



CITY OF HOUSTON

Annise D. Parker

Mayor

P.O. Box 1562
Houston, Texas 77251-1562

Telephone – Dial 311
www.houstontx.gov

An efficient and effective Houston Fire Department is vital to the health and vitality of the fourth largest city in America. I want to commend the leadership of the Houston Fire Department for their commitment and effort in developing the HFD Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016 – 2018.

With this plan in place, it will be possible for the department to chart its future and address many of the issues raised over the years in a comprehensive and collaborative approach. I want to thank the entire department for the outstanding services it provides our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annise D. Parker".

Annise D. Parker
Mayor



Council Members: Brenda Stardig Jerry Davis Ellen R. Cohen Dwight A. Boykins Dave Martin Richard Nguyen Oliver Pennington Edward Gonzalez
Robert Gallegos Mike Laster Larry V. Green Stephen C. Costello David W. Robinson Michael Kubosh C.O. "Brad" Bradford
Jack Christie

Controller: Ronald C. Green



Table of Contents

Letter from the Fire Chief	2
Mission and Vision Statements.....	4
Slogan and Core Department Values	5
HFD Scope of Service	7
Community Involvement	9
Strategic Planning Flow Chart.....	11
HFD Key Goals	12
FY2016- Fy2018 Strategic Plan Objectives.....	13
Goal 1.0 Be Safe	16
Goal 2.0 Be Nice	35
Goal 3.0 Be Accountable	44
Update Timeline.....	67
Work Group Contributors	68



Letter from the Fire Chief

September 22, 2015

It gives me great pleasure to present the Houston Fire Department FY2016-FY2018 Strategic Plan. Months of effort and input from all commands of the department have resulted in a document that lays a clear path to guide the Houston Fire Department into the future.

Like the FY13-15 Strategic Plan, it is centered on three key goals selected by our members:

1. Be Safe

- *Enhance the health and safety of HFD members*
- *Improve fire prevention and public safety awareness*
- *Improve emergency response operations*

2. Be Nice (Improve Customer Service)

- *Strengthen and reinforce a positive public perception of the department*
- *Embrace Diversity*
- *Fairness*

3. Be Accountable

- *Provide adequate resources*
- *Practice fiscal responsibility*
- *Implement best business practices to increase organizational effectiveness, accountability and communications*
- *Strengthen management and leadership skills*

Within the plan are long-term objectives that will enable the department to reinforce the goals of the Houston Fire Department. The objectives are further supported by critical tasks and measurable performance indicators. Each division has helped create this document and will ensure that the implementation takes place.

It is imperative that we as individuals and as an organization have a clear vision of what we want the Houston Fire Department to look like in the years to come. It is vital to lay out a foundation that will assist us in making these plans materialize. The strategic plan is a living document intended to be used as the foundation for decision making at all organizational levels: policy, administrative, management, and service.



Our plan includes an online tool, accessible from the HFD Desktop, to track the progress and completion of the strategic plan objectives. HFD members will be able to easily access information concerning all parts of the strategic plan and to determine who is assigned a specific task. Combined with regular reviews, the online tool will help ensure a timely follow-through on the implementation of objectives. This communication and transparency will help us report back to the members and the public about what is getting done.

I thank all of our members who helped create this document and hope the Strategic Plan will better inform our members and the public we serve about the challenges we face through our careers and the initiatives that the HFD will undertake to better prepare us for the future.

This strategic plan will allow the Houston Fire Department to safely, effectively, and efficiently progress into the future. After all, it is the vision of the Houston Fire Department to be recognized as a premier public service organization, respected and admired by our peers and the community as the most diverse, innovative and efficient public safety provider in the world.

Be Safe, Be Nice & Be Accountable,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Garrison".

Terry Garrison
Fire Chief



HFD Mission Statement

To save lives, protect property, and serve our community with courage, commitment and compassion.

HFD exists to serve our citizens (the public). Our menu of responsibilities is ever changing, but our basic areas of service are prevention and enforcement, public education, pre-hospital emergency care & transportation, and fire control. Our service has evolved to include hazardous materials, technical rescue, tactical medicine, swift water rescue, and social service calls. We are the “one-stop” shopping that citizens can rely on. When they call we only ask a few questions, respond quickly, solve their problems, and leave just as fast as we arrived. No red tape on either end....no other government agency works in quite the same way.

HFD Vision Statement

HFD will be recognized as a premier public service organization, respected and admired by our peers and the community as the most diverse, innovative, and efficient public safety provider in the world.

Where do we want to go?

To continually evolve to meet our customers’ needs. We cannot stop growing. For instance, there are fire departments that felt they were in place to just run fire calls. They no longer exist and if they do, it is on a very small budget. We have always evolved; emergency medical services, hazardous materials, technical rescue, homeland defense are all services that we now identify as core services.

What do we want to become?

The best we can be for our community. The key is to play to your strengths and play your position.

What do we want to accomplish?

Exceed our customers’ expectations...

How do we want to be seen/perceived?

As professional, knowledgeable, nice and caring... as a part of the Community.

How do we want to be treated by the Community and by each other?

With respect, consideration, understanding, acceptance and care. There is a direct connection between the way we treat each other & our customers and the way we are perceived.

We should understand, practice (train), implement and always ensure appropriate risk management. This is how we operate on EMS calls, fire incidents, driving, and around the station...Always.



HFD Slogan

Courage, Commitment, and Compassion

Courage

The mental and physical ability to face adversity with focus and determination.

Commitment

The act of dedicating one's self, through total effort, to that which is necessary to accomplish the mission.

Compassion

To be understanding, considerate, sympathetic, and kind hearted to others.

HFD Core Values

Safety

The preservation of life remains the number one goal of the HFD beginning with the responder and extending to the public. Our citizens must be reasonably free from danger and harmful acts. With the best equipment and training, the department can reduce the risk to the public and its members at all emergency incidents. We commit to the health, safety, and welfare of our members, thus protecting them and enhancing capability and readiness. We aim to eliminate preventable work-related injuries and illnesses through the systematic management of our risks.

Reliability

Our commitment to the public we serve is unwavering and consistent. This commitment is fully expressed in our motto: "Courage, Commitment, and Compassion".

Teamwork

Teamwork is the basis of our success. We work as a team because we value each other, the community we serve, and our commitment to the HFD mission.

Dedication

The faithful observance of duty beckons us to fulfill our obligations professionally and honestly.

Bravery

Courage is the foundation of our character. Bravery is the ability to overcome fear through fortitude, instinct, compassion for others and training.



Inclusiveness

The Department is committed to equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion. Connecting each firefighter's differences and life experiences to the department is essential in achieving a common goal of delivering the best public service.



HFD Scope of Service

The service provided by the Houston Fire Department has evolved over the years from a heavy emphasis on fighting structure fires to a more prominent role in providing pre-hospital care, large scale disaster preparedness and community outreach. HFD has expanded its role in responding to all types of emergencies, such as hazardous materials incidents, technical rescue events, transportation accidents, utility-related incidents and acts of terrorism. The public demands and expects a courteous and professional response to all types of emergencies and requests for service.

The Houston Fire Department responsibilities include:

Fires – Structural and Non-structural

Traditional structural firefighting, vehicle fires, wild land fires, and rescue related to these events.

Emergency Medical Services

The bulk of the demand for services continues to increase in the area of pre-hospital care provided by the Houston Fire Department. HFD now provides a complete package of Emergency Medical Services, mass casualty management, decontamination, and patient transport.

Terrorist Acts – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives

Issues arising from the recent rise in global terrorism necessitates that HFD personnel have the ability to respond to, and mitigate all acts of terrorism, both domestic and international. The Houston Fire Department has increased its readiness through aggressive planning, training and equipment acquisition. HFD has a liaison working with the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group within the National Counterterrorism Center in Washington, D.C.

Hazardous Materials Response

The City of Houston has long been recognized as the “Chemical Capital of the World.” Consequently, the HFD Hazardous Materials Response Team has become a model for fire services around the world. The department continues to expand the capabilities of the HMRT to meet the ever increasing demand for response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives events.

Technical Rescue

The Technical Rescue Team provides emergency response to incidents such as structural collapse, swift and rapid-rising water, trench rescue, confined space rescue, high angle emergencies, and vehicle extrication.

Transportation Incidents – land, air, water, and rail

The Houston Fire Department responds to emergencies involving all modes of transportation. It maintains and provides the Air Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) capability for both of Houston’s



major airports – Bush Intercontinental and Hobby. HFD also works closely with the Port Authority of Houston and the US Coast Guard to provide response to water related incidents.

Catastrophic Weather Events – hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, floods and heat

Hurricanes, thunderstorms and the associated flooding and tornadoes pose an immediate danger to the citizens of this community. The HFD plays a vital role in protecting life and property from the consequences of weather related emergencies.

Fire Prevention – inspection, education, enforcement, and code development

Traditional fire prevention activities, such as inspection and enforcement continue to play a prominent role in protecting the community from fire related losses – life, property, and environment. A greater emphasis on pro-active code development will be sought.

Fire Investigation – arson, origin/cause, intelligence, prosecution

The HFD Arson Division has a long-standing reputation for its efficiency in fire cause and determination. Working jointly with other police agencies and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to bring arsonists to conviction adds another element of fire prevention. Interaction with other enforcement agencies allows for collective intelligence sharing and enhances safety to our community.

Special Event Planning and Dignitary Protection

Houston is home to past President George H. Bush and more than 46 foreign consulates. HFD provides planning and response to many special events and dignitary visits. With the added threat of terrorism, special event planning and response takes on a whole new dimension and is no longer routine.

