

# TASK FORCE REPORT

Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association  
Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad Comprehensive Review

TO: Executive Committee, Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association  
Board of Directors, Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association

FROM:

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Chief Kevin Wilson  
Chair, Coles Review Task Force

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Hickerson".

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Chief Brian Hickerson  
Member, Coles Review Task Force

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Rubino".

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President Richard Rubino  
Member, Coles Review Task Force

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lance McClintock".

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Assistant Chief Lance McClintock  
Member, Coles Review Task Force

April 5, 2013

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad Comprehensive Review

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The Prince William County Board of County Supervisors (“Board”) intends to assure adequate public safety, health, and welfare through a collaborative system for the provision of a fire, rescue, and emergency medical services program that is competent, highly trained, efficiently delivered, and equitably administered, and that is operated by the Board through the Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue and volunteer fire and rescue companies as managed through the Fire and Rescue Association (“FRA”).

To accomplish the goals of public safety and promote public interest, the system must provide adequate fire and rescue response service levels in the most efficient and effective manner possible. To this end, the Department of Fire and Rescue (DFR) and each volunteer company must ensure that each fire station has adequately trained staff, and has the operational capabilities necessary of all service providers. They also must develop near and long-term plans and policies to serve current and future populations within the company’s service area. All of this must be done in accordance with state laws and Chapter 9.1 of the County Code.

Consistent with these goals, it is the responsibility of the FRA to monitor volunteer companies who are alleged to be functioning below an acceptable level. Such allegations must be taken seriously, investigated and resolved, in a timely manner, to maintain the integrity of the system, because if the allegations are true, such sub-par performance places citizens, the County, and the fire and rescue system in jeopardy.

### **PRESENTING PROBLEM:**

In August of 2012, now former Chief Adam Eldert, Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad (“Coles”) brought certain concerns to the attention of the Chair of the FRA. These concerns included:

- Number of volunteers had declined and remained low
- Number of current volunteers capable of essential staffing had declined
- Personal ambitions of some volunteers were placed ahead of department needs
- Tasks and responsibilities of Coles were unaddressed or incomplete
- Lack of communication within ranks

- Issues of conflict among crews and members, specifically citing fire and emergency medical service (EMS) personnel
- Predicted organization failure without change

### **TASK FORCE CREATED:**

Pursuant to the authority in Section 9.1 of the Prince William County Code, the Chair of the FRA issued an Emergency Directive supported by the Executive Committee of the FRA and appointed a Task Force to perform a comprehensive review of Coles to determine whether Coles has

- the ability to provide fire and rescue services in accordance with its Agreement with the BOCS and
- the leadership to meet this obligation to the public.

This Task Force was chaired by Kevin Wilson, Chief of Stonewall Jackson Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, and comprised of three additional members: Chief Brian Hickerson from the Nokesville Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company, President Richard Rubino from the Stonewall Jackson Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, and Assistant Chief Lance McClintock of the PWC Department of Fire and Rescue. Their investigation commenced on August 29, 2012, and concluded on February 6, 2013.

### **FINDINGS:**

Based upon an extensive review of documents and a significant number of volunteer interviews, the Task Force found the following to be present in Coles:

- Insufficient number of operationally effective members to legally operate a volunteer company under §27-8 and 27-10, VA Code Ann.
- Ineffective Management & Leadership
- Lack of Adherence to State and FRA Policies & Procedures
- Ineffective Fleet Maintenance Program
- Inadequate Facilities Maintenance
- Culture of Negativity
- Divisiveness within the company
- Non-Compliance with Internal Governing Documents
- Ineffective Recruitment Program
- Inadequate retention of Qualified Personnel

### **CONCLUSION:**

Following its investigation, the Task Force reached the following conclusions:

- Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad has failed operationally and administratively as an organization charged with providing emergency public safety services in Prince William County; and

- Coles is in a non-recoverable situation and is unable to meet its contractual obligations with the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Task Force unanimously recommends the following:

- The Board of County Supervisors terminate the Agreement for Provision of Fire and/or Rescue Services with the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad; and
- The Board of County Supervisors dissolve Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad; and
- All Coles' assets be transferred to Prince William County.

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## **BACKGROUND**

### **Coles' Leadership Resignations**

On August 28, 2012, Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad ("Coles") Chief Adam Eldert and Assistant Chiefs Jimmy Pearce and Jeff Osborn resigned their leadership positions at the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad (Coles). Chief Eldert tendered his letter of resignation to Coles on August 28, 2012 [Appendix A]. In it, he alleged that the membership was unwilling to implement his strategic vision and operational improvement plans for the Coles department [Appendix B]. Chief Eldert's desire to implement a new strategic plan was the result of his concerns and assessment of actions needed to strengthen the Coles organization. These concerns were comprehensively addressed by Chief Eldert with the Coles membership during their July 2012 company meeting. The following are examples of Chief Eldert's concerns:

- Number of volunteers had declined and remained low
- Number of current volunteers capable of essential staffing had declined
- Personal ambitions were placed ahead of department needs
- Tasks and responsibilities unaddressed or incomplete
- Lack of communication within ranks
- Issues of conflict among crews and members, specifically citing fire and emergency medical service (EMS) personnel
- Predicted organization failure without change

In his resignation letter, Chief Eldert stated that select members of the department were not willing to comply with his direction or follow the provisions of Chapter 9.1 of the Prince William County Code (County Code), the Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association (FRA) policies and procedures, and relevant provisions of the Code of Virginia. Chief Eldert also stated that a core group of the Coles membership was not in compliance with Coles' internal policies or governing documents (e.g., by-laws) and that basic leadership principles were not being followed. This included the failure to provide basic facility and fleet maintenance repairs.

### **Fire and Rescue Association Executive Committee Action**

In anticipation of the resignation of the operational leadership team from Coles, Chief Eldert met with the Chairman of the FRA regarding the critical nature of the issues facing Coles. As a result of this meeting, the Chairman of the FRA consulted with the Executive Committee. On August 28, 2012, with the approval of the Executive Committee, the Chairman of the FRA issued Emergency Directive # 1.8.2 titled

“Stabilization and Review of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad” [Appendix C]. In part, the emergency directive provided the following:

1. That the Department of Fire and Rescue (DFR) assume immediate responsibility and oversight for the provision of emergency services from Coles.
2. That, to the extent deemed necessary, DFR also assume the administrative roles and functions held by the Coles’ membership in order to ensure the continuity of emergency services until it could be determined that Coles was in a position to comply with the terms of its Agreement with the Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) for the Provision of Fire and Rescue Services dated August 29, 2009 [Appendix D].
3. An FRA Coles Review Task Force (“Task Force”) be appointed to perform a comprehensive review of Coles’ organization and its ability to provide emergency services to the public and effectively administer organizational responsibilities and functions, and conduct an assessment of what was needed to stabilize Coles. The Task Force was to be comprised of two Volunteer Chiefs, one volunteer president/member of FRA Board of Directors, and a career assistant chief.
4. That required members of Coles comply with the emergency directive, the Task Force, FRA policies and procedures, and any direction provided to Coles by the DFR or the FRA.

As is indicated in the title of the Emergency Directive, a primary goal of the process was to make every effort to stabilize Coles. To that end, the Task Force Chair Wilson, Stonewall Jackson Volunteer Fire Department (SJVFD) offered to serve as a mentor to the newly elected leadership of the organization. In addition, the DFR provided daily oversight to Coles in an effort to ensure stability and the provision of fire and rescue services. The DFR Operations Assistant Chief routinely met with Coles’ leadership to provide guidance and offer assistance regarding organizational operations. As an example, the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations provided his Executive Fire Officer Applied Research Project on volunteer recruitment and retention as a guide to take action. Coles’ leadership did not actively engage in these efforts or take advantage of the resources and encouragement, and no positive results were realized.

In accordance with the emergency directive, the Task Force was comprised of two volunteer chiefs from the FRA Executive Committee (Kevin Wilson and Brian Hickerson), a volunteer president from the FRA Board of Directors (Richard Rubino) and a career assistant chief (Lance McClintock). The Task Force commenced its investigation on August 29, 2012 and concluded its investigative work on February 6, 2013.

