappropriate use of ECFR identification, including uniforms
- Granting permission to a subordinate to violate any rule, policy, regulation, or guideline, whether explicit or condoned through inaction
- Failure to work overtime, special hours, or special shifts or be on stand-by as directed

NEGLECT OF DUTY

- Causing damage or loss of public, private, or ECFR property or equipment through negligence or misconduct
- Fraud, waste, and/or abuse of county and/or ECFR property or time
- Absence without approved leave
- Leaving assigned workstation or area during regular working hours without permission
- Violating a safety rule or practice or any conduct which affects the safety of others
- Operating an ECFR vehicle or equipment in a wanton disregard for safety, including while under the influence of drugs, legal or illegal, and/or alcohol
- Failure to promptly report any on-the-job accident or injury to the appropriate authority
- Unauthorized release of information or records
- Unauthorized vending or solicitation on county or fire station property
- Failure to maintain assigned duty station until relieved where operations are continuous
- Carelessness that results in an injury, at least \$100 damage, or financial liability to the county
- Failure to report to Fire Chief a subpoena or request for information from a law firm, that relates to county or ECFR operations or business
- Willful neglect in performance of duties

UNETHICAL ACTS

- Falsification or misrepresentation of any document or record completed in the course of duty
- Violation of ECFR policies relating to impartiality, use of public property, conflict of interest, disclosure, or confidentiality
- Conviction of a felony, a misdemeanor conviction involving moral turpitude, or any first-degree misdemeanor
- Unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, or weapons at fire stations or other county property
- Attempting to coerce or influence a member of the public, fellow co-workers, subordinates, or supervisors with services, gifts, loans, or other consideration or receipt of a fee, gift, or item when such is given or accepted in the expectation of receiving a favor or preferential treatment
- Engaging in any employment, activity, or enterprise which is illegal, incompatible, or in technical conflict with one's duties and responsibilities as a county employee
- Theft or unauthorized removal or use of county or ECFR property
- Theft or unauthorized removal, possession, or use of another's personal property, tools, or equipment without consent

- Concerted curtailment or restriction of production or interference with work or operations in or about work stations including, but not limited to, instigating, leading, or participating in any walk-out, sit-down, slow-down, sick-out, demonstration or participation in a strike as defined by Florida Statute
- Violation of ECFR Workplace Environment policies

The offenses listed above are examples only. Officers reserve the right to discipline any proven misconduct and is not limited only to the infractions specified in this policy.



## **STANDARDIZED COMMUNICATION METHODS**

In many organizations, communication is one of areas most often identified by personnel as being deficient. It is critical that all personnel are kept well informed on issues and projects that may affect them. It is also just as important for a communication medium to be available to personnel to correspond with co-workers and supervisors throughout the entire organization. Poor communication promotes vagueness, uncertainty, and causes false information to manifest itself throughout the workplace.

In creating a new combination fire department, a successful communication plan was considered to be essential in transferring massive amounts of information throughout all fire stations and to/from all personnel. It was also determined that available technology should be used as much as possible to simplify information delivery and that communication methods should be standardized so that all personnel are aware of the mediums used to send and receive information.

To ensure that effective communication is maintained throughout the organization, the following initiatives and methods have been implemented:

1. All personnel have a personal e-mail account available through the county or through the department's website; [www.escambiafire.com](http://www.escambiafire.com)
2. As much as possible, the department will utilize e-mail to distribute important department information. This allows personnel to promptly access information from their home or the fire station.
3. A bi-weekly newsletter that addresses many current issues within the department has been implemented and has been very successful.
4. Senior Staff Meeting notes are distributed by e-mail to all personnel, usually on the day of the meeting.
5. Public Safety Bureau Staff Meeting notes are distributed by e-mail to all personnel, usually within 2 days.
6. Each department has a mailbox at Fire Headquarters where printed material is placed for fire station pick-up
7. Bulletin boards are located at each station for important department material to be printed and displayed
8. In October 2008, the Fire Chief will begin holding monthly Operations and In-Service Meetings that are open to all personnel. These meetings will be held in the evenings so that they are more convenient for volunteer personnel.