Professional Development

Workforce development is designed to enhance the department's overall operations by ensuring complete Fire and EMS training of qualified entry-level personnel. It is also the responsibility of HFD to produce proven leaders through officer development, which brings in the best trainers in the fire service to conduct management and leadership classes. Officer Development provides officers an opportunity to improve their management skills and firefighting tactics through use of a state of the art training simulator and classroom instruction.

Community Outreach and Public Education

The Houston Fire Department's Public Affairs Division is committed to fostering and maintaining a positive, mutually beneficial relationship with our customers, while promoting our fire safety message through effective two-way communication for the safety of those we protect and our members.



Community Involvement

The Houston Fire Department is a service organization. While response to emergency situations is often the first act associated with emergency responders, important elements of the job include safety education and prevention programs. Through these education and prevention programs, HFD members are able to gauge the needs of the community and respond. Every interaction with the public we serve presents an opportunity to listen and provide appropriate aid or information. Many times, HFD is the first agency to coordinate assistance after a crisis has occurred, especially in Houston's underserved communities. Through the following interactions, HFD is able to assess the need of Houston's citizens and develop plans, both long and short term to address them.

The Houston Fire Department community involvement includes:

Municipal Partnerships

- Attendance by HFD's City Council liaison at weekly Houston City Council meetings
 - City Council members present concerns from their constituents. Members of the public have the opportunity to raise concerns during weekly public comment sessions.
- City Council Public Safety Sub-Committee meetings
 - HFD presents approximately three times per year to address operational changes and events, and address any concerns from committee members.
- Mayor's Public Safety Advisory Committee
 - HFD will address public safety concerns brought to the Mayor by citizens
- Multi-jurisdictional drills are an opportunity to reach out and receive input from other agencies. Drills include: active shooter (partner with U of H, Metro and FBI and Channel Industries Mutual Aid (CIMA))

Community Based Services

- Get Alarmed Houston-HFD members install smoke detectors for Houston's underserved communities.
 - Often when in someone's home to install the detector, other needs are identified and HFD members act or coordinate a response.
- Community visits to: Senior living centers, neighborhood meetings, community (multi-service) centers, Health Fairs
 - HFD provides information and assess needs of the organizations or their members.
- Safe School Safe Congregation Program
 - It is an outlet where community members can present concerns to HFD and members will address and/or mitigate concerns.
- Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) input
 - Community-based businesses set aside funds for community improvement. HFD has input on needs and use of funding (newly built Fire Station 84)



- Super Neighborhood Organizations- smaller neighborhoods come together to have a voice in community concerns
 - Neighborhood representatives bring needs to forums and meetings. HFD will address issues related to HFD, if another department is needed, and then HFD refers and follows-up.
- Houston Police Department's Positive Interaction Program (PIP) with area civic and neighborhood associations
 - HFD District Chiefs participates when requested to address timely critical incidents concerning HFD.
- HFD District Chiefs attend Houston area Civic meeting in October to give safety presentations, hear concerns from the community.

Coordination of Prevention and Community Partnerships

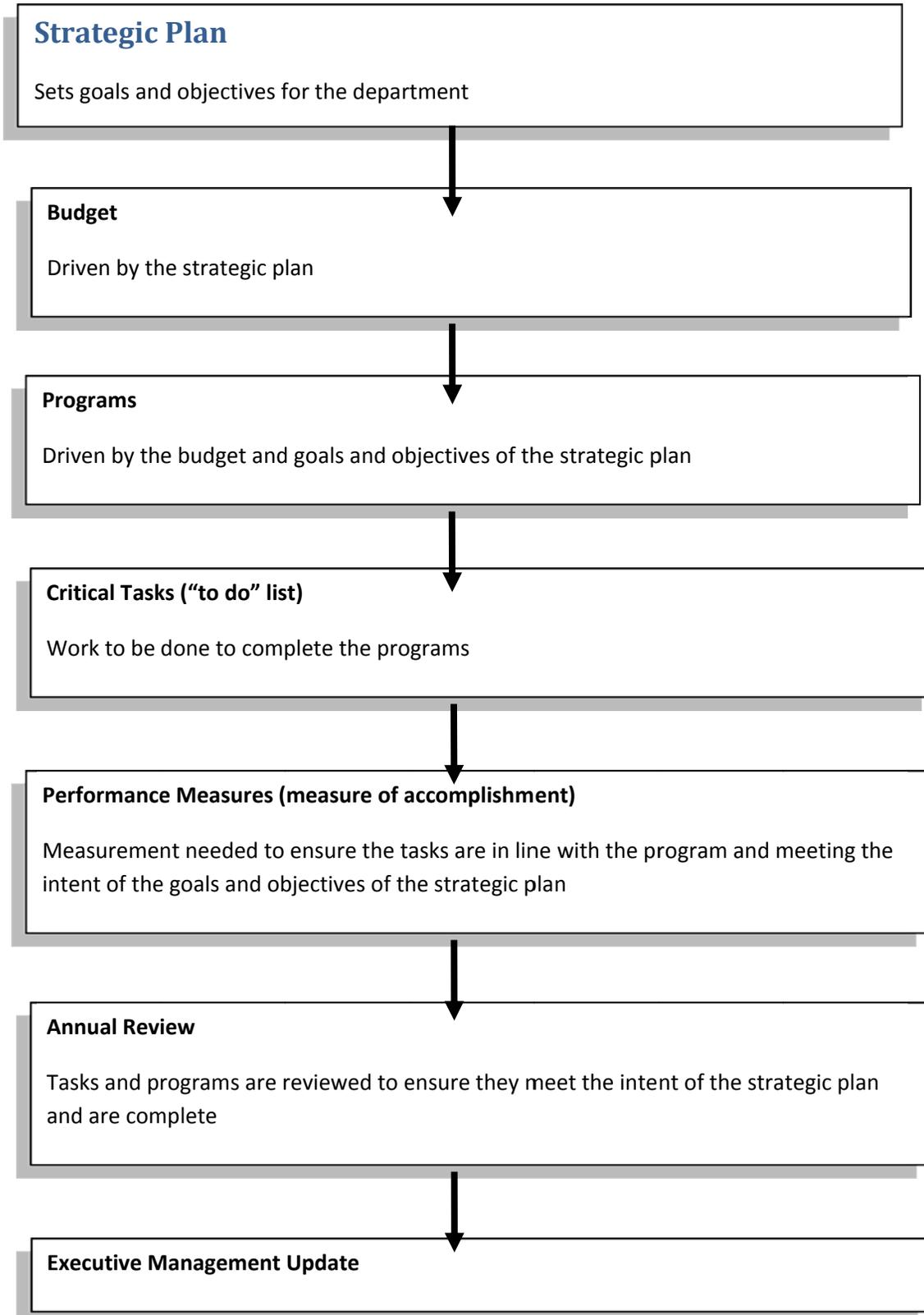
- Gatekeepers Programs- provides anonymous home services to wheelchair bound seniors.
 - HFD makes referrals after wheelchair bound citizens in homes with no ramps for fire self- evacuation.
- Care Van Immunization Program at fire stations-
 - Hosts immunization for kids 0-18 yrs. old
- After the Fire Program- HFD connects people with help
 - Coordinate relocation, replacement of items and temporary housing for citizens after fire loss.
- Partner with Community- Based Organizations for Disaster Preparedness
 - Southern Baptist Ministers Association
 - Assist private sector risk management consultant

Communication

- Positive interactions through social media and email
 - HFD will mitigate and follow-up when concerns are directed to HFD.
- Civic Safety Chain- HFD quarterly electronic newsletter with fire safety info.
 - It is sent to 210 HOA's, churches, businesses, then is redistributed to their members. Fire Safety info, stats, and upcoming events. Concerns are sent to editor, and they are addressed in next newsletter.
- Vietnamese Community of Greater Houston
 - HFD liaison meets weekly to address needs and/or concerns from Houston's Asian community.
 - HFD liaison also hosts weekly TV show on VANTV in a "Meet the Press" format, where questions and concerns related to HFD functions are called in by the public.
- Annual Univision Tele-thon with all City of Houston Departments
 - 3 HFD representatives speak directly with citizens and answer questions and address concerns or redirect and follow-up if concerns are outside of HFD.



Strategic Planning Flow Chart





HFD Key Goals

The Houston Fire Department has identified three key goal areas. The Strategic Plan includes specific objectives for achieving each of the stated goals. It is the intent to have all personnel, collectively and individually contribute to the accomplishment of these goals. Collectively, with a clear vision, we can improve and enhance the service we provide to both our members and the public we have sworn to protect.