## **OVERVIEW**

### **County and State Codes**

Pursuant to Section 9.1-2(b) of the County Code, the FRA consists of the DFR and each volunteer fire, rescue, or fire and rescue company established in accordance with the Code of Virginia and the County Code that has obtained the authority from the BOCS to provide fire and rescue services in Prince William County, as set forth in the contract between each volunteer company and the BOCS. A volunteer company may not provide fire and/or rescue services in Prince William County unless it is (a) a member of the FRA and (b) has entered into an agreement with the BOCS. On August 29, 2009, Coles and the BOCS entered into the Agreement for the Provision of Fire and/or Rescue Services (the Agreement) in which Coles agreed:

1. To remain, at all times, a member in good standing with the FRA, pursuant to Chapter 9.1 and any by-laws of the Company and the FRA.
2. To implement, comply with, and be subject to all FRA policies and procedures and all provisions of Chapter 9.1.
3. To provide fire and rescue services in accordance with Chapter 9.1 of the County Code, FRA policies and procedures, and other applicable County, state and federal regulations.
4. That the allocation of funds by the County to Coles, either directly or indirectly, shall be contingent on Coles' compliance with the laws, policies, and regulations identified in the Agreement and as set forth in Chapter 9.1 of the County Code.

Section 27-8 of the Code of Virginia requires that a fire company in Virginia have no less than 20 effective members to legally form.

Section 27-10 of the Code of Virginia provides that "whenever the fire/EMS department of the city, town, or county to which any fire/EMS company belongs shall ascertain that such company has failed, for three months successively, to consist of twenty effective members in the case of a fire company, or ascertain that it has failed for the like period to have or keep in good and serviceable condition, an engine, hose, emergency medical services vehicle and equipment and other implements, or the governing body of the county, city or town for any reason deems it advisable, such governing body may dissolve the company." [Appendix E].

### **Response Area and Call Volume**

The response area covered by Coles is approximately 20.2 square miles with a population of 16,835 (2010 estimated).

In calendar year 2012, Coles (Station 6) responded to the following emergency service incidents:

<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Engine Company	919	55.5%
Basic Ambulance	277	17%
Rescue Squad	149	9%
Chief/Utility	132	8%
Tanker	103	6%
Haz-Mat Support Unit	66	4%
Brush Unit	8	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,654 unit responses</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Budget**

For Fiscal Year 2013, the BOCS budgeted and appropriated \$878,667 of fire levy funding to Coles to provide fire and rescue services. Funds that are not utilized during a particular fiscal year automatically rollover to the undesignated/unreserved fund balance for use in future fiscal years. As of March 29, 2013, the Coles' undesignated/unreserved fund balance is \$287,928.

The Coles' facility maintenance and vehicle maintenance adopted budget and actual expenses (total of all applicable line items) for FY 12 and FY13 are:

	<b>FY12 Adopted</b>	<b>FY13 Actual</b>	<b>FY13 Adopted</b>	<b>FY13 Year-to-Date</b>
Facility Maintenance	\$39,999	\$40,355	\$45,000	\$34,690
Vehicle Maintenance	\$74,761	\$60,357	\$76,761	\$74,334

This budget appropriation does not include the allocation from the General Fund for career staffing at Station 6.

### **Membership**

Coles was established in 1949, and their current by-laws are included as an appendix [Appendix F]. Coles maintains a current "membership packet" which contains their operational and administrative policies.

It was noted that Coles has had the highest chief turnover rate in the FRA. Since 1994, there have been nine different department chiefs.

As of March 19, 2013, Coles had a total of nine members who have the FRA required medical clearance to qualify them as authorized operational members for emergency response services staffing. Coles has an additional twenty members who are not compliant with FRA medical clearances and thus are not operational members cleared to respond to calls for service from the community.

Additionally, nine members have been endorsed by the Operational Medical Director (OMD) as basic life support (BLS) providers in Prince William County. Of these members, there are only four members who satisfy both the medical clearance and OMD endorsement requirements.

Coles Members	Number	Authorized For Staffing
Medical Clearance and OMD Endorsed	4	Yes
Medical Clearance and Non OMD Endorsed	5	Yes
No Medical Clearance and OMD Endorsed	5	No
No Medical Clearance and Non OMD Endorsed	15	No
Total Effective and Qualified Members	9	Yes

**Apparatus and Staffing**

Coles owns and operates 15 vehicles:

2 pumpers	1 rescue squad
2 ambulances	1 brush truck
2 tankers	7 staff or utility vehicles

DFR provides the following career staffing at Coles (Station 6):

- 24-hour engine company with additional responsibilities for the hazardous materials response unit
- 12-hour weekday tanker (0600 – 1800), excluding holidays

FRA resolutions #96-31, #07-09, and #07-10 identify the apparatus staffing priority for Coles (Station 6) as an engine and a BLS ambulance [Appendix G]. This means the engine and the BLS ambulance are to be the first two units staffed by available resources.

The graph below illustrates the apparatus staffing for Coles for the period of time from July 2011 through February 2013. As an explanatory example, for the month of February 2013 the following is depicted:

Priority Units:

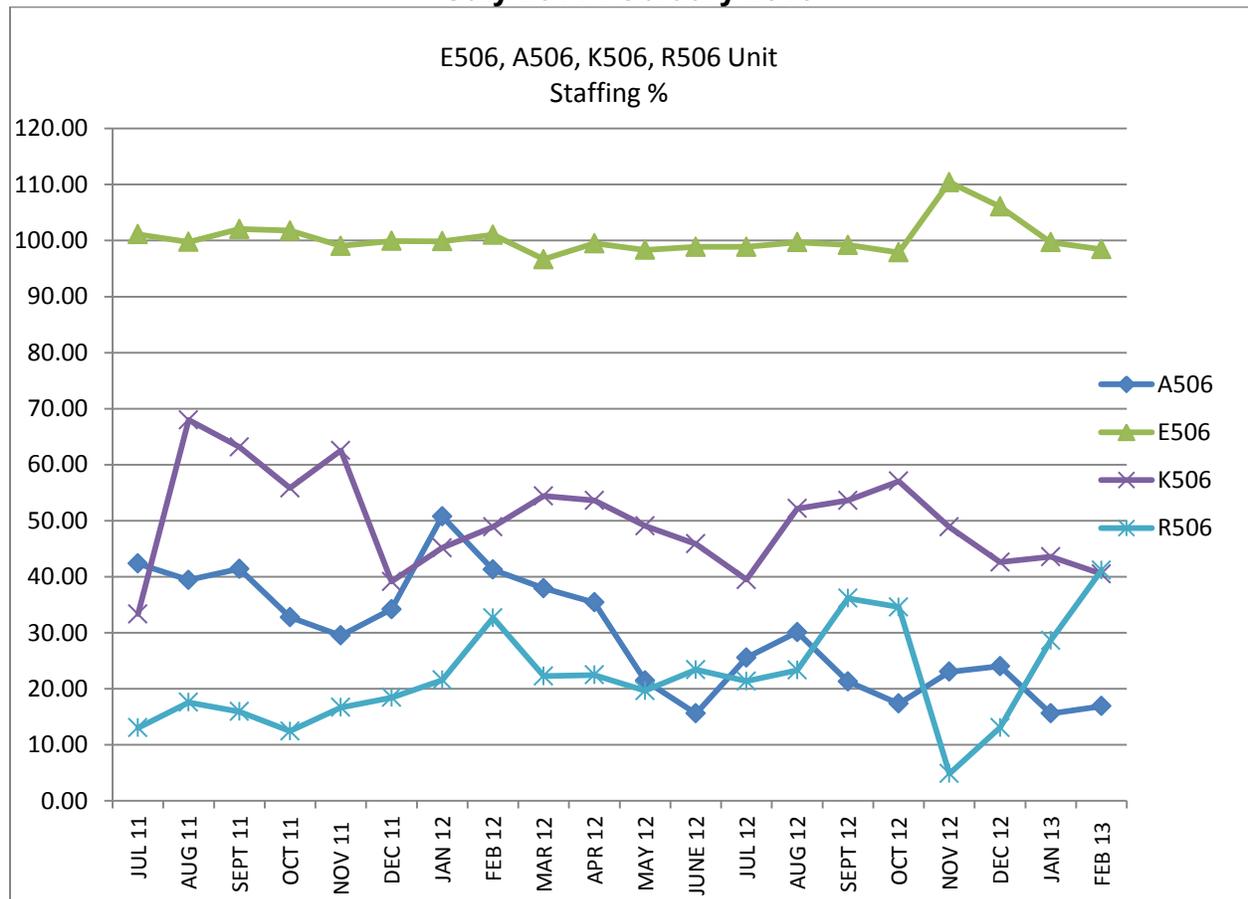
- Engine 506 (E506)(staffed 24-hours by career personnel) was staffed 98.5% of the month.
- Ambulance 506 (A506)(volunteer staffing only) was staffed 16.9% of the month.