## **ANNUAL PERSONNEL EVALUATIONS**

Personnel evaluations provide two important pieces of information: what the organization expects from me, and am I meeting those expectations. Personnel evaluations must be written, easy to understand, and provide for measurable and realistic goals and objectives. The combination of job specifications and a valid annual evaluation will clearly establish roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each individual within the county's new combination fire department.

In addition, routine and regular communication between volunteer and career supervisors will be required so that the job performance of assigned personnel may be discussed and shared.

Career personnel are evaluated annually, based upon current Escambia County policy and methodology. However, a standard performance evaluation for volunteer fire personnel has been non-existent in most volunteer departments. To solidify performance expectations of volunteer personnel, the following Annual Personnel Evaluation has been implemented:

## Volunteer Firefighter Evaluation Form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ RANK \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1-Unsatisfactory Requirements	4-Exceeds Normal				
2-Fair (Needs Improvement)	5- Far Above Average	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
3-Meets Normal Requirements					
<i>*Extreme grade "1" and "5" must be explained under the "Comments" section.*</i>					
<b>I. JOB PERFORMANCE</b>					
<b><u>A. Performance on the fire grounds has been</u></b>					
B. Performance of the station duties has been					
C. Performance of drill duties has been					
D. Leadership Skills					
<b>II. JOB KNOWLEDGE</b>					
<b><u>A. Your knowledge of the job is considered</u></b>					
B. Initiative shown in acquiring job knowledge has been					
C. Your application of job knowledge to your work has been					
<b>III. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>					
<b><u>A. Ability to get along with others has been</u></b>					
B. Cooperation with others in accomplishing group assignments					
C. Ability to adapt yourself to "military-type" fire service structure					
<b>IV. PERSONAL TRAITS</b>					
<b><u>A. Station professional conduct</u></b>					
B. Fire ground professional conduct					
C. Your dependability has been					
D. Punctuality in reporting and carrying out assignments					
E. Temper control and emotional stability					
<b>V. GENERAL</b>					
<b><u>A. Ability to learn new materials and methods</u></b>					
B. Ability to follow orders and instructions					

C. Initiative in your work has been					
D. Attitude toward your position and your work load					
E. Your conduct has been					
<b>VI. COMPOSITE EVALUATION</b>					
<b>YOUR OVER-ALL RATING</b>					

**COMMENTS:**

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**DEVELOPMENT / IMPROVEMENT PLAN:**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONNEL COMMENTS:**

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Personnel Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Officer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

District Chief Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **STANDARDIZED RECORD KEEPING**

Records management is a vital element within all aspects of the fire department. Whether reviewing routine operational information or analyzing historical data as part of the organization's strategic planning process, the ability to collect, disseminate, and/or analyze data on a regular basis is most important. Without the availability of up-to-date departmental information, leadership is practically blind in its ability to make sound informed decisions.

Escambia County's new unified fire service must have a standardized method and means for collecting, storing, and retrieving large amounts of information. This information includes, but is not limited to: personnel, training, vehicle maintenance, facility maintenance, budgeting, pre-fire planning, inspections, fire hydrant testing, fire equipment testing, equipment inventory, and emergency responses. In addition, much of this data is required to be readily available to representatives during an ISO inspection. Not having the ability to provide this important information can have a significant negative impact on a community's ISO Fire Protection Rating.

The department has made FireHouse Software available to all fire stations and personnel and shall be its official records management software. The software is web-based and with proper credentials can be accessed from any computer having Internet capability. The software is built specifically for the fire service and is currently being used by many fire departments across the country. In fact, many volunteer departments in Escambia County have been using "stand-alone" versions of the software for many years.

Currently, information is being collected from all fire stations and training is being conducted to ensure successful implementation of this software countywide. It is expected that all fire stations will be on the records management system no later than January 1, 2009. This will tremendously increase the ability of the fire department's leadership to track response trends, training, maintenance tendencies and other important information.