Goal 1.0 Be Safe

- Enhance the health and safety of HFD members
- Improve fire prevention and public safety awareness
- Improve emergency response operations

Goal 2.0 Be Nice (improve customer service)

- Strengthen and reinforce a positive public perception of the department
- Embrace Diversity
- Fairness

Goal 3.0 Be Accountable

- Providing adequate resources
- Practice fiscal responsibility
- Implement best business practices to increase organizational effectiveness, and communications
- Strengthen management and leadership skills



FY2016-FY2018 Strategic Plan Objectives

Goal 1.0 Be Safe

- 1.01 Maintain optimal level of Paramedic staffing as set forth by Medical Director and Fire Chief.
- 1.02 HFD will increase hiring of classified personnel in order to ensure adequate resources are provided to meet minimum staffing requirements per the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- 1.03 Expand graphic identification system (GIS) tracking of Public Affairs Division's community safety education events.
- 1.04 Continue implementation of high-rise sprinkler ordinance requirements.
- 1.05 Continue the development of the HFD Firefighter Support Network.
- 1.06 Collaborate with Labor for the development of a department wide wellness program to promote physical and mental health, in compliance with NFPA 1582.
- 1.07 Implement new grant funded training initiatives: Incident Command Blue Card, Shipboard firefighter training, Fire Ground Survival (FGS).
- 1.08 Develop an enhanced firefighter safety program through coordination of existing risk management analytical data, near-miss reporting, and after action matrix.
- 1.09 Expand EMS Emergency Tele Health and Navigation (ETHAN) program.
- 1.10 Explore opportunities to increase staffing in OEC to accommodate changes in radio procedures.
- 1.11 HFD will develop an Emergency Evacuation Procedure for the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) to relocate from the Houston Emergency Center (HEC) to the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Tom Bass Building.
- 1.12 Maintain federal clearance level for integration into Homeland Security enterprise.
- 1.13 Prepare for emergency response to large scale public events (Super Bowl 51 in 2017; Final Four 2016).
- 1.14 Develop community safety education handbook for community safety educators and distribution to fire stations for reference.

Goal 2.0 Be Nice

- 2.01 Continue the design, development, and implementation of programs, policies and strategies that establish and support diversity and foster inclusion within the Department.
- 2.02 Expand recently developed CASEY Fire Ops program.



- 2.03 Partner with agencies in targeted communities to increase awareness of the fire service.
- 2.04 Implement a comprehensive quality assurance program for accuracy of dispatch protocols and overall patient care.
- 2.05 Explore opportunities to increase support staff for all HFD Commands by incorporating classified members into HFD support positions or increasing non-classified personnel where appropriate.
- 2.06 Create a website for the Life Safety Bureau that will provide the public with a web-based tool for permit requirements, pre-inspection reports, to request inspections, and answer frequently asked questions, and on-line resources.

Goal 3.0 Be Accountable

- 3.01 Maintain and enhance skills-based continuing education for EMTs and Paramedics as set forth by Medical Director.
- 3.02 Implement a new inspection system for LSB called 360 Degree Inspection Program, to realign the Life Safety Bureau's management team and inspectors to maximize inspections, provide accountability and better serve the citizens of Houston.
- 3.03 Reevaluate and improve apparatus replacement schedule to reflect ten years of service for front line emergency vehicles.
- 3.04 Maintain appropriate replacement schedule for PPE.
- 3.05 Replace or enhance medical equipment (cardiac monitors, AED's, modify stretchers for automatic loading)
- 3.06 Ensure HFD facilities meet the needs of the department's operational objectives.
- 3.07 Enhance HFD training schedule to include all departmental, local, state, and federally mandated training.
- 3.08 Renovate and expand the Val Jahnke Training Facility (VJTF).
- 3.09 Maintain Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC) 1 rating.
- 3.10 Maintain CFAI Accreditation for HFD and achieve Re-accreditation in 2016. Maintain accredited status through 2022.
- 3.11 Evaluate data/records management systems and create a process to identify compliance and performance enhancement needs of the department in a timely manner.
- 3.12 Enhance officer development through improved leadership training at all levels to included recommendations in NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications.



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- 3.13 Partner with COH Permitting Center to develop a bar coding system for all COH fire permits.
 - 3.14 Enhance non-emergency vehicle replacement schedules to six years or 150,000 miles of service.
 - 3.15 Certify three Arson members as Certified Fire Investigators (CFIs) by an international professional association of investigators.
 - 3.16 Ensure 50% of Classified Arson staff is state certified as Intermediate Peace Officers or above.
 - 3.17 Amend and maintain MOU's at the state and local levels (i.e. State Fire Marshal's office, HPD).



Goal 1.0 Be Safe

- **Enhance the health and safety of HFD members**

The preservation of life continues to be the highest priority among fire service providers. The Houston Fire Department recognizes that our ability to protect human lives is greatly impacted by the health and safety of our personnel and their ability to provide adequate services. The Department's highest goal is to provide a safe and healthy work environment for its members. The NFPA's "Patterns of Firefighter Fireground Injuries" Report by Michael J. Karter, Jr., issued in December 2013, states that for 2007-2011, there was an estimated annual average of 34,065 firefighter fireground injuries in the U.S. Of these, an average of 23,885 (70%) were minor, and 10,180 (30%) were moderate or severe. The leading types of moderate and severe injuries were: strains or sprain accounting for an annual average of 6,200 injuries a year, or 26%; pain only, accounting for 3,095 injuries (13%); and thermal burn, accounting for 2,625 injuries (11%); Activities related to extinguishing a fire accounted for half of the moderate and severe injuries (5,255 or 52%). The leading causes of moderate and severe injuries were strains or sprains (3,420 or 34%). The 2014 NFPA Firefighter Fatalities in the U.S. report indicated 56% of the firefighter fatalities were attributed to sudden cardiac death. These are clear indications that mandate a pro-active approach to firefighter fitness and safety. The department seeks to instill and model a common philosophy that promotes firefighter safety and health...

- **Improve fire prevention and public safety awareness**

The absolute best method of reducing fire fatalities and property loss is through fire prevention and public education initiatives. Public fire safety education serves to extend fire prevention and life safety intervention through education by providing educational programs for schools, businesses and civic associations.

Aggressive development and enforcement of the fire codes and ordinances thorough fire investigative techniques will greatly reduce the number of accidental fire incidents. Fire and life safety inspections are required by law as a necessary and integral part of fire code enforcement within our business communities. The public expects enforcement of the fire codes to provide a safe environment in which to live their lives. Likewise, property must be protected from individuals that commit arson and the associated death, property loss, and fraud produced by this crime.

- **Improve emergency response operations**

The core mission of the Houston Fire Department is to provide superior emergency services to the citizens of Houston. Often, the first interaction between the public and the Houston Fire Department occurs during a time of personal tragedy for the requestor. The public sector expects and should receive timely, efficient, and superior professional services from our employees. All opportunities to enhance and improve the services we provide should be explored and implemented. The introduction of new technologies coupled with aggressive training and comprehensive professional development of our employees will allow the Houston Fire Department to achieve this goal.



Objective 1.01

Maintain optimal level of Paramedic staffing as set forth by Medical Director and Fire Chief.

Priority: 1

Timeline: July 2016- June 2018

Responsibility: Medical Director Dr. David Persse, Assistant Chief David Almaguer, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Secure continued funding for Paramedic initial training program.
2. Identify and secure a nationally accredited Paramedic training institution.
3. Create the application and requirements for eligibility for Paramedic School.
4. Create a Paramedic School schedule that coincides with the needs of HFD daily staffing.
5. Increase paramedic rotation stations as set forth by Medical Director.

Performance Indicators:

1. Funding has been secured.
2. Fill each Paramedic Training Class with the appropriate amount of personnel.
3. Nationally accredited Paramedic training institution must have a minimum success rate of 80% Paramedics nationally registered, in the initial class.

Expected Outcome:

Maintain a sufficient amount of nationally registered firefighter paramedics and EMTs to meet the needs of HFD daily staffing.



Objective 1.02

HFD will increase hiring of classified personnel in order to ensure adequate resources are provided to meet minimum staffing requirements per the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Priority: 1

Timeline: March 2015 - July 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Lisa Campbell, Admin. /Support; Assistant Chief Jeff Cook, Assistant Chief David Almaguer, Assistant Chief Kevin Alexander, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Prepare annual budget that ensures identification of funding in each fiscal year for personnel, VJTF staffing, operational costs, and facilities.
2. Determine class criteria (i.e. Trainee, Paramedic, EMT, Firefighter/Paramedic, and Firefighter/EMT).
3. Liaison with Central HR to recruit qualified candidates that represent the demographics of the City of Houston.
4. Ensure contract in place for outside third party EMT training.
5. Ensure adequate staffing at the training academy.
6. Train cadets to meet Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) and Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) standards and pass required certification exams.
7. Maintain and remodel facilities at the training academy.
8. Prepare grant application for at least one cadet class each fiscal year.

Performance Indicators:

1. Budget funded for FY17.
2. Budget funded for FY18.
3. Training calendar prepared for FY17.
4. Training calendar prepared for FY18.
5. Graduate a minimum of 100 Firefighters in excess of attrition rate for FY16.
6. Graduate a minimum of 100 Firefighters in excess of attrition rate for FY17.
7. Graduate a minimum of 100 Firefighters in excess of attrition rate for FY18.



Expected Outcome:

Adequate staffing resources will be available to meet minimum staffing requirements per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which will help in reallocating funds to other needed areas.



Objective 1.03

Expand graphic identification system (GIS) tracking of Public Affairs Division's community safety education events.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2016 - January 2017

Responsibility: Senior Captain Ruy Lozano, Fire Chief's Office, Public Affairs Division

Critical Tasks:

1. Incorporate community education tracking form into existing City Point GIS database.
2. Designate staff to manage data entry.
3. Establish benchmark performance and review program goals as needed.
4. Match community events to HFD risk assessment.
5. Target at risk areas for educational events.

Performance Indicators:

1. Community education tracking form is loaded to City Point GIS.
2. Mapping allows for layering of at risk communities, smoke detector installs and community safety education events.
3. Monthly reports are generated for review.

Expected Outcome:

By following these steps, HFD will be able to better track where community safety education events have an impact. Mapping areas will enhance the department's ability to determine the areas in need of smoke detectors and community safety education, plus potentially decrease fire fatalities in that area by giving Public Affairs a way to focus education and prevention efforts.