Other Units:

- Rescue 506 (R506)(volunteer staffing only) was staffed 41.2% of the month.
- Tanker 506 (T506)was staffed 40% of the month. Career staffing was responsible for 35% of the monthly staffing hours. Coles staffed the tanker an additional 5% of the time.

It is important to note that this graph shows Coles' inability to staff the units for which they are responsible. This does not mean that calls went unanswered but it does mean that units from elsewhere in the County or in the City of Manassas had to respond to calls for service in Coles first due area putting pressure on other areas of the Fire and Rescue system.

**Coles (Station 6) Career and Volunteer Staffing  
July 2011-February 2013**



## **TASK FORCE**

### **Objective, Scope and Methodology**

The objective of the Task Force was to perform a comprehensive review of Coles to determine whether Coles has

- (a) the ability to provide fire and rescue services in accordance with its Agreement with the BOCS and
- (b) the leadership to meet this obligation to the public.

The scope of the Task Force's investigation included a review of all aspects of the Coles' operations. The Task Force did the following:

- Examined documents, records, policies pertaining to Coles including:
  - Coles Articles of Incorporation
  - Bye-laws
  - Minutes of monthly department meetings
  - Recent minutes of the Coles Board of Directors
  - Leadership Rosters
  - Membership Rosters
  - Clerk of the Court rosters
  - Vehicle maintenance records
  - Ladder and hose testing records
  - Operational and administrative policies and procedures
- Conducted 16 scheduled formal interviews and one general open interview. These interviews did not use a set list of questions but instead focused their questions based on the operational or administrative role each member held within the department. Additionally, each interview was allowed time to provide general observations of the state of the Department prior to Chief Eldert's resignation and after. The task force interviewed the following:
  - current and former officers and general members of Coles and DFR personnel assigned to Station 6
  - past and present Coles' leadership positions
  - line officers, members and DFR staff
  - Additionally, the Task Force announced and held an open interview date and encouraged any member that wanted to speak with the Task Force to attend. One response was received during this open interview.
  - Made direct observations of the operations of Coles during the Task Force investigation period.

During the Task Force review process, the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD) offered mentorships to Coles' leadership in an effort to assist and provide them with best practices.

As the investigation continued, the Task Force provided several updates to the membership of Coles at their company meetings as well as monthly updates to the FRA Executive Committee and FRA Board of Directors.

### **Task Force Findings**

As a result of this investigation, the Task Force was able to substantiate significant issues or material failures in each of the areas identified by Chief Eldert in his presentation to the Coles membership in July 2012, and in his subsequent letter of resignation dated August 28, 2012.

Chief Eldert had attempted to change the organizational culture and implement a plan that:

- (a) would restructure the crews and ensure a sufficient number of qualified personnel to staff both the ambulance and the rescue on each duty crew and
- (b) grow the crews to Tuesday and Thursday nights as membership expanded.

After the resignation of Chief Eldert and his leadership team, Coles did not implement the staffing plan that had been laid out by Chief Eldert. Instead, the remaining leadership determined that they would continue with the existing staffing priorities with the goal of staffing a unit each night.

Based on its review of the documents provided by Coles and interviews with Coles' members and DFR personnel, the Task Force determined that Coles, as currently structured, is not a viable organization and will continue to be unable to sustain itself as an entity capable of delivering fire and rescue services to the public as required by its Agreement with the BOCS. The Task Force has identified material failures of the operational and administrative leadership of Coles, that coupled with a divisive organizational culture, lead the Task Force to conclude that Coles is in noncompliance with its BOCS Agreement and unable to reliably provide the level of fire and rescue service that is required of volunteer fire and rescue companies in Prince William County. The findings below are divided into eight common theme categories which were repeatedly, clearly, and consistently identified during the course of the interviews and the document review.

### **Common Themes**

The Task Force interviewed 16 individuals including representative of past and present members of Coles-- as well as DFR personnel. In the interest of protecting interviewee confidentiality, the Task Force elected not to include the names of individuals who were part of the interview process or to provide details of the interviews that would be identifiable to any individual. The responses to the interview questions identified eight common themes, which were consistent with those raised by Chief Eldert.

All interviewees agreed that significant issues were pervasive throughout the organization. The Task Force was in agreement that Coles has faced significant leadership and management deficiencies, both past and present, as well as a negative culture which causes divisiveness within the department. A majority of the interviewees concluded that the Coles' leadership was not following its internal policies and procedures or properly maintaining its apparatus.

Based upon the information gathered primarily from the volunteer interviewees, the Task Force concluded that the past and current leadership of Coles is not capable of operating a public safety emergency services agency charged with the provision of public safety emergency services to the citizens of Prince William County. Task Force findings are summarized in the following chart.

Interview Number	Ineffective Mgmt & Leadership	Lack of Adherence to State and FRA Policies & Procedures	Ineffective Fleet Maintenance Program	Inadequate Facilities Maintenance	Culture of Negativity, Negative Mentality, Cliques	Non-Compliance with Internal Governing Documents	Ineffective Recruitment Program	Retention of Qualified Personnel Inadequate
1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	X	X	X	X	X	X		
4	X	X	X	X	X	X		
5	X			X	X	X		
6	X		X		X	X	X	X
7	X	X	X		X	X		
8	X	X	X	X	X		X	
9	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
10	X				X			
11	X	X	X	X	X	X		
12	X	X	X		X	X		X
13	X				X	X		X
14	X		X		X	X		
15	X				X	X		
16	X		X	X	X	X	X	X

The following sections summarize the information gathered during the interviews and is organized into the eight common themes identified in the chart above.

**Ineffective Management and Leadership**

1. Leadership was unable to effectively lead and make changes and improvements due to resistance by a subversive and uncooperative faction to follow rules established by leadership.
2. Chief Engineer, the responsible party for fleet maintenance, failed to design a fleet maintenance program or delegate authority for maintenance or emergency repair issues of apparatus.
3. The roles and responsibilities of the deputy chief were not defined by the former leadership and remain undefined by the current leadership.

4. Communications between former and current leadership was ineffective; resulting in lost institutional knowledge and inefficient transitions.
5. Communication within former and current leadership was/is ineffective including the exclusion of key personnel from meetings and outright failure to pass information between the chief and president and the chief and board of directors.
6. Previous leadership failed to understand the environment and culture when attempting to implement improvements and changes leading to failure.
7. New leadership repeated the same failed approach as the former leadership.
8. Leadership has failed to change or improve negative behaviors.
9. A very influential and negative informal leadership entity exists and undermines the formal elected leadership structure.
10. There was a failure to comply with direction from DFR oversight in a timely manner to redact or remove non-compliant social media posts regarding patient privacy issues.

### ***Impact of Issue***

Ineffective management and leadership severely undermines the Company and has led to the inability of Coles to meet the primary goals under Chapter 9.1 to serve the residents of their first due thus posing a high risk to the safety and health of members of Coles and to the community.

Leadership determines the success of the organization. If the leadership cannot properly influence and guide an organization, it seriously undermines the probability of accomplishing the delivery of emergency services to the community.

The Task Force noted failures in departmental communications, staffing priorities, continuing negative behaviors, inability to embrace change, and inability to follow policies, which were present before and after the issuance of Emergency Directive #. 1.8.2.

The Task Force also identified that an influential and negative informal leadership entity exists and is problematic and difficult to address. A specific member who retains a Coles' life membership status was identified through interviews as the significant source of extreme negativity and organizational disruption.

Chief Eldert identified the critical service issues and discrepancies of the Coles organization in his document [Appendix B]. These same issues remain unaddressed eight months later. They include:

- Current staffing is inconsistent.
- Staffing adversely impacted when one or two members are unable to attend.
- Essential positions can only be filled by an extremely limited number of members.