## **FIRE STATION STAFFING**

The characteristics of response districts throughout Escambia County vary. Some of these variances include: call load, water infrastructure, and population density. Each of these elements requires that different approaches to fire suppression be taken by the various county fire stations. This is an aspect of Escambia County that provides challenges for its fire service and requires differing amounts and types of department resources in the various stations.

For example, McDavid may not be dispatched to an emergency call for several days, while Ensley averages almost 8 calls per day. Firefighters on Pensacola

Beach must deal with high-rise fires and water rescues, while Walnut Hill personnel must master the art of shuttling water with tankers to fires. A slow response time by the fire department to a farm home in Molino may mean the total loss of the home, but a slow response time to a residential fire in densely populated West Pensacola may mean the total loss of multiple homes.

The proper staffing of fire stations is probably the most critical element in providing effective fire suppression and rescue services to Escambia County's residents and businesses. The ability to provide an immediate fire department response, with an adequate number of properly trained personnel can dramatically affect the outcome of an emergency incident. However, financial constraints and low call volume districts make it hard to justify continuous staffing by career and/or volunteer personnel in every fire station in the county. Therefore, various staffing plans are currently in effect for fire stations in Escambia County, and most appear adequate at this time.

However, to address the various staffing issues throughout all fire stations, the following guideline is implemented:

**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1205.020**  
**Fire Station Staffing**  
Implemented: 07-29-08  
Revised:  
Page 1 of 2



***PURPOSE***

One of the most crucial issues regarding the response of an organized fire department is its ability to provide a rapid response to emergency incidents. In order to provide for a rapid response, a fire department must ensure that personnel are either staffing a fire station full-time, have adequate personnel that are available for an immediate recall, or a combination of both.

***OBJECTIVE***

Escambia County presents a wide variety of response areas. These areas include environments that represent high-rise, urban, suburban, and rural communities. Due to the varying call load and potential for emergencies within each area, fire stations in Escambia County are staffed in several different methods.

***SCOPE***

All Personnel

**AREAS OF OPERATION**

Escambia County is essentially divided into 4 different neighborhood environments. Those environments include; waterfront (gulf and inland waterways), urban, suburban, and rural. Each area presents its own set of unique challenges for the fire service; including, building design, land use, and available water supply. Also, the population density is directly related to the amount and types of emergencies that ECFR can expect to respond to in certain areas.

Firefighters assigned to urban and suburban areas should expect multiple calls for emergency assistance on a daily basis, while those that are responders in rural areas may go several days without a call. Due to the dramatic difference in call volume, the staffing needs of fire stations also vary.

**FIRE STATION STAFFING**

District Chiefs, or the senior station officer shall be responsible for establishing a volunteer staffing plan that meets the needs of the area served. Those fire stations in the most populated and busy areas should create a plan that provides for continuous staffing. Rural areas, and those areas where emergency calls are less frequent, should have a staffing plan that provides for the immediate recall and response of firefighting personnel.

**CAREER STAFFING**

Fire stations may be staffed full-time or part-time by career personnel. Career staffing is primarily based upon the availability of trained volunteer personnel; call volume, and regional response capability. If a fire station routinely demonstrates that it is not capable of providing a rapid response with adequate numbers of trained personnel, the Fire Chief shall

confer with the District Chief to determine a plan of action to increase staffing levels as needed.

**ANNUAL STAFFING PLAN**

District Chiefs, or the senior station officer shall prepare a written annual staffing plan. This staffing plan shall be submitted along with their annual budget packet to the Fire Chief. The plan shall identify how adequate staffing will be accomplished for their particular station through the upcoming fiscal year, and if any additional staffing needs are anticipated.



## **PROMOTIONAL PROCESS**

Fire departments must ensure that only highly qualified and skilled personnel are promoted to officer ranks within the organization. Minimum qualifications and a comprehensive selection process help ensure that the best candidates are promoted. The fire service tradition of simply promoting the most senior members of the department, or those that have the greatest participation rate is far outdated and dangerous. Only those personnel that demonstrate a keen understanding of emergency incident procedures and sound personnel management skills should be placed into a position to supervise others.