Objective 1.04

Continue implementation of high-rise sprinkler ordinance requirements.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2015- December 2017

Responsibility: Chief Inspector George Meadows, Prevention/Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify existing high-rise buildings that must comply with Appendix J, Automatic Sprinkler Systems in Existing High-Rise Buildings.
2. Notify and monitor building managers for compliance quarterly.
3. Create and obtain Letter of Compliance to identify high-rise buildings that are 100% compliant.
4. Determine if additional resources are required to achieve objective of compliance with Appendix J, Automatic Sprinkler Systems in Existing High-Rise Buildings. If additional resources are required, determine additional personnel hours to achieve objective.
5. Enhance electronic database to include compliance schedule due dates.
6. Issue notices of non-compliance and consult with COH Legal Department to determine course of action.
7. Monitor Inspection and Activity Reports to determine the percentage of high-rise buildings in compliance.
8. Evaluate and adjust available resources to evenly distribute inspection workload to ensure adherence to the Compliance Schedule.

Performance Indicators:

1. Database is enhanced to include compliance schedule due dates.
2. By December 31, 2017, the total square footage of buildings will be equipped with an operational automatic sprinkler system and verified by Sprinkler Ordinance Notice issued by Inspector.

Expected Outcome:

By achieving a minimum level of Fire Code compliance through comprehensive Fire and Life Safety inspections, all city employees and residents of high-rise buildings will have a safer work environment and customers will be ensured a safer place to visit and conduct city business.



Objective 1.05

Continue the development of the HFD Firefighter Support Network.

Priority: 1

Timeline: May 2015 - May 2018

Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Rodney West, Dr. Sam Buser, Dr. Jana Tran, Captain Laura Hunter, Admin. /Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Enhance member support through the development of resiliency programs, including:
 - a. Behavioral Health
 - b. Relationship Health
 - c. Financial Health
 - d. Substance Abuse Prevention
 - e. Suicide Prevention
 - f. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
2. Develop a psychology training program, including Practicum Students, Predoctoral Interns, and Postdoctoral Fellows, who provide psychology services to firefighters under the clinical supervision of the Staff Psychologists.
3. Develop an ongoing psychology research program focusing on the mental health needs of firefighters.
4. Coordinate activities and services of the Member Advocate, Staff Psychologists, CISM Team, Chaplain, and Family Services Coordinator under the aegis of the Firefighter Support Network chaired by the Senior Staff Psychologist.
5. Conduct quarterly meetings of the Firefighter Support Network elements to ensure adequate coordination and communication.
6. Provide ombudsman services to members (e.g. assistance with insurance issues, worker's comp, and referral to resources) through the office of the Member Advocate.
7. Produce a monthly bulletin on mental health issues (Shrink Rap) to promote awareness and educate members on common mental health challenges.

Performance Indicators:

1. At least one resiliency program will be implemented or conducted each year of this Strategic Plan.



2. Psychological services are provided to firefighters by Practicum Students, Predoctoral Interns, and Postdoctoral Fellows (funding for Interns and Fellows are established).
3. Research findings will be available within the Department and published in professional journals or publications.
4. Minutes will be maintained of quarterly Firefighter Support Network meetings.
5. Statistics will be maintained by the Member Advocate of the various kinds of services requested.
6. At least 10 "Shrink Rap" bulletins on mental health issues will be produced each year.

Expected Outcome:

Members will be able to access resources and services that promote mental health and wellness more efficiently. Resiliency programs will be available to prevent or ameliorate common mental health challenges faced by our members. Research in the Department will enable us to tailor our support services so as to better meet the needs of our members. Members will gain an increased understanding of mental health concerns and how they can be addressed.



Objective 1.06

Collaborate with Labor for the development of a department wide wellness program to promote physical and mental health, in compliance with NFPA 1582.

Priority: 1

Timeline: July 2016 - July 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Kevin Alexander, Emergency Response; Executive Assistant Chief Rodney West, Captain Laura Hunter, Dr. Sam Buser, Dr. Jana Tran, Admin. /Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Create a Wellness Division including position(s) for a Health and Safety Chief and/or wellness coordinator for continued planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of a wellness program for HFD and support staff.
2. Participate in National Health Study to provide department data for implementation of awareness/prevention programs.
3. Conduct independent research to determine mental health needs of the department.
4. Research and development of a fitness program in accordance with the IAFF Wellness Fitness initiative.
5. Continue to provide holistic wellness education and resources to members (mental health, physical health, heart health, nutrition, etc.) based on membership data in the 2014 health assessment sponsored by CIGNA and mental health needs research.
6. Identify a funding source for maintenance and/or replacement of fitness equipment at all HFD work locations, and additional needs of the division.
7. Obtain funding for member's physicals in accordance with NFPA 1582.
8. Introduce enhanced fitness and rehabilitation programs to HFD.
9. Track participants and progression towards health management goals.

Performance Indicators:

1. Hire Wellness Coordinator by Fiscal Year 2017.
2. Awareness and prevention programs based on National Health Study and independent research are established.
3. Wellness focus for HFD program is determined (see Critical Task #5).
4. Budget for Wellness Division is established.



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5. Injury and Illness baseline statistics are established prior to enhancements of the program.
 6. Fitness program is implemented and progress of participants is tracked.
 7. Rehabilitation program is implemented and progress of participants is tracked

Expected Outcome:

Members experience fewer injuries and illnesses because more accurate data is being used to make key decisions and develop a need- based mental and physical wellness program. Public safety is enhanced by keeping firefighters on the job and utilizing limited resources efficiently.



Objective 1.07

Implement new grant funded training initiatives: Incident Command Blue Card, Shipboard firefighter training, Fire Ground Survival (FGS).

Priority: 1

Timeline: July 2015 – August 2019

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Kevin Alexander, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Begin FGS training in October 2015 for Emergency Response and Communications (OEC) personnel.
2. Load grant budget for Blue Card training and Shipboard firefighter training into COH SAP.
3. Build shipboard firefighting training prop.
4. Develop Shipboard firefighter training curriculum.
5. Develop training calendar for Blue Card training and Shipboard firefighter training.
6. Begin Blue Card instructor training in January 2016.
7. Begin Blue Card training for Emergency Response personnel in April 2016.
8. Begin Shipboard firefighter instructor training in September 2017.
9. Begin Shipboard firefighter training for Emergency Response personnel in January 2018.
10. Manage and maintain documentation to support grant requirements.

Performance Indicators:

11. FGS complete by August 2016.
12. Blue Card instructor training completed by April 2016.
13. Blue Card Emergency Response complete by April October 2017.
14. Shipboard firefighter instructor training complete by January 2018.
15. Shipboard firefighter training for emergency responders by August 2019.
16. All members are knowledgeable of standardized reporting (i.e., size-up reports, progress reports, exception reports, etc.) and tactical operations (i.e., mobile vs. stationary command post, vertical vs. positive ventilation, etc.).
17. An effective incident management organization is developed and utilized in the Command Post by the early implementation of Operations, Planning, and Logistics Sections which would also include enhancing the role of the Incident Command Technicians and more effective staging and rehab.



Expected Outcome:

Public and firefighter safety is increased through firefighter education and training. Incident Commanders, emergency responders, and those providing support functions are operating within a more organized environment. Public safety service delivery is enhanced due to improvements in organization, resource tracking, situational awareness, communications, Staging, Rehab, and the fundamental use of Incident Command Technicians.



Objective 1.08

Develop an enhanced firefighter safety program through coordination of existing risk management analytical data, near-miss reporting, and after action matrix.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015 – July 2017

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Jeff Cook, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify and coordinate existing data tracking.
2. Identify gaps in risk management reporting system.
3. Research methods to consolidate data reporting and establish point of contact for data management.
4. Develop a standardized near miss reporting system.
5. Develop plans for training and dissemination of information.

Performance Indicators:

1. Identified any gaps in risk management reporting.
2. Point of Contact is established.
3. Near miss reporting form is available on the HFD Desktop.
4. Data made available to members and specific training is implemented based on findings.

Expected Outcome:

Fire fighter safety is enhanced through increased awareness of injury patterns, trends and near misses.



Objective 1.09

Expand EMS Emergency Tele Health and Navigation (ETHAN) program.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2016- June 2018

Responsibility: Medical Director Dr. David Persse; Assistant Chief David Almaguer, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Secure continued funding for ETHAN
2. Expand target population to include patient refusals, psychiatric patients and stroke patients
3. Expand interoperability with psychologist and neurologist.
4. Develop methodology to accurately measure performance

Performance Indicators:

1. Permanent funding is established for the ETHAN program.
2. Target population includes patient refusals
3. Target population includes psychiatric patients
4. Target population includes stroke patients
5. Developed accurate performance measures

Expected Outcome:

Permanent funding is established for ETHAN program with broadened scope of practice.



Objective 1.10

Explore opportunities to increase staffing in OEC to accommodate changes in radio procedures.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015 – June 2018

**Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Rodney, Communications
Deputy Chief John Syzdek, Admin. /Support**

Critical Tasks:

1. Acquire funding for new Communication Captain positions.
2. Create at least three Communications Captains per shift to accommodate increased call volume, monitored radio talk groups, and anticipated attrition of Customer Service Operators (CSO).
3. Train newly promoted Communication Captains.

Performance Indicators:

1. Funding for new positions is approved.
2. New positions are created and personnel are in place.
3. Communication Captains are trained.

Expected Outcome:

HFD OEC will have adequate staffing to accommodate multiple alarms dispatch procedures. Increased staffing will allow OEC to maintain firefighter safety as call volume increases and additional talk groups are needed.