The Task Force believes that the discrepancy between the number of members and those who have completed all requirements to be operationally qualified represents a failure of operational leadership and management.

### **Lack of Adherence to the Code of Virginia and State and FRA Policies and Procedures**

1. Sections 27-8 and 27-10, VA Code Ann. – In order to be considered legally viable, volunteer fire companies must have no less than 20 effective members. Coles currently has 9 effective members authorized to staff apparatus, well short of the legal requirement.
2. FRA Procedure 4.8.3, Medical Evaluation Program – 9 of 29 members are medically cleared to provide emergency services. There is also a Coles' policy that mirrors the FRA policy that is not being complied with. Medical clearance process includes medical physicals, OSHA questionnaires, and respirator fit testing.
3. FRA Procedure 5.4.3, Acceptance of EMS Providers – 9 of 29 members are OMD endorsed as active BLS providers and capable to fill staffing requirements for these designated positions. The rescue unit is a Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) permitted vehicle which has a state regulatory staffing requirement that must include an OMD endorsed BLS provider as part of the personnel complement any time the unit responds to emergency or non-emergency service requests. Coles has staffed the rescue without the required staffing complement.
4. Staffing – FRA resolutions #96-31, #07-09, and #07-10 place staffing priority for an engine and a BLS ambulance [Appendix G]. Instances of staffing the rescue before the ambulance frequently occur. Chief Eldert attempted to address and correct this issue, but his staffing priorities were ignored and not implemented by Coles.
5. FRA Procedure 12.0.4, Protected Health Information (PHI) Confidentiality and FRA Procedure 1.0.9, Use of Photography – violations of patient confidentiality have occurred on Coles' social media outlet (Facebook).
6. Deficiencies exist with completion of BLS internships.
7. There was an occurrence of the company utilizing the pumper for a "Santa Ride" during which signal preemption devices were activated on traffic lights in violation of the FRA's agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

### ***Impact of Issue***

The lack of organizational adherence to state law, regulations and policy, as well as FRA policies and procedures severely undermines the Company and has led to the inability of Coles to meet the primary goals under Chapter 9.1 to serve the residents of their first due thus posing a high risk to the safety and health of members of Coles and to the community.

The Task Force determined that Coles has not demonstrated compliance with several FRA policies and procedures.

Policy noncompliance violates Coles' contract with the BOCS to provide fire and EMS services.

### **Ineffective Fleet Maintenance Program**

1. No mechanical apparatus check out training documented on new driver check-offs.
2. Lack of proactive and preventative maintenance program. A fix it when it breaks culture or "old school" attitude is the perceived approach displayed by the Chief Engineer.
3. Slow notification system for needed repairs (pass-on book/telephone).
4. No apparatus check sheets.
5. Lack of a communication process and deficient follow-up procedures from volunteers to notify all personnel of issues regarding apparatus repair statuses.
6. Incidents of tires in-service beyond safe service life.
7. Chief Engineer acknowledged deficiencies in their fleet maintenance program.

### **Impact of Issue**

A lack of a formal and structured fleet maintenance program severely undermines the Company and has led to the inability of Coles to meet the primary goals under Chapter 9.1 to serve the residents of their first due thus posing a high risk to the safety and health of members of Coles and to the community.

The Task Force identified that Coles has a lack of a written and structured apparatus preventive maintenance policy. Fire and rescue apparatus requires a routine and detailed preventive maintenance program. An effective program must include processes to address repairs, ensure mechanically safe systems, and communicate apparatus conditions and repair statuses with all personnel.

### **Inadequate Facilities Maintenance**

1. Repairs go unattended for lengthy periods of time.
2. Asbestos abatement issues were inadequately addressed.
3. Plumbing and maintenance issues in the bathroom not addressed for weeks. This included water leaks from the bathroom plumbing through the floor down into the kitchen area.
4. Climate control issues in the server room during extreme summer temperatures not addressed.
5. Career and volunteer communication issues--input from career staff regarding maintenance not accepted.
6. Fire and building code issues addressed inconsistently.

7. Failing air-conditioning units not addressed for one year.
8. Physical security of the building neglected; doors not closing and securing adequately.
9. Bay door maintenance neglected.

### ***Impact of Issue***

Inadequate facilities maintenance poses both high and medium risks to the members (depending on the specific issue).

Doors unable to be secured present a security risk. Fire and building code violations, as well as neglected plumbing repair issues create health and safety risks for personnel.

Station 6 is scheduled to be rebuilt as part of the County's Capital Improvement Program. While this will address the long-term building condition requirements, on-going maintenance cannot be neglected.

### **Culture of Negativity, Negative Mentality, Cliques**

1. Atmosphere of a hostile environment is created by some members.
2. Negative and disruptive "mob" mentality of certain members is displayed toward leadership.
3. "Us vs. Them" atmosphere created by cliques.
4. Negative culture displays anti-EMS attitudes.
5. Presence of negative interactions among membership and a lack of positive and collaborative interactions.
6. Individual members not assimilated into perceived popular cliques become targets for belittlement and are treated as a second-class citizen.
7. Sense of entitlement by some members.
8. Conflict between two families that have created divisiveness and organizational dysfunction.
9. Inequality among EMS and fire suppression members. For example:
  - a. EMS leadership candidates/officers were required to provide resumes while fire leadership candidates/officers were not.
  - b. EMS recruits were required to wear the red "recruit" uniform shirt while fire recruits uniform requirements were not enforced.
  - c. Lack of authority parity in fire and EMS ranks--EMS line officers subordinate to fire line officers in command structure.
  - d. Senior EMS line officers not consulted by Assistant Fire Chief in development of EMS policies and procedures.
10. Recruits and associate members were only assigned menial tasks which created feelings and perceptions that they were treated as a "maid service."
11. Need to be part of the clique to ride the rescue unit.
12. Fire leadership does not carry required OMD endorsement to provide EMS services in Prince William County. This sends a poor message to the rank and file regarding the station priorities.

13. EMS transport unit staffing diverted to provide an EMS endorsed provider on the rescue.
14. Unprofessional conduct during company meetings (e.g., verbal attacks between members and on outside guests).
15. The Coles Department's Facebook "234 Express" page illustrated a bias favoring the rescue unit.
16. Certain members destabilized organization by over-reaching their authority.
17. Training opportunities selective due to cliques.

### ***Impact of Issue***

The sustained negative culture severely undermines the Company and has led to the inability of Coles to meet the primary goals under Chapter 9.1 to serve the residents of their first due thus posing a high risk to the safety and health of members of Coles and to the community.

The Task Force observed an atmosphere of conflict between fire and EMS members. The culture subordinates and diminishes the importance of the delivery of emergency medical services. EMS is a critical service provided to the community and represents approximately 75%-80% of the county-wide service demand. The anti-EMS culture is ultimately reflected in the priority of unit staffing and service delivery to the community.

Delivery of efficient and effective services requires leadership, training, and teamwork which all will suffer in a negative organizational culture as displayed at Coles.

### **Noncompliance with Internal Governing Documents**

1. September 2012 officer elections were not conducted in a manner consistent with Coles' By-laws.
2. Attempted to dismiss a member without providing the 14-day notice required by Coles' By-laws.
3. Chief Eldert's station staffing policy did not receive membership support and was not complied with by the membership.
4. Chief Eldert ordered an investigation into alleged member misconduct. The investigation was never initiated or performed by the assigned investigator, which was another member of the Coles' Board of Directors.
5. Inconsistent discipline of members; perception of favoritism.
6. Inconsistent enforcement of the Coles' tobacco policy.

### ***Impact of Issue***

Noncompliance with internal governing documents poses both high and medium risks to the members and the community (depending on the specific issue).

Internal governing documents are adopted to address administrative activities and establish expectations for member conduct. The Task Force identified occurrences of

noncompliance with internal governing documents which created a perception of favoritism and inconsistent discipline that undermined and eroded morale and initiative.

### **Ineffective Recruitment Program**

1. No clear responsibility in the department for recruitment.
2. No apparent organized recruitment effort.
3. Membership applications routinely lost.
4. Membership Committee did not follow established processes.
5. Recruitment signage removed and not replaced.