Like training and disciplinary procedures, the promotional process for volunteer and career firefighters must mirror each other as much as possible. Differing promotional processes or minimum qualifications between volunteer and career promotional candidates creates animosity and feelings of disproportionate competence within the same rank.

To help ensure that only the most capable and competent personnel are promoted into positions of leadership and management within the new organization, the following steps will be utilized in all promotions:

### **Promotional Process**

1. Submission of application and proof of required credentials.
2. Successful completion of a written exam that is appropriate for the position sought.
3. Successful completion of one or more practical exercises that are appropriate for the position sought.
4. Successful completion of an oral interview by department personnel that are appropriate for the position sought.
5. All recommendations for initial acceptance into the department or promotion are subject to final approval of the Fire Chief.

## **STANDARDIZED RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

The current radio system utilized by Escambia County's firefighters is obsolete and insufficient for current operations. This creates communication difficulties for fire department units responding to emergency incidents. Also, most fire department frequencies in use in the county are licensed to the independent volunteer fire department corporations, there is inconsistency in the types of radios in use, and there is even more inconsistency in how each radio is programmed to operate.

One of the main concerns with current radio communications is the fact that radio channels are not standardized throughout the county's fire service. For example,

all Warrington radios may have Warrington's fire frequency programmed as channel 2 in their units. However, this frequency may be on channel 2,5,7, 13, etc., depending on which fire station the radio is assigned to. Because of this situation, simply commanding all units to change to channel 2 at the scene of an emergency can prove disastrous. This inconsistency can create confusion and safety issues on the scene of any emergency.

To address this issue, central warehousing will regulate the types of radios purchased and institute methods for standardized programming. Therefore, fire department radio frequencies will be standardized on all radios countywide. This standardization can significantly reduce confusion and communications inconsistencies on the fireground.

### **DEPARTMENT BUDGETING PROCESS**

When creating a fire department budget, the Fire Chief must ensure that adequate funds are made available for the effective operation of the department. However, he must also ensure that funds are not made available for unnecessary capital, inefficient operations, or unnecessary personnel resources. To accomplish this, a thorough analysis of department staffing, operational processes, facilities, and rolling stock must be completed on an annual basis. And, once the proposed budget is complete, the Fire Chief must be able to justify his budget requests before the Board of County Commissioners and the public.

The following guideline has been implemented to address the annual department budgeting process:

**ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE**  
*Standard Operating Guidelines*

**1130.005**  
**Annual Budget Preparation**  
Implemented: 07-08-08  
Revised:  
Page 1 of 2



**PURPOSE**

Any agency that is funded through "taxpayer" dollars must have a well-organized and accountable means of establishing an annual budget for any personnel, operations, and capital expenditures.

**OBJECTIVE**

To establish a process that ensures a responsible and accurate budget is annually submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for the efficient provision of county fire protection.

**SCOPE**

All Personnel

**OVERVIEW**

The fire department must ensure that its annual budget has taken all stakeholders into account and that it reflects the department's commitment to providing the best service possible with the funds that are available. An established, step-by-step, process will make certain that department funds are allocated in a fair manner, and that all expected expenditures can be easily justified.

**ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS**

**JANUARY**

In the month of January, the Fire Chief and senior staff shall visit all fire stations to review and inspect the facility, assigned tools, equipment, and apparatus. During the visit, the ranking officer for the station should be present and prepared to discuss essential repairs, upgrades, or replacement/new equipment that may be needed in the upcoming fiscal year. These visits gives the Fire Chief and staff the opportunity to personally view the condition of each fire station and grounds, assigned apparatus, tools, equipment, and other inventory. All station visits will be complete by the end of the month.

**FEBRUARY**

Beginning in February, Fire Administration shall forward a budget preparation packet to each senior station officer. The officer is responsible for accurately completing the budget packet in its entirety. All completed budget packets shall be returned to Fire Administration no later than the last day of the month.

**MARCH**

During the month of March, the Fire Chief and staff shall meet with each senior station officer to evaluate their submitted budget packet. Budget requests shall be thoroughly reviewed and a "zero-based budgeting" methodology shall be used in justifying and

establishing each station's budget. A draft department budget shall be established by the end of the month and distributed throughout the department for review.