Objective 1.11

HFD will develop an Emergency Evacuation Procedure for the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) to relocate from the Houston Emergency Center (HEC) to the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Tom Bass Building.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2014 – June 2018

Responsibility: Deputy Communications Chief John Syzdek, Admin. / Support Command

Critical Tasks:

1. Develop emergency evacuation procedure for OEC.
2. Identify minimum functionality to operate the OEC at a different location.
3. Partner with relevant outside agencies (including HPD, HEC, HEC IT, GHC911)
4. Obtain overtime funding for test exercise.
5. Develop exercise to test and evaluate the evacuation procedure and Tom Bass Building capabilities.
6. Identify any issues with the current Tom Bass Building configuration and propose potential solutions.
7. Emergency Evacuation Procedure is in place.
8. Perform post-event analysis report (after action report).

Performance Indicators:

1. Develop a preliminary procedure for OEC to follow for an emergency evacuation.
2. Functionality elements have been identified.
3. Funding has been acquired for overtime.
4. Test the transition of operations to the Tom Bass building.
5. Post event analysis is complete.
6. Emergency Evacuation Procedure is adopted.

Expected Outcome:

Ensure public and firefighter safety by having a back-up plan in place to continue dispatch operations at an alternate location.



Objective 1.12

Maintain federal clearance level for integration into Homeland Security enterprise.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015 – June 2018

Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Cynthia Vargas, Prevention/
Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Establish partnerships with federal agencies.
2. Establish MOU with federal agencies.
3. Select personnel to serve as liaisons.
4. Submit personnel for screening through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Performance Indicators:

1. MOU published and signed.
2. Clearance certificate from DHS received.
3. Annual background check submitted to appropriate federal agencies.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will increase integration into the intelligence community and access to real-time analytics and protected information in order to increase situational awareness for firefighters, which will ultimately increase public and personnel safety. Arson Bureau will have become consumers and producers of national intelligence products through increased access subject matter experts, research/development, and related resources.



Objective 1.13

Prepare for emergency response to large scale public events (Super Bowl 51 in 2017; Final Four 2016).

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015 – February 2017

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Jeff Cook, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Attend sports and special event management training in fall 2016.
2. Identify internal special event planning team and field operations team.
3. Develop appropriate Organizational chart for special events.
4. Identify HFD special events response personnel and equipment needs.
5. Identify funding to support additional needs.
6. Participate in multi-agency joint special events planning events and tabletop exercises.
7. Conduct post-event analysis (lessons learned).

Performance Indicators:

1. Management training is complete.
2. Organizational chart is submitted for approval.
3. Funding is acquired for additional personnel and equipment.
4. Publish post-event analysis report (after action report).

Expected Outcome:

HFD will have enhanced special event planning and operations for large scale events, resulting in increased public safety.



Objective 1.14

Develop community safety education handbook for community safety educators and distribution to fire stations for reference.

Priority: 2

Timeline: January 2016 - March 2018

Responsibility: Senior Captain Ruy Lozano, Fire Chief's Office, Public Information Division

Critical Tasks:

1. Develop age specific education training materials.
2. Distribute to Public Affairs staff for use in pilot program.
3. Revise and incorporate input from staff.
4. Publish handbook and distribute to all community safety educators.
5. Distribute handbook to all fire stations for reference.

Performance Indicators:

1. Training materials are complete
2. Community safety presentations are streamlined and consistent.
3. Handbook is distributed to all fire stations.
4. Revise annually incorporating feedback from community safety educators and rank and file personnel.

Expected Outcome:

Streamline and standardize HFD community safety education to ensure a common message is delivered by all educators.



Goal 2.0 Be Nice (Improve Customer Service)

- **Strengthen and reinforce a positive public perception of the department**

Perception is everything. If our members and external customers perceive that HFD is well managed and provides superior services, then that is true. An opposite perception of poor management and substandard service is also true. Perceptions are the precursors to attitudes. The Houston Fire Department must have a plan to develop positive perceptions from our members and the people we serve. HFD must pay special attention to our relationship with the media. The media can solidify our standing in the community or destroy the confidence of citizens in the department. There must be a comprehensive plan to maximize positive publicity and reduce negative stories. The primary means of accomplishing this goal is through service excellence. The department must pursue opportunities to showcase the achievements of the department to our members and the public. This not only provides morale enhancements, but it also details the value of an effective fire department pursuing excellence in public safety. The public will support a public sector agency if they believe that superior service is being provided with their tax contributions.

- **Embrace Diversity**

- **Fairness**

The management and members of the Houston Fire Department are keenly aware of the importance of creating a winning, balanced workplace in which people of all cultures and backgrounds have an opportunity to succeed. We recognize that diversity creates many opportunities and benefits, because it includes all ethnicities, cultures, genders, religious beliefs, lifestyles, and physical challenges. The Houston Fire Department will continue to work toward encouraging all members to embrace and accept the differences within the department, as well as those within the community we serve, through training and allocating appropriate funding for accomplishing our diversity and inclusion goals.



Objective 2.01

Continue the design, development, and implementation of programs, policies and strategies that establish and support diversity and foster inclusion within the Department.

Priority: 1

Timeline: April 2012- December 2015

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Lisa Campbell, HR Manager Wanda Andrews, Admin. / Support Command

Critical Tasks:

1. Publish and distribute diversity statement.
2. Develop and implement training on the subjects of diversity, workplace behavior and conduct.
3. Coordinate with other commands and city departments to ensure achievement of organizational diversity goals including outreach to Houston's under-represented communities.
4. Develop performance measures to ensure leadership accountability for implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives.
5. Conduct performance audits and climate surveys to identify strengths and weaknesses and address deficiencies as appropriate.
6. Identify funding to support program initiatives.
7. Establish criteria to identify members for Diversity Advisory Committee (DAC).
8. Establish DAC along with its mission statement and goals.

Performance Indicators:

1. Mission has been established and quantifiable measures of success have been identified.
2. Performance audits and climate surveys have been conducted and strengths and weaknesses of adopted programs and policies have been identified.
3. Increase diversity in the department based on current demographic needs with the combined effort of the department's classified recruiting and human resources department.
4. Funding has been secured.
5. DAC members have been identified, and mission statement, goals, and work groups have been established.



Expected Outcome:

Leaders at all levels have accepted and will commit to promoting a diverse workforce free of harassment and discrimination. Leaders have created and maintained an environment with no tolerance for any type of discrimination or harassment.



Objective 2.02

Expand recently developed CASEY Fire Ops program.

Priority: 1

Timeline: September 2015 – December 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Fire Chief Lisa Campbell, HR Manager Patricia Scott, Admin. / Support Command

Critical Tasks:

1. Increase social media publications and followers.
2. Distribute pamphlets for program advertisement.
3. Implement leadership roles within each established school.
4. Ensure monthly meetings are held at all established schools.
5. Ensure students are educated on HFD fire and medical emergency practices.
6. Make sure all students participating understand that this program is to educate them on the possibility of employment with HFD and that this program is utilized as a grassroots recruiting tool for HFD.
7. Develop additional avenues for outreach to Houston's under-represented communities for community center program.
8. Conduct performance audits and surveys to identify strengths and weaknesses and address deficiencies as appropriate.
9. Identify funding to support program initiatives.

Performance Indicators:

1. Mission has been established and quantifiable measures of success have been identified.
2. Performance audits and surveys have been conducted and strengths and weaknesses of program have been identified.
3. Increased participation in the program.

Expected Outcome:

Students who take part in the "C.A.S.E.Y Fire Ops" are more likely to be successful in completing the process of becoming a Houston firefighter. The program will build self-esteem, social and behavioral skills, encourage and foster students to be good citizens and great role models amongst their peers.



Objective 2.03

Partner with agencies in targeted communities to increase awareness of the fire service.

- HISD dual credit program with Lone Star College- students participating have the opportunity to graduate as certified firefighter and nationally registered EMTs.
- Robert Garner Foundation partnership

Priority: 1

Timeline: September 2015 – December 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Fire Chief Lisa Campbell, HR Manager Patricia Scott, Admin. / Support Command

Critical Tasks:

1. Assist partners with identifying and maintaining qualified diverse candidates for the programs.
2. Assist with the development and distribute of pamphlets for program advertisement.
3. Coordinate with partners to ensure program processes are in place.
4. Develop and maintain relationship within program campuses to ensure program success.
5. Provide support to HISD students as needed to ensure that all students can successfully complete programs and receive their Fire and EMT Certification.
6. Provide all successful students with HFD hiring information.
7. Conduct performance audits and surveys to identify strengths and weaknesses and address deficiencies as appropriate.

Performance Indicators:

1. Program campuses have been identified.
2. Students participating in the program have been partnered with the CASEY Fire Ops Mentorship program.
3. Funding has been secured.

Expected Outcome:

Students who take part in the HISD Dual Credit program and the Robert Garner Fighter Foundation will be Fire and EMT certified and more likely to be successful in completing the hiring process of becoming a Houston firefighter. These programs will also build self-esteem, social and behavioral skills, and encourage students to be good citizens and role models.



Objective 2.04

Implement a comprehensive quality assurance program for accuracy of dispatch protocols and overall patient care.

Priority: 1

Timeline: July 2016 - March 2018

Responsibility: Medical Director Dr. David Persse; Assistant Chief David Almaguer, Emergency Response; Executive Assistant Chief Rodney West, Admin./ Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Determined number of personnel needed to accomplish objective.
1. Obtain funding for increased support staffing in EMS Command.
2. Develop training for quality assurance data analysis for dispatch protocols, and medical quality assurance.
2. Resume quality assurance data analysis for dispatch protocols, and medical quality assurance.
3. Develop HEC call taker training based on data analysis.
4. Resume HEC call taker continuing education.
5. Establish post-EMS event review program.
6. Develop continuing education based on critical and non-critical event review.