### ***Impact of Issue***

An ineffective recruitment program severely undermines the Company and has led to the inability of Coles to meet the primary goals under Chapter 9.1 to serve the residents of their first due thus posing a high risk to the safety and health of members of Coles and to the community.

Chief Eldert identified that the number of volunteers had declined and had consistently remained low resulting in poor staffing performance. In his Strategic Vision Power Point Presentation (Appendix B) presented to Coles in July 2012, Chief Eldert identified a plan to boost staffing and increase Coles membership, which was ignored by the remaining Coles leadership after Chief Eldert's departure. Since that time, there has been no measureable improvement, and the Task Force determined that Coles has insufficient personnel resources to deliver required emergency services.

Recruitment is an essential function needed for long term health and viability of an organization. The persistent and insufficient recruitment efforts directly impact Coles' ability to maintain minimum level of staffing and subsequent service delivery, both short and long term.

### **Retention of Qualified Personnel Inadequate**

1. Due to the negative environment in the station, qualified personnel seek and leave for opportunities elsewhere.

### ***Impact of Issue***

Inadequate retention of qualified personnel poses a high risk to the organization.

The failure to retain qualified members directly impacts Coles' ability to maintain a minimum level of staffing and subsequent service delivery. Without qualified members, Coles is not in a position to provide emergency services to the public.

## **CONTINUED PROBLEMS FOLLOWING THE EMERGENCY DIRECTIVE ISSUANCE**

The following issues occurred without prior knowledge of the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations assigned to provide oversight to Coles in accordance with the Emergency Directive. When the issues were discovered by the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations, corrective actions were taken.

### **Santa Ride**

On December 15, 2012, Coles conducted a "Santa Ride." A Santa Ride is a holiday activity where volunteer fire and rescue companies tour a community, typically with a pumper and a Santa, to celebrate the holidays.

Coles travelled sections of Dumfries Road with the engine, rescue, and tanker units, all with their emergency lights and siren activated. Additionally, Santa and several members were riding on top of the rescue and tanker units.

When questioned about the incident, Coles' leadership described the activity as a long standing tradition. The Coles' leadership failed to recognize this as a significant safety risk, and there was no follow-up action taken by Coles' leadership to address the concerns.

### **Impact of Issue**

The driving on the major roadway with emergency lighting and siren activation created confusion among civilian drivers. Civilians reacted by pulling to the side of the road, believing the units were responding to an emergency. This disrupted the normal traffic flow along the roadway and was a potential source for unintended vehicular collisions and injury to involved civilians. Section 46.2-920 of the Code of Virginia specifically addresses the use of warning lights by emergency response vehicles when responding to emergency calls.

The use of apparatus' emergency lighting activated traffic signal preemption devices along the route. Activation of traffic signal preemption devices for non-emergency use is against FRA and VDOT signal preemption guidelines. This disrupted the normal traffic flow along the roadway and was a potential source for unintended vehicular collisions and injury to involved civilians. An agreement between VDOT and Prince William County dated July 7, 2005, specifically identifies that misuse of preemption devices shall result in immediate removal of said device. A loss of preemption devices would have a permanent negative impact on emergency response times county-wide and increase the risk to emergency responders and citizens.

Upon learning of the incident, the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations informed the membership to not perform this type of unsafe activity.

This activity involved multiple unsafe practices which pose a high risk to the safety and health of the members and the community and which could also lead to loss of the agreement between Prince William County and VDOT for signal preemption thus impacting DFR and all other volunteer companies.

### **Citizen Complaints**

In mid-December, a citizen complaint was received regarding the driver of the tanker using a cellular phone. Based upon the information, the driver at the time of the complained upon activity was a volunteer member.

On December 15, 2012, personnel at Coles (Station 6) received another citizen complaint. The citizen called the station to report concerns about the Coles' rescue chief's vehicle and the rescue unit traveling on Interstate 95 at a high rate of speed, estimating the speed at 80+ mph. Based upon the information, the driver at the time of the complained upon activity was a volunteer member.

There is no known record of any Coles' investigation into, or formal or informal response to, either of these complaints.

### **Impact of Issue**

This activity involved unsafe vehicle operation practices which pose a high risk to the members and the community.

These incidents included unsafe vehicle operation and impact the public's perception of the Fire and Rescue System as a whole and erode public trust.

Upon learning of these incidents and on December 17, 2012, the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations delivered a directive to the Coles' membership regarding safe vehicle operation expectations and compliance with FRA policies.

### **Apparatus Transfer**

On December 19, 2012, the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations issued written direction to the Coles' membership that apparatus could not be transferred out of the Coles response area without prior approval.

On January 2, 2013, the Coles Chief, who is also an employee of Manassas Park Fire and Rescue, learned of a water main break in the City of Manassas Park. The Coles Chief made the unilateral decision to move Tanker 506 from Station 6 and relocate it out of the County and place it at the City of Manassas Park's Station 9.

### ***Impact of Issue***

This activity involved the improper transfer of emergency apparatus which poses a high risk to the community.

Tanker 506 is a County-wide emergency response resource. The removal of this unit from the County and its transfer to the City of Manassas Park made the unit unavailable for dispatch in its normal response area or within the County since the City of Manassas Park had decided that Tanker 506 would only be available for dispatch within the City of Manassas Park during this event.

Coles' Chief failed to comply with the specific direction provided by the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations on December 19, 2012. Coles' Chief failed to follow the appropriate chain-of-command to request and coordinate the unit transfer. This transfer action was performed unilaterally without consulting the DFR Operations Assistant Chief or Battalion 504. As a result, since Tanker 506 was not available for dispatch within the County, this action depleted emergency resources should there have been a need in the County.

Due to a lack of proper coordination and planning from a regional apparatus use perspective, an adequate response to the needs of Manassas Park was not achieved. A system wide approach to addressing this issue would have been identified if the appropriate chain of command was notified.

Finally, this action was in direct violation of the Emergency Directive then in effect.

### **HIPAA Violations**

On March 8, 2013, the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations was notified by the DFR HIPAA Compliance Officer that potentially identifiable patient information had been posted on Coles' Facebook page, called "The 234 Express." Upon review of the Facebook page, it was determined that there were postings regarding recent emergency incidents which were not in compliance with FRA policies.

### ***Impact of Issue***

This activity involved inappropriate social media postings and violations of protected health information regulations which violate Federal and State laws as well as established FRA policy posing a high risk to the organization and County. Such activity directly impacts the public's perception of the Fire and Rescue System as a whole thereby eroding the public trust in our system.

There are medical industry and FRA policies that require the protection of an individual's personal health information. FRA member departments must maintain patient confidentiality and avoid releasing any potentially identifiable patient information.

Non-compliance with FRA policies regarding protected health information could result in substantial fines, civil monetary penalties, as well as criminal sanctions.

On March 8, 2013, the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations brought the situation to the attention of the Coles' Chief and President. Coles' leadership initially failed to acknowledge this was an issue, despite the DFR Assistant Chief's insistence on the information's immediate removal from the site. It eventually took several days for Coles' leadership to take action and have the information removed.

### **Resistance to Offered Assistance**

At the onset of the Task Force review process, the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD) offered to assist and provide mentoring to the new leadership at Coles. In response to the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD)'s mentoring offer, the Coles' Chief expressed concerns related to level of oversight and control assigned to the DFR by the Emergency Directive issuance.

The Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD) met with the Coles' Chief and President, and during the meeting specific concerns were identified by Coles' leadership related to emails from the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations that were sent to Coles' membership regarding the operational riding status of members and a plan to remediate asbestos which was found during a facility inspection. In both examples, the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD) was lead to believe by the Coles' leadership that the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations was acting on his own authority without any interaction or consensus from the Coles leadership.

Acting as an intermediary, the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD) scheduled a meeting on January 9, 2013, with the DFR Chief, DFR Assistant Chief of Operations, Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD), and Coles Chief and President. It was during this meeting that contrary information regarding expressed concerns was revealed as described below:

- Member riding status emails – it was revealed that the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations had indeed communicated with the Coles' Chief regarding the members' riding statuses and email to be sent out to the membership. The Coles' Chief admitted he had given his agreement and approval to the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations to send the emails.
- Asbestos remediation plan – the Coles' Chief admitted that he was indeed notified of the asbestos issue and was aware of the remediation plan. The Coles' Chief further acknowledged that he never passed the remediation plan information on to the Coles' President, nor did he inform the Coles' Board of Directors even though the Coles' Chief is a standing member of that board.