APRIL

During the month of April, the established Fire Service Citizens Advisory Committee (FSCAC) shall review the draft budget as part of their normal quarterly meeting. The Fire Chief and staff shall be responsible for making the department's budget presentation to the FSCAC for approval.

MAY

Usually, the County Administrator will hold budget reviews with all Bureaus and Divisions during the month of May. The Fire Chief and staff shall be responsible for making the department's budget presentation to the Administrator for approval.

JULY

Usually, the Board of County Commissioners holds budget reviews with all Bureaus and Divisions during the month of July. The Fire Chief and staff shall be responsible for making the department's budget presentation to the Board for approval.

SEPTEMBER

During the month of September, the Board of County Commissioners shall hold 2 public hearings to receive input from the public on the proposed budget. Any necessary final adjustments will be made, and final budget approval by the Board

## **ISO RATINGS**

ISO is an independent party that provides, among other things, risk assessment information to insurance companies. For fire protection, ISO utilizes the Public Protection Classification (PPC) Program to assign a rating to a community between 1 and 10; 10 being virtually no fire protection and 1 being the best fire protection coverage. The PPC Program evaluates 3 different elements of local fire protection. These include water supply, communications/dispatch effectiveness, and the operations of the fire department. Home and business property insurance premiums are partially based on PPC Program ratings.

In Escambia County, each volunteer fire department maintains its own ISO rating and current ratings range from 10 to 4. It is possible that the consolidation of multiple ISO areas could provide improvements in ISO ratings throughout the county. However, all data to make a positive analysis is not available at this time.

A recent meeting with a senior ISO representative confirmed the possible need to merge ISO districts in the county. However, ISO inspections revolve mostly around the fire department's ability to provide accurate records and data from fire department operations and water supply information from the previous 3 years. Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier in this report, data management is an area that is in need of much improvement throughout all fire stations.

Therefore, no change in ISO districts will be sought for at least 1 year. This will provide time for the new unified fire service to completely implement the FireHouse Software system and give fire department leaders and ISO representatives the ability to analyze more complete countywide data. The availability of this data will be crucial in determining which direction to take regarding ISO boundaries.

## **MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS**

Most fire departments throughout the country participate in mutual aid agreements. This also rings true for local departments. Mutual aid responses between neighboring fire departments in Florida, Alabama, and local U.S. Navy installations are a common occurrence in Escambia County.

The fire department is currently reviewing all mutual aid agreements between Escambia County resources and other departments. Many of these agreements have been entered into by the local volunteer departments and the county is not party to the agreements. To address this issue, standardized blanket agreements are being researched and prepared for Board of County Commissioners approval. It is expected that multiple mutual aid agreements will be brought before commissioners over the next several months.

## **JOINT RECRUITMENT EFFORT**

The recruitment of volunteer firefighters is a perpetual fire department activity. Keeping sufficient numbers of volunteer personnel within the organization allows the county to keep fire protection assessments at a low rate. When compared to other similar counties in Florida, Escambia County residents pay far less than their fellow Floridians.

Upon unifying all departments, Escambia County Fire-Rescue will rank as one of the largest combination fire departments in the State of Florida. There are many all-career departments throughout the state that cover less area, have fewer responses, and provide less services. This is a testament to the strong volunteer element in our local area and the commitment of the department's volunteer firefighters.

The department will continue its current recruitment effort and program, but a more thorough and updated recruitment brochure is in the process of being created. In addition, the new standardized in processing procedure will simplify the manner in which new volunteer firefighter applicants are addressed.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW OF UNIFICATION PLAN**

It is recognized that the full unification of all county fire services will be a multi-step process. This report documents those elements that are considered to be most critical in the initial phase of bringing Escambia County's fire department resources together as one combination organization. In the out-years, the perfecting and honing of department processes, programs, and policies will be essential in achieving continued success. Therefore, like a strategic plan, it is recommended that all personnel review the unification effort annually for its effectiveness, and any recommended adjustments or changes should be shared with the Board of County Commissioners for approval.