Performance Indicators:

1. Funding for newly created positions is acquired.
2. Personnel have been trained on quality assurance data analysis for dispatch protocols, and medical quality assurance.
3. Quality assurance program is in place.
4. HEC call taker CE training is established.
5. Post-EMS event review program is established.
6. Continuing education based on critical and non-critical event review is in place.

Expected Outcome:



Enhance the quality of Emergency Medical care delivered to the citizens of Houston. HFD will expect to see more efficient use of apparatus and personnel with improved accuracy from dispatch. HFD will expect to see more effective interventions and clinical care as measured by critical interactions. This should lead to maximized cardiac resuscitations, and reduced morbidity and mortality.



Objective 2.05

Explore opportunities to increase support staff for all HFD Commands by incorporating classified members into HFD support positions or increasing non-classified personnel where appropriate.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015- December 2016

Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Rodney West, Assistant Chief Lisa Campbell, Admin. / Support Command

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify available number of positions throughout the department.
2. Develop job descriptions for classified staff positions (placement for at least one year).
3. Coordinate approval with COH Human Resources Dept., COH Legal Dept.,
4. Obtain Civil Service Commission approval for positions.
5. Conduct needs assessment to determine which commands would benefit from increased non-classified support personnel.
6. Applicable Job Descriptions are created for any non-classified positions.
7. Appropriate approval and funding is identified for any increases in non-classified personnel.

Performance Indicators:

1. Needs analysis of positions is complete.
2. Job descriptions are complete and approved by City Legal.
3. Civil Service Commission approval received.
4. Non-classified needs assessments are complete.
5. Appropriate non-classified positions are approved and requested in the budget.

Expected Outcome:

Increased support staff and productivity for all HFD divisions where the HFD brand is underrepresented or necessary for the success of the department's strategic mission and goals.



Objective 2.06

Create a website for LSB that will provide the public with a web-based tool for permit requirements, pre-inspection reports, to request inspections, and answer frequently asked questions, and on-line resources.

Priority: 3

Timeline: August 2015- August 2016

Responsibility: Chief Inspector John Garcia, Senior Inspector Byron Robinson, Prevention/ Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Coordinate with HFD webmaster and City IT to develop website content.
2. Ensure content is kept current.
3. Publicize website when complete.
4. Monitor usage and effectiveness of the website.

Performance Indicators:

3. Website is available to the public.
4. System is in place to ensure content is kept current.
5. Semi-annual reviews of content are conducted.

Expected Outcome:

LSB will be able to provide better customer service to the citizens of Houston. Citizens will have better access to HFD LSB information, with more efficient use of E-Permits.



Goal 3.0 Be Accountable

The “**HFD Process of Accountability**” described below must be addressed in sequence. The elimination of any step will have a negative impact on our ability to move forward in a constructive way and diminish support of our employees in the process.

1. **Establish (agreed upon) Organizational Expectations**

This step is absolutely the most critical step in the process. It is our opportunity to describe exactly what the job should look like. Our expectations should match the mission of our organization and describe the work that should be done. The greater detail described and the more time we spend outlining our expectations the better off we will be as we move forward. You deserve to know what is expected from you. You should also know how your role and work supports the overall mission of the organization.

2. **Train on Those Expectations**

The training element is important because it gives you an opportunity to understand then apply strategic, tactical and task level expectations. The type of work that is performed will determine how much time is spent during the training phase. In firefighting, extensive training is required due to the high risk, low frequency type of incidents we respond to. The higher the risk of the work that is being performed, the more important it is for us to identify problems of performance and correct them. Mistakes that are identified in a training setting are not lethal. Training will include station routine also; such as identifying when a “good joke goes bad” and what the supervisor’s role is in managing the situation.

3. **Monitor Performance**

The most effective accountability we have in the fire service is self-accountability, and most of the time that is all that is needed. However, there are times when self-accountability or self-discipline breaks down and our employees perform below standards. In these cases the supervisors’ role is to step in and correct performance. This is best done with a “right then, right now” approach. Supervisors are basically in the “don’t run with scissors” business. They should address issues as they see them. Supervisors should never walk by a mistake. If they do they will definitely see it again. Value statement: Supervisors are not empowered to compromise safety procedures, and Command Officers do not have an option as to whether or not to follow up on those compromises. Seat belt usage is a great example of this.

4. **Hold People Accountable**

Holding people accountable for both positive and negative performance is important. When supervisors witness good performance they should acknowledge it with praise. When poor performance occurs the supervisor’s role is to correct the behavior. The purpose of discipline is to improve performance and is most effective when it is delivered as corrective, progressive, and lawful.



- **Provide adequate resources**
- **Practice fiscal responsibility**

It is vital to the success of the Houston Fire Department to provide adequate funding to support the mission. We must create a budget plan that reflects the vision of the department and supports the activities necessary to achieve its mission and goals. Not only is it important to create an adequate budget process, it is vital to create systems to address preventative maintenance of assets and ensure sufficient operating supplies. All employees must utilize department assets efficiently and effectively while avoiding unnecessary financial impacts.

- **Implement best business practices to increase organizational effectiveness, accountability and communications**

Best practices are management ideas, which assert that there is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive, or award that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc. With proper processes, checks and testing, a process can be rolled out and completed with fewer problems and unforeseen complications. The Houston Fire Department must have a plan to identify those areas where there are marginal business practices or processes. Once areas in need of improvement are identified, the Department will seek a solution from a number of relative best practices. The Department will pursue business practices that will enhance organizational effectiveness, improve financial accountability and continue to open the communications between the various agencies.

- **Strengthen management and leadership skills**

There is a distinct difference between management and leadership. Both are vital to the success of any organization, and because they are, it is critical to understand the difference. Leadership is defined as having the ability or capacity to lead. It focuses on doing the right things. Management focuses on doing things right. In order to secure success in the efforts of the Houston Fire Department's mission, we must cultivate and educate leaders from within our organization. It is important to mention that leadership is not rank, title, privileges, or money. It is responsibility. All members of this organization should be encouraged to embrace their responsibilities to the City, this department, its members and the citizens we serve.

Effective management, doing things right, will only come through comprehensive training and education of our employees. All members of the Houston Fire Department must accept responsibility for the development of this organization and be encouraged to "do the right things right".



Objective 3.01

Maintain and enhance skills-based continuing education for EMTs and Paramedics as set forth by Medical Director.

Priority: 1

Timeline: July 2016- June 2018

Responsibility: Medical Director Dr. David Persse; Assistant Chief David Almaguer, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Increase funding for positions and tuition.
2. Expand curriculum to include essential topics for EMTs and Paramedics.
3. Prioritize personnel in need of training.
4. Determine ways to measure effectiveness of increased training.

Performance Indicators:

1. Funding secured.
2. Expanded curriculum developed and published.
3. 80% of credentialed EMTs and Paramedics completed required CE per year as set forth by Medical Director.
4. Incorporate training review into enhanced quality assurance program.

Expected Outcome:

Enhance the quality of Emergency Medical care delivered to the citizens by the department. HFD will expect to see a decrease in Medical Incident Reviews. HFD will measure and maximize cardiac resuscitation variables.



Objective 3.02

Implement a new inspection system for the Life Safety Bureau called 360 Degree Inspection Program, to realign the LSB's management team and inspectors to maximize inspections, provide accountability and better serve the citizens of Houston.

- This program is designed to use analytics (data and numbers) to help HFD Inspectors conduct targeted inspections of the City of Houston's most populated and vulnerable areas.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2016 - January, 2017

Responsibility: Fire Marshal Jerry Ford, Assistant Fire Marshal John Valenti, Chief Inspector Richard Galvan, Prevention/ Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Expand and upgrade means to analyze existing data to target inspections.
2. Implement GIS/Dashboard/Mapping to enable supervisors to Plan, Organize, Coordinate and direct personnel.
3. Reevaluate and reorganize the Teams Inspection concept to more efficiently distribute personnel to cover inspection workload. Consider following options:
4. If the teams are maintained; remove two inspectors from each team and add them to the general occupant team to deal with the increasing number of inspections that the general occupant teams are responsible for inspecting.

Performance Indicators:

1. GIS/Dashboard/Mapping equipment has been purchased.
2. GIS/Dashboard/Mapping training has been completed.
3. Effectiveness of equipment/ usefulness has been evaluated.
4. State Certification training of newly promoted inspectors has been developed.
5. Inspector 360 program has been implemented.
6. Inspector 360 program has been evaluated for effectiveness.



Expected Outcome:

With realignment of Chief Inspectors to provide more span of control and responsibility for each Chief Inspector, LSB will be better situated to meet the demands of a changing industry with the proper tools and training.



Objective 3.03

Reevaluate and improve apparatus replacement schedule to reflect ten years of service for front line emergency vehicles.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2016 - March 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Mark Donovan, Admin. / Support

Critical Tasks:

6. Review M5 data as it relates to apparatus age.
7. Identify and submit apparatus eligible for replacement to COH Finance Dept.
5. Develop specifications for new vehicles for submission to COH Fleet Management Department (FMD) and COH Strategic Procurement.
6. Review funding levels as determined by COH Finance.
7. Apparatus Design and Construction team will recommend manufacturer of apparatus to HFD Fire Chief.
8. Recommend manufacturer to Strategic Purchasing Division.
9. Council will approve purchase.
10. Develop and implement an apparatus rotation program based on unit utilization.