### ***Impact of Issue***

The failure of Coles' leadership to honestly and effectively communicate within their own leadership structure, as well as with the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD) and other representatives attempting to provide guidance poses a high risk to the organization.

The meeting on January 9, 2013, illustrated a leadership and communication failure on the part of the Coles' Chief. Once confronted with a situation where information could no longer be manipulated, the Coles Chief admitted his previous knowledge and approval of the emails and asbestos remediation plan. The Coles Chief had misrepresented this information to the Task Force Chair Wilson (SJVFD).

This situation placed the DFR Assistant Chief of Operations in the difficult position of defending his actions when they were previously approved by the Coles' Chief.

## **TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The totality of the identified issues identified in this report demonstrates that the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad has failed operationally and administratively as an organization charged with providing emergency public safety services in Prince William County. The depth of these failures is such that the Task Force unanimously believes that Coles is in a non-recoverable situation and is unable to meet its contractual obligations according to Chapter 9.1 with the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

The development and implementation of an action plan to address current and future stability, while considered as an option, is not recommended by the Task Force due to the caustic organizational culture that exists at Coles. Chief Eldert's initial plan to address identified organizational issues was refuted by the current membership. The current Coles leadership has not taken appropriate measures to address continued organizational issues that pose a risk to the Coles membership, other Prince William County fire and rescue personnel, and the citizens of Prince William County.

Coles Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad is in an irreparable organizational state and unable to meet their contractual obligations with the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

### **Alternatives**

1. Recommend the Board of County Supervisors terminate the Agreement for Provision of Fire and/or Rescue Services with the Coles District Volunteer Fire

Department and Rescue Squad, dissolve the company and transfer its assets to Prince William County.

2. Recommend the Board of County Supervisors terminate the Agreement for Provision of Fire and/or Rescue Services with the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, dissolve the company and transfer its assets to an existing Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association member volunteer company following approval by the FRA.
3. Recommend the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad be placed under the operational and administrative control of another Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association member company selected and approved by the FRA, thereby suspending their contractual authority to independently provide fire and rescue services, until such a time the corporation has strong and viable leadership, is deemed compliant with state, county, FRA and internal regulations, policies and procedures, has a functioning organization, healthy culture, and fleet and station maintenance programs. The return to full operational status must be recommended by the FRA and approved by the Board of County Supervisors, who has the sole authority to lift the operational suspension.

**Recommendation**

The Coles Review Task Force unanimously recommends that the Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association endorse Alternative 1.



## Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad

13712 Dumfries Road • Manassas, Virginia 20112

Telephone 703-791-3400 • 703-791-5400 • Fax 703-791-6805

*Chief Adam Eldert*

*President Shane Wood*

August 28, 2012

To the Officers and Members of CDVFDRS,

The events over the last year have caused me to do some serious introspection which has caused me to re-evaluate my ability to be a leader within this organization. I have witnessed talented, productive members with generous hearts get slighted, demeaned, or otherwise have so much disrespect shown to them that they have left the organization, become apathetic to the point where they stop showing up, or are considering leaving at this very moment.

I cannot help but to feel guilt about their treatment as I am ultimately in charge, however while I was not directly responsible for their treatment at the hands of less than marginal elected/appointed officials, I opened up the opportunity for this treatment to occur as I have been unsuccessful in curtailing the poor behavior of a small group of people. With that said the same lackluster individuals who feel it is their right to run our organization into the ground and ensure its demise has further negatively impacted my home and family. Unfortunately, I can no longer muster the strength to believe that things will change.

I have seen incredible people come here with great ideas and intentions to only be marginalized, excluded, used, abused, and discarded like trash. They leave and sometimes they go elsewhere and do great things. Other times these people have been so badly tainted that they walk away from everything all together. It is a shame that either occurs as I witnessed marked improvement in the morale and health of our organization during my tenure as President. In the last year, I have seen our organization be reduced to an awful shadow of what it used to be and the hopes of a bright future dashed. My Assistant Chiefs and I have worked tirelessly the last seven months to try and correct many issues ranging from seemingly insignificant to serious. However, due to a select few members, change and accountability appear to be something feared and not embraced. As a result, important responsibilities have

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## Appendix A - Resignation Letter

been neglected either due to a level of apathy or incompetence. Either way, this has caused a never ending workload to be distributed among a handful of dedicated professionals, who in my opinion epitomize the words “selflessness” and “professionalism”. That cannot be said for the individuals who appear to only want a title or “to be in charge”.

The behaviors mentioned above have negatively impacted the entire organization’s ability to grow beyond where we have stagnated for years. The mentality that the select group of individuals have with regard to following the rules as set forth by the Department, the FRA as well as the OMD are one of the reasons we continue to have staffing and service delivery issues. Adding to that is the lack of desire to put the organization before individual aspirations of members. Continuing to exhibit these behaviors will always stifle this Department and coupled with the perpetual maltreatment of members will never raise this organization beyond its current dysfunctional state.

Additionally, the continued double standard that certain people use when dealing with members is ridiculous. We have people within our ranks that feel they have the right to verbally and physically assault members in public forums, but want to dismiss others from the Department who have made public comments less inflammatory than others have made. While this seems trivial, it is another manner by which inappropriate behavior is allowable for only the select few, but is categorized as horrific for others. When attempts have been made to correct such actions, the responses have ranged from “I’m just passionate” to “It is my right to say what I feel”. Using this logic, if this is acceptable, then all forms of public outbursts must be acceptable regardless of venue and members need to be able to act inappropriately whenever the mood arises. While I do not agree with this mentality, I have been personally subjected to such outbursts by a select few as have a number of others.

Therefore, I am tendering my resignation as Department Chief effective, Tuesday, August 28, 2012 at 2359 hours. My family and physical well-being is not worth the price of admission to this broken ride. To the people that actually care about this organization and are the solution, you have my deepest regrets and utmost respect

Adam Eldert, MS, NREMT-I  
Department Chief  
Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad

*Serving Prince William County for over 60 Years*



## CDVFD & RS OUTLOOK

- ❖ Department demographics
- ❖ Future outlook
- ❖ Current crews & staffing
- ❖ Intra-crew cohesion and functionality
- ❖ Addressing current issues
- ❖ Crew feedback
- ❖ Phase I: Staffing Initiative
- ❖ Duty crew log
- ❖ Duty crew procedures



## DEPARTMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- ❖ Rural location with approximately 18,000 residents
- ❖ Relatively low call volume
- ❖ Number of volunteers has remained low
- ❖ Number of volunteers has declined over time
- ❖ Number of our current volunteers capable of essential staffing has declined
- ❖ Additional expectations & requirements of Chapter 9.1



## DEPARTMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- ❖ Personal ambitions placed ahead of department needs
- ❖ Recruitment efforts have declined
- ❖ Tasks and responsibilities unaddressed or incomplete
- ❖ Lack of communication within the ranks
- ❖ Increased the burden and stress on members and officers



## FUTURE OUTLOOK AND PROJECTIONS

- ❖ If we continue on this same path, we will not be able to continue as a volunteer entity providing service to the community
- ❖ We have motivated and selfless volunteers willing to provide needed services - we cannot exist without these members
- ❖ There is internal conflict, essential tasks and responsibilities left undone, lack of dependability, lack of confidence
- ❖ Service to the community is the utmost priority of our leaders
- ❖ These issues will be addressed!



## CURRENT CREWS AND STAFFING

- ❖ Current staffing is inconsistent
- ❖ Staffing impacted when one or two members are unable attend duty
- ❖ Essential positions can only be filled by 3-5 of our active members
- ❖ Securing coverage or backfill is often not effective or practical



## CURRENT CREWS AND STAFFING

- ❖ Of the 3-5 essential personnel, 2-4 have full time employment and obligations outside of the volunteer fire service; committing to multiple nights a week is typically not possible
- ❖ Of the 3-5 essential personnel, 1-3 are able to commit to multiple day/night staffing positions in a 7 day work week. This leads to a sense of ownership within the organization which initiates conflict amongst other members



## INTRA CREW COHESION AND FUNCTIONALITY AMONGST PERSONNEL

- ❖ Issues and conflict amongst crews and members have increased as the diversity of members change:
  - Fire vs EMS
  - new members vs tenured members
  - motivated personnel vs unmotivated personnel
  - operational vs administrative
  
- ❖ Social media, television, stories from other fire stations, etc. have allowed the fire department population to create their own mindsets of what a fire department should be like



## **INTRA CREW COHESION AND FUNCTIONALITY AMONGST PERSONNEL**

- ❖ Individual ambitions often take priority over the needs of the department and community we serve
- ❖ Stagnant crews and a lack of group activities, training and operations has lead to an “us versus them” mentality



## EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CURRENT ISSUES

- ❖ Round table discussions with duty crews:
  - 72 neutral or suggestive comments
  - 3 positive comments on current effectiveness/function
  - Majority of comments were consistent among members
  
- ❖ Involving members in leadership and decision making process
  
- ❖ Leading by example: to meet the current needs of the department and community
  
- ❖ Standardized and impartial operational procedures have been implemented to address some of the most controversial issues brought to our attention by the membership
  
- ❖ Attempts made to merge the bridge between operational and administrative leadership



## PHASE I: STAFFING INITIATIVE (CREWS, SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURES)

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2012

CREW 1  
MONDAY  
CHIEF OFFICER: ELDERT (L)  
DUTY CREW OFFICER: DAY (E)  
CREW: CORNWELL  
HENDERSON  
HON  
KITONIS (E)  
PALACIOS (E)  
RIPPLE  
SEPULVEDA  
WOOD, S. (L)  
recruit  
recruit  
recruit

PRIORITY UNIT: AMBULANCE  
SECOND UNIT: RESCUE  
THIRD UNIT: TANKER

CREW 3  
WEDNESDAY  
OSBORN (L)  
ORAZI  
DALE  
GEHR (E)  
HAMMOND  
IDDINGS (E)  
KRONLEIN (E)  
MANICI  
MAY  
recruit  
recruit  
recruit  
recruit

AMBULANCE  
RESCUE  
TANKER

CREW 5  
FRIDAY  
PEARCE  
FORMAN  
FILBERT  
FORKER  
HEARD, C. (L)  
HEARD, T.  
KERLIN  
MCILWAIN (L)  
MEADOWS  
STROH  
recruit  
recruit  
recruit

RESCUE  
TANKER  
AMBULANCE

(L) = LIFE MEMBER

(E) = EMS ONLY



## PHASE I: STAFFING INITIATIVE

- ❖ 6-month initiative to:
  - Improve staffing percentages
  - Expedite training for staffing positions
  
- ❖ Consolidate personnel to 3 assigned duty crews
  - Monday (Crew 1)
  - Wednesday (Crew 3)
  - Friday (Crew 5)
  
- ❖ Tuesdays and Thursdays will utilize “fill-in” crews, if available
  
- ❖ Chief officers will review monthly to determine if additional crews can be formed
  
- ❖ Initiative will be reviewed in 6 months to determine whether to continue



## PHASE I: STAFFING INITIATIVE

- ❖ Each crew will be assigned a Chief Officer and Duty Crew Officer (DCO)
- ❖ The Chief Officer maintains ultimate responsibility and governance over crew
- ❖ The DCO will assume day to day operations management
- ❖ The DCO will report to the Chief Officer of that crew
- ❖ The chain of command begins with the DCO



## PHASE I: STAFFING INITIATIVE

- ❖ Tuesday and Thursday fill-in crews will include:
  - members with additional time to staff
  - members who have missed their assigned duty that week
  
- ❖ One person shall be the Crew Leader for fill-in crews
  
- ❖ Crew Leader shall be determined by the following order:
  - Highest ranking officer present
  - Unit officer of the apparatus staffed
    - Rescue/Fire unit officer
    - Ambulance unit officer
  - Member with greatest years of service
  
- ❖ The Crew Leader shall be responsible for the duties of a DCO
  
- ❖ The Crew Leader shall send an email to [staffing@cdvfd.org](mailto:staffing@cdvfd.org) when a unit is being staffed on Tuesday or Thursday shifts



## DUTY CREW LOG

- ❖ The duty crew log is to be completed for all duty crews as well as any time a unit is staffed
  - By the DCO for regular duty shifts
  - By the Crew Leader for “fill-in” staffing
  
- ❖ The log will be completed before leaving the station at the end of the staffed period
  
- ❖ The log will be submitted to the designated drop box



# DUTY CREW LOG

## DUTY CREW LOG

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CREW LEADER: \_\_\_\_\_

### STAFFING

	RESCUE	AMBULANCE	TANKER
OFFICER			
OPERATOR			
LEAD FF/LEAD AIDE			
CREW			
CREW			
CREW			

### ATTENDANCE

LATE	EXCUSED	NO-SHOW

### TRAINING

TYPE	LENGTH

### HOUSE DUTIES

COMPLETED (CIRCLE)	YES	NO



## DUTY CREW LOG

- ❖ Any and all personnel, apparatus and other relative issues will be noted on this log
  
- ❖ Significant incidents to be noted include:
  - battalion chief response
  - medevacs
  - incidents assigned tactical radio channels
  - any conflicts (patient complaint against crew, incidents in which other members of fire/rescue have complaint against member of CDVFD&RS, incidents involving emergency vehicle crashes or related property damage, and all other incidents in which the DCO deems appropriate. The incident number should also be listed)



## DUTY CREW PROCEDURES

- ❖ Members who are unable to report for duty will:
  - Notify the DCO as soon as reasonably possible with reason for absence
  - Make an attempt to secure coverage for equal or greater staffing capabilities
  - If unable to report due to medical condition or doctors orders, before returning, members must provide documentation of full release to return to duty from doctor
  - Long term absence requires leave notice/request per department policy



## DUTY CREW PROCEDURES

- ❖ Members who intend to “hang out” out during operational staffing hours will need to:
  - check in the with the DCO immediately upon their arrival
  - assist with house chores if staying overnight or present during time chores are being completed
  - if capable of filling a NEEDED staffing position, will do so for the duration that their capabilities are needed
  - check out with the DCO or highest ranking operational/unit officer present. If assigned to ride a career unit, members will also check in and out with the career unit officer



## DUTY CREW PROCEDURES

- ❖ Operational members shall obtain adequate sleep while staffing apparatus
- ❖ Members staying overnight will NOT interrupt members in sleeping quarters who are staffing operational equipment
  - This affects members' ability to effectively rise to the occasion in the middle of night and answer calls for service
  - Some members have jobs that require their alertness during daylight hours
  - Any reports of members coming into the sleeping quarters during early morning hours and disturbing sleeping operational members may be prevented from staying overnight
    - Does not include instances when crews are returning from calls



## DUTY CREW PROCEDURES

- ❖ Members will be in appropriate uniform by 1800 hours – no excuses
  - Laundry shall be done before coming to duty
  - Uniforms will meet current policy
  - The DCO will advise if house chores warrant a change of clothing
  
- ❖ Dinner plans will be made and carried out by 1900 hours
  - circumstances may affect this
  
- ❖ House duties will be completed by 2100 hours
  - circumstances may affect this



## DUTY CREW PROCEDURES

- ❖ No outside training will take place after 2300 hours or before 0600 hours without the DCO approval
- ❖ Interior training is to be completed by 2200 hours.
  - Approval may be given by the DCO, to extend the training during special times i.e. weekends. Discretion should be given considering how training may affect members sleeping, working etc



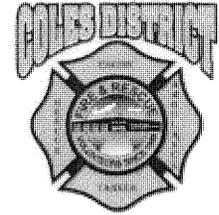
## VEHICLE CHECK OFF LOG AND PROCEDURES

- ❖ This form will be completed any time ANY company vehicle is staffed or is to be driven/operated (minus emergency circumstances) by the vehicle operator
- ❖ Completed forms will be submitted to the designated drop before the end of the shift
- ❖ For each of the items listed on the form, place an X if any defects are found or a particular item is N/A.
  - On the reverse side, describe the reason (damage, operational defects missing or inoperative equipment item/s along with any corrective action taken and chief officer notified)



## VEHICLE CHECK OFF LOG AND PROCEDURES

- ❖ Any serious issues (significant damage, safety concern, etc.) shall be immediately brought to the attention of:
  - the Chief Engineer
  - a chief officer
  - and noted on this form.
  