Performance Indicators:

1. M5 data reviewed prior to submission of documents to COH Finance.
2. Specifications submitted to COH FMD.
3. Appropriate funding has been approved to replace the identified apparatus.
4. SPD issues purchase order to approved vendors.
5. Apparatus has been received by HFD.
6. Apparatus rotation program is in place.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will continually integrate newer vehicles with state of the art technology and safety features into the fleet based on a standardized apparatus replacement schedule, which will ultimately reduce maintenance costs. By maintaining a standardized replacement schedule, the reserve fleet will be upgraded on a yearly basis.



Objective 3.04

Maintain appropriate replacement schedule for PPE.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2016 - March 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Mark Donovan, Admin. / Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify PPE that has reached maximum age during the fiscal year.
2. Identify PPE needed for newly hired firefighters.
3. Review historical data for PPE replaced prior to reaching maximum age.
4. Identify total PPE needed for fiscal year.

Performance Indicators:

1. PPE data reviewed prior to submission of documents to COH Finance.
2. Specifications submitted to COH SPD.
3. Appropriate funding has been approved to replace the identified PPE.
4. SPD issues purchase order to approved vendor(s).
5. PPE has been received by HFD.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will continually integrate newer PPE into the inventory based on a standardized replacement schedule, which will ultimately enhance safety for emergency responders. By maintaining a standardized replacement schedule, PPE will be upgraded on a yearly basis.



Objective 3.05

Replace or enhance medical equipment (cardiac monitors, AED's, modify stretchers for automatic loading)

Priority: 1

Timeline: July 2016 - March 2018

**Responsibility: Assistant Chief Mark Donovan, Admin. / Support;
Medical Director Dr. David Persse; Assistant Chief David
Almaguer, Emergency Response**

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify equipment that has reached maximum serviceability during the fiscal year.
2. Develop appropriate replacement schedule for medical equipment.
5. Conduct field performance evaluations for replacement equipment.
6. Identify costs and funding needed for fiscal year.

Performance Indicators:

6. Field evaluation data reviewed prior to submission of documents to COH Finance.
7. Specifications submitted to COH SPD.
8. Appropriate funding has been approved to replace the identified medical equipment.
9. SPD issues purchase order to approved vendor(s).
10. Equipment has been received by HFD.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will continually integrate newer medical equipment into the inventory based on a standardized replacement schedule, which will ultimately improve patient care and improve firefighter safety.



Objective 3.06

Ensure HFD facilities meet the needs of the department's operational objectives.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2016 - March 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Mark Donovan, Admin. / Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify need for new HFD facilities.
2. Identify HFD facilities in need of renovation and/or expansion.
3. Review 2015 Work Demands Analysis and COH Space Utilization Analysis and incorporate appropriate recommendations.
4. Review work requests and Facility Condition Assessment with GSD to determine outstanding needs.
5. Submit Project Budget Justification (PBJ) to COH Finance for potential inclusion in COH Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Performance Indicators:

1. All Priority 1 work requests have been assigned and addressed within the specified time frame.
2. All Priority 1 and 2 deficiencies addressed as per the facility condition assessment and subsequent funding level.
3. Space Utilization Analysis recommendations have been implemented per allocated funding levels.
4. HFD CIP has been approved and projects initiated.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will ensure all new facilities meet operational objectives, life safety codes, and incorporate energy efficiency measures (LEED certified) and ADA provisions. All renovations will incorporate these measures as appropriate or mandated.



Objective 3.07

Enhance HFD training schedule to include all departmental, local, state, and federally mandated training.

Priority: 1

Timeline: January 2016- January 2017

Responsibility: All HFD Commands

Critical Tasks:

1. Conduct a needs analysis to determine as best as possible all recurring and/or required training for HFD members, to include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Officer development for future leaders
 - b. Six Sigma program for all managers, classified and non-classified
 - c. DSHS training
 - d. EMS Training: PediSteps, MitieLab, Hands on skills training
 - e. HIPAA training
 - f. Diversity training
 - g. TCOLE training (Arson)
 - h. All special Ops (ARFF, Haz-Mat, Rescue)
 - i. Tabletop exercises (for Emergency Response, Fire Prevention) Information Management Training- all Commands
 - j. Association of Public-Safety Communication Officials(APCO) Fire Communications Officer Training for Communications Captains
 - k. Management Training for all supervisors, through CAPE and HR.
 - l. Department specific FMLA training (CE)
2. Assign priorities with the highest given to mandated and safety-impact training.
3. Coordinate with COH IT Department to determine the best business solution for developing the schedule.
4. Determine and designate team to coordinate the schedule.
5. Develop process and/or guideline (SOP) for updating schedule.
6. Implement new online training schedule.

Performance Indicators:

1. Needs assessment is complete.
2. Priorities have been determined.
3. Acceptable on-line tool for schedule has been determined.



4. Procedure for maintenance of schedule is developed.
5. Procedure is published and training (if necessary) is complete.
6. Enhanced training schedule is on-line and implemented.

Expected Outcome:

Existing HFD training schedule will be enhanced to include training needs for all members of HFD, ensuring better accountability and reduced out of service time for emergency service personnel. A department wide training calendar will also eliminate or greatly reduce training conflicts for all members.



Objective 3.08

Renovate and expand the Val Jahnke Training Facility (VJTF).

Priority: 1

Timeline: March 2015 – June 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Kevin Alexander, Emergency Response; Assistant Chief Mark Donovan, Captain Isaac O’Neal, Admin. / Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Complete remodel of the burn building at VJTF.
2. Identify Funding source for creation of the master plan and additional facility upgrades and infrastructure.
3. Partner with COH Building Services to develop a current master plan.

Performance Indicators:

1. Burn building remodel is complete.
2. Funding is identified.
3. Master plan is published.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will have state of the art training facilities that are essential to the development and future operational efficiency of the department and surrounding region.



Objective 3.09

Maintain Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC) 1 rating.

Priority: 1

Timeline: December 2013- July 2018

**Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Cynthia Vargas, Prevention/
Planning & Homeland Security**

Critical Tasks:

1. Review “Sustaining the City Houston’s ISO Public Protection Classification” document and identify opportunities for maximizing the ISO grading point total.
2. Determine feasibility of implementing recommendations.
3. Develop plan to implement feasible recommendations.
4. Implement and track progress of programs.
5. Prepare for site visit.

Performance Indicators:

1. Opportunities identified.
2. Plan to implement recommendations is developed and presented.
3. Tracking tool created.
4. ISO PPC 1 rating maintained.

Expected Outcome:

Maintain ISO PPC 1 rating, ensuring lower fire insurance premiums for the citizens of Houston.



Objective 3.10

Maintain CFAI Accreditation for HFD and achieve Re-accreditation in 2016. Maintain accredited status through 2022.

Priority: 1

Timeline: September July 2015- June 2018

Responsibility: Management Analyst Heather Gallagher, Assistant Chief Michelle McLeod, Fire Chief's Office, Staff Services Division

Critical Tasks:

1. Publish FY16-18 Strategic Plan in fall 2015.
2. Conduct annual Strategic Plan management reviews in fall 2016, 2017, and 2018.
3. Update Standard of Cover in spring 2015.
4. Attend CFAI training to keep current with CFAI processes.
5. Assemble team of Subject Matter Experts (SME's) to complete the performance indicators and maintain documentation (references).
6. Implement tracking tools to better track FESSAM Plans and documentation.
7. Document data analysis needs to maintain current HFD certifications, including, but not limited to, ISO and CPSE Accreditation requirements.
8. Submit all required accreditation documents to Command Staff and Fire Chief for approval.
9. Submit all required accreditation documents to CFAI by September 2015.
10. Continue to improve HFD branding in regards to HFD's accredited status as world's largest accredited municipal fire department.
11. Complete all Annual Compliance Reports.

Performance Indicators:

1. FY16-18 Strategic Plan is published.
2. Strategic Plan annual management reviews are completed.
3. Standard of Cover update completed.
4. Electronic FESSAM tracking tool implemented.



5. HFD Re-accredited in 2016.

6. Accreditation status referenced as part of HFD branding campaign. Annual Compliance Reports completed and approved.

Expected Outcome:

Maintain accredited status and receive re-accreditation status in 2016. Examine past, current, and future service levels and performance as compared to industry best practices. Improved service delivery by aiding HFD in determining community risk and safety needs, evaluate the performance of the department, and establish a method for achieving continuous organizational improvement.



Objective 3.11

Evaluate data/records management systems and create a process to identify compliance and performance enhancement needs of the department in a timely manner.

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015 – June 2018

Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Rodney West, Support; Deputy Director Tom Sorley, HITS

Critical Tasks:

1. Document software/IT programs in use by all commands and divisions of HFD.
2. Document data analysis needs to maintain current HFD certifications, including, but not limited to, ISO and CPSE Accreditation requirements.
3. Produce system profiles for each system identified.
4. Produce a long term strategy for each systems maintenance and replacement.
5. Identify funding necessary to maintain or replace IT systems.
6. Improve the reporting process for system malfunctions and change management process to request updates.

Performance Indicators:

1. Finalize a list of systems and programs used by HFD for critical task and data storage/collection.
2. Create a chart of each systems age, hardware, update cycles, primary users and the task that are completed using the systems.
3. Acquire the funding necessary to perform the identified critical task to maintain/replace current systems.
4. Establishment of a change management procedure that includes HITS, IT Liaison and a representative from the division requesting the change and/or improvement .