- ❖ Failure to complete this inspection will result in loss of driving privileges for 5 days for the first occurrence.
  
- ❖ Second and subsequent offenses will result in loss of driving privileges for no less than 15 days.

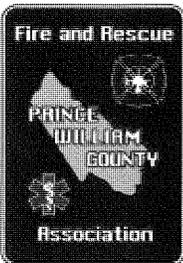


## VEHICLE CHECK OFF LOG AND PROCEDURES

Vehicle:	Date:	Time:
Inspector 1 Name:	Inspector 1 Signature:	
Inspector 2 Name:	Inspector 2 Signature:	
Current Mileage:	MDC: Yes (# _____ )	No
Reason For Vehicle Use:		
Officer Direct on Vehicle Use:	Chief Officer Review:	Date:

EXTERIOR		INTERIOR	
	Damage Free/Clean Exterior		Damage Free/Clean Interior
	Clean Exterior		Radio System
	Tires, Tire Pressure and Wheel Covers		Siren/PA System (if applicable)
	All Vehicle Lights (including Emergency Lights)		MDC
	Spare Tire and Jack		Safety pad
	Generators		Fire Extinguisher
	Tools		Fuel Level $\frac{3}{4}$ or More
	Brakes		Full Box of Flares
	Mechanical		Roll of Fire Line Tape
	Miscellaneous Exterior (Note on back)		Helmet Identifiers
			Air Packs
			Portable Radios
			Portable Radio Pouch and strap

Appendix C - FRA Emergency Directive

	<b>PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION EMERGENCY DIRECTIVE</b>		NUMBER	1.8.2	
			PAGE	1 of 3	
	TITLE	<b>Stabilization and Review of Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad</b>		IMPLEMENTATION DATE	08/28/12
	CHAPTER	1	Administration	<i>KJM</i>	
SECTION	8	Emergency Directives			

1. **Purpose:**

1.1. On August 28, 2012, the operational leadership (Chief and two Assistant Chiefs) of Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad tendered their resignation, effective 2359 hours. Concurrent with the resignations, these individuals referenced numerous deficiencies which, if accurate, would constitute a material failure to provide those services outlined in and required by the 2009 Contract between Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad (“Coles”) and the Prince William County Board of Supervisors. Pending an investigation of the above cited deficiencies and in the face of the inherent instability caused by a mass resignation of leadership as has happened at Coles, this Emergency Directive is issued to assure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and members of the fire and rescue system and to assist Coles in fulfilling all obligations outlined in the 2009 Contract.

2. **Authority:**

2.1. Section 9.1-14 of Article I, Chapter 9.1 provides that “the chair shall have the authority to issue emergency directives, which shall constitute Policies and Procedures upon issuance.” Emergency directives shall be valid for no more than 120 days following issuance and shall not be renewed except through the adoption of an FRA Policy or Procedure with respect to the subject matter of the emergency directive.

3. **Definitions:** (in alphabetical order)

3.1. None.

4. **Directive:**

4.1. The Department of Fire and Rescue (DFR) will perform the following:

4.1.1. Assume immediate responsibility and oversight for the provision of emergency services from Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

- 4.1.2. Assume administrative roles and functions currently held by Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad members, as deemed necessary and appropriate to ensure continuity of service provisions until such time it can be determined the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad can comply with their Agreement for Provision of Fire and Rescue Services.
- 4.2. The Fire and Rescue Association (FRA) will perform the following:
  - 4.2.1. The Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee will establish and appoint members to a FRA Task Force for review of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad (titled Coles Review Task Force). Members will include two volunteer chiefs, one volunteer president and one DFR assistant chief.
- 4.3. Coles Review Task Force will perform the following:
  - 4.3.1. Will immediately begin a comprehensive review of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad organization and their ability to provide services and effectively administer organization responsibilities and functions.
  - 4.3.2. Will provide monthly progress reports to the FRA Executive Committee during the course of their review.
  - 4.3.3. Will make recommendations to the DFR Chief on operational and administrative matters which justify actions in advance of a FRA Executive Committee meeting.
  - 4.3.4. Will develop an action plan to address current and future stability and sustainability at the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad station and to ensure provisions of fire and rescue services.
  - 4.3.5. Will make a full report and presentation at the conclusion of their assignment to the FRA Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
- 4.4. Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad members will perform the following:
  - 4.4.1. All members affiliated with Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad shall comply with this Emergency Directive.
  - 4.4.2. All members affiliated with Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad shall cooperate with the FRA Coles Review Task Force and comply with any direction from the DFR Chief and FRA actions.

4.4.3. All members affiliated with Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad shall comply with FRA policies and procedures while performing operational and administrative functions in cooperation with DFR leadership and direction.

5. **Responsibilities:**

5.1. **Fire and Rescue Association Chair**

Prepare and present to the Executive Committee a summary of this Emergency Directive at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

5.2. **Executive Committee**

Receive this Emergency Directive summary from the Fire and Rescue Association Chair.

Consider the Emergency Directive and any comments or other input from the Board of Directors.

Adopt a final proposed policy/procedure to present to the Board of Directors on December 19, 2012, for ratification, rejection, modification, or deferral.

**AGREEMENT FOR PROVISION OF FIRE AND/OR RESCUE SERVICES**

**THIS AGREEMENT** is made this 29<sup>th</sup> day of AUGUST, 2009, by and between the **BOARD OF COUNTY SUPERVISORS OF PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA** ("County") and the **COLES DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**, a Virginia Corporation ("Company").

**WITNESSETH:**

**WHEREAS**, to assist in the administration and coordination of fire and rescue services, the County has created the Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association ("Association"); and

**WHEREAS**, the Company has been duly organized pursuant to Title 27, VA Code Ann., and other applicable law with the approval of the County to provide fire and/or rescue services as a volunteer company to the residents of Prince William County; and

**WHEREAS**, the County desires to contract with the Company to continue to provide fire and/or rescue services in Prince William County; and

**WHEREAS**, nothing in this Agreement is intended, nor shall it be construed to make any volunteer company or any member of a volunteer company, an employee of Prince William County;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, this Agreement is entered into upon the following provisions:

**A. THE COUNTY AGREES AS FOLLOWS:**

1. In consideration for the Company's provision of fire and/or rescue services in accordance with Chapter 9.1, applicable federal and state provisions, other relevant Prince William County Code provisions, and Fire and Rescue Association Policies and Procedures ("FRAPPs") duly adopted, the County will allocate fire levy funds to the Company as outlined in Chapter 9.1.

**B. THE COMPANY AGREES AS FOLLOWS:**

## Appendix D - Agreement for Provision of Fire and/or Rescue Services

1. The Company will remain at all times a member in good standing of the Association, pursuant to Chapter 9.1 and any bylaws of the Company and the Association.
2. The Company will implement, comply with, and be subject to all FRAPPs and all provisions of Chapter 9.1.
3. The Company will provide fire and/or rescue services in accordance with Chapter 9.1, FRAPPs, and other applicable County, State, and Federal regulations.
4. County allocation of funds to the Company, either directly or indirectly, shall be contingent on compliance with the laws, policies and regulations identified herein, and set forth in Chapter 9.1.

### **C. TERM OF CONTRACT:**

The term of this Agreement shall be one year from the date of its execution. This Agreement shall be automatically renewed for successive one year periods, without limitation. This Agreement shall be subject to annual review by the County and the Association. In each year after the first full year this Agreement is in effect, the Association shall meet with the County Executive or the County Executive's designee, not later than December of that year, for the purpose of reviewing the contents of this Agreement. This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect unless terminated in accordance with Section D below.

### **D. DISSOLUTION AND TERMINATION:**

1. This Agreement shall be deemed terminated upon the dissolution of the Company by the Board of County Supervisors for any reason, pursuant to Va. Code Ann. § 27-10.
2. Upon dissolution, title that the Company holds to any and all real and personal property purchased, maintained, or repaired by the Company, the acquisition of which was funded in whole or in part with public funds, shall automatically vest in the Board of County Supervisors and shall so remain until and unless the Board of County Supervisors determines otherwise.

## Appendix D - Agreement for Provision of Fire and/or Rescue Services

3. The County shall, upon such dissolution, assume