Expected Outcome:

HFD and HITS will partner to implement a process whereby the information technology tools used by HFD will be updated and repaired, when necessary, in an efficient and timely manner.



Objective: 3.12

Enhance officer development through improved leadership training at all levels to included recommendations in *NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*.

Priority: 2

Timeline: June 2016 – July 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Kevin Alexander, District Chief Josef Gregory, Captain Jeffery King, District Chief Chris Hill, Emergency Response

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify and develop training programs that provides an approved, progressive learning system specific to HFD.
2. Review and determine applicable elements of NFPA 1021, based on HFD job performance requirements (JPR).
3. Determine the timeline appropriate for institutionalization of the training, as related to the promotional system.
4. Determine funding needs.
5. Submit funding request for training with HFD budget in applicable fiscal year.
6. Coordinate with other department-wide training schedules, and promotional exam dates.
7. Conduct Labor-Management negotiations to have course completion tied to the promotion system, providing progressive training for the position prior to the acquisition of that position. Discussion to include the following:
 - a. Tie Texas Commission on Fire Protection Driver Operator Program to the Engineer/Operator examination.
 - b. Tie Texas Commission on Fire Protection Fire Officer I to Captain's examination.
 - c. Tie Texas Commission on Fire Protection Fire Officer II to Senior Captain's examination.
 - d. Tie Texas Commission on Fire Protection Fire Officer III to District Chief's examination.

Performance Indicators:

1. Training programs specific to HFD JPR's have been identified.
2. Multi-year implementation timeline has been established.
3. Funding is secured.



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4. Training schedule for all members has been established.
 5. Contract is amended to reflect changes in promotional system.

Expected Outcomes:

Officers at all levels are more rounded, both administratively and on the incident scene, through defined expectations during both emergency and non-emergency situations. HFD produces not only great firefighters, but also the development of marketable, validated and recognized Chief Officers.



Objective 3.13

Partner with COH Permitting Center to develop a bar coding system for all COH fire permits.

Priority: 2

Timeline: January 2016- January 2018

Responsibility: Chief Inspector John Garcia, Senior Inspector Byron Robinson, Prevention/ Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Develop implementation plan for bar coding.
2. Determine funding needs.
3. Acquire funding in FY2017.
4. Implement bar coding system.

Performance Indicators:

1. Plan is approved for implementation.
2. Needed funding is acquired.
3. Plan is operational.

Expected Outcome:

Life safety will be improved by more efficiently ensuring all permitted locations in the city of Houston are code compliant.



Objective 3.14

Enhance non-emergency vehicle replacement schedules to six years or 150,000 miles of service.

Priority: 2

Timeline: January 2016 - March 2018

Responsibility: Assistant Chief Mark Donovan, Admin./ Support

Critical Tasks:

1. Review M5 data as it relates to vehicle age.
2. Identify and submit vehicles eligible for replacement to COH Finance Dept.
3. Develop specifications for new vehicles for submission to COH Fleet Management Department (FMD) and COH Strategic Procurement.
 1. Review funding levels as determined by COH Finance.
 2. Recommend manufacturer to SPD.
 3. Council will approve purchase.

Performance Indicators:

1. M5 data reviewed prior to submission of documents to COH Finance.
2. Specifications submitted to COH FMD.
3. Appropriate funding has been approved to replace the identified vehicles.
4. SPD issues purchase order to approved vendors.
5. Vehicles have been received by HFD.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will continually integrate newer vehicles with state of the art technology and safety features into the fleet based on a standardized vehicle replacement schedule, which will ultimately reduce maintenance costs. By maintaining a standardized replacement schedule, the reserve fleet will be upgraded on a yearly basis.



Objective 3.15

Certify three Arson members as Certified Fire Investigators (CFIs) by an international professional association of investigators.

Priority: 2

Timeline: January 2016 – June 2018

**Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Cynthia Vargas, Prevention/
Planning & Homeland Security**

Critical Tasks:

1. Identify funding for training and certification.
2. Select members for certification.
3. Identify required training, testing, etc.
4. Schedule members for required training and testing.
5. CFIs develop and teach best practices as identified in training.

Performance Indicators:

1. Funding approved.
2. Personnel selected and approved for travel and training.
3. Members successfully completed required testing.
4. Members received CFI certificate.
5. Curriculum developed and approved.
6. Arson Division members trained by CFIs.

Expected Outcome:

Members will develop expertise of best practices in field of investigations as required by NFPA 921 and 1033. Members will disseminate knowledge to home agency to ensure agency continues to implement best practices and operate under current standards.



Objective 3.16

Ensure 50% of Classified Arson staff is state certified as Intermediate Peace Officers or above.

Priority: 2

Timeline: October 2015 – June 2018

Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Cynthia Vargas, Senior Investigator Daniel Crayton, Prevention/ Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Assess current percentage of Intermediate (and above) Peace Officer Certification level.
2. Target basic level peace officers for training based on TCOLE report.
3. Establish benchmarks and track completion rates.
4. Schedule mandatory training for basic peace officers to fulfill requirements for intermediate level certification.

Performance Indicators:

1. Baseline report of certification levels within Arson Division produced.
2. TCOLE report produced and provided to investigators with Basic Peace Officer Certification.
3. Benchmarks and completion rates reported on HFD dashboard.
4. 50% of Arson personnel certified as Intermediate Peace Officer or greater.

Expected Outcome:

Higher trained investigators will improve quality of investigations. HFD Arson Division will attain greater level of fiscal responsibility by leveraging advanced level low cost training taught in surrounding jurisdictions/agencies.



Objective 3.17

Amend and maintain MOU's at the state and local levels (i.e. State Fire Marshal's office, HPD).

Priority: 2

Timeline: July 2015 - June 2018

Responsibility: Executive Assistant Chief Cynthia Vargas, Prevention/
Planning & Homeland Security

Critical Tasks:

1. Establish partnerships with state and local agencies.
2. Review and amend MOUs with agencies.
3. Fire Chief or designee approves MOUs.
4. Create digital Arson Division library.
5. Place in digital Arson Division library.

Performance Indicators:

1. MOUs published and signed.
2. Arson Division digital library created.
3. MOUs available in Arson Division digital library.

Expected Outcome:

HFD will increase working relationships and response with state and local agencies. More streamlined processes, less duplication of efforts, increase organizational efficiencies, and provide more thorough, timely investigations.



Update Timeline and Review Process

As with any plan, it is of little use unless periodically examined for its effectiveness. Each command will review the Strategic Plan for applicability of the objectives, progress on the critical tasks, completed performance indicators and needed revisions. Each command is responsible for monitoring and updating the online tracking tool in regards to completing the objective critical tasks. It is imperative that strategic plan goals and objectives are considered and incorporated into funding requests of each year's budget.

Annual Review- All objectives will be formally reviewed in the fall of each year. Any performance indicators reported to be done will be compared against the critical tasks to determine completion. A report will be provided to the Command Staff confirming completion of performance indicators or recommending further revision of the objective. Complete/Non-complete status will be determined by the Command Staff.

Executive Management Yearly Planning Session- Review what has been completed during the past year, as well as what needs to be added/deleted/revise. Indicate any changes in status in the Comments section of the online tracking tool. Compare completed objectives against expected outcome and progress in accomplishing the respective goal.

Three-Year Review- Perform a comprehensive analysis of the review and updating process to determine its effectiveness in meeting outcomes and accomplishing HFD's mission. Begin in-depth revision of Strategic Plan Objectives and determine appropriate objectives for the next three year strategic planning cycle. Continue to seek input from all Commands in HFD and solicit input from HFD diverse communities.

Strategic Plan publishing- Upon approval of the Strategic Plan by the Command Staff and Fire Chief, the Strategic Plan will be submitted to the Mayor for approval. After approval, the HFD Strategic Plan will be posted on the HFD website and intranet HFD Desktop. Members will be notified of its publication by the Fire Chief. As updates are made to the strategic plan, the most current version will be posted to the HFD Website and the HFD Desktop.



Work Group Contributors

This Strategic Plan is the result of a collaborative effort made by the following members of HFD:

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| David Almaguer, Assistant Chief | Ruy Lozano, Senior Captain |
| Wanda Andrews, Human Resources Manager | Richard Mann, Executive Assistant Chief |
| Sam Buser, PhD, Staff Psychologist | Michelle McLeod, Assistant Chief |
| Lisa Campbell, Assistant Chief | George Meadows, Chief Inspector |
| Jeff Cook, Assistant Chief | Isaac O’Neal, Captain |
| Daniel Crayton, Senior Investigator | David Persse, MD, Medical Director |
| Mark Donovan, Assistant Chief | Jacque Ray, Management Analyst III |
| Jerry Ford, Fire Marshall | Byron Robinson, Senior Inspector |
| Heather Gallagher, Management Analyst IV | Patricia Scott, Human Resource Manager |
| Richard Galvan, Chief Inspector | Tom Sorley, Deputy Director |
| John Garcia, Chief Inspector | John Syzdek, Deputy Communications Chief |
| Terry Garrison, Fire Chief | Lloyd Spevack, Shop Manager |
| Michelle Golovine, Senior Captain | Jana Tran, PhD, Staff Psychologist |
| Josef Gregory, District Chief | Denny Traylor, Deputy Assistant Director |
| Chris Hill, District Chief | John Valenti, Assistant Fire Marshal |
| Laura Hunter, Captain | Cynthia Vargas, Assistant Arson Investigator |
| Beda Kent, Senior Captain | Rodney West, Executive Assistant Chief |
| Jeffery King, Captain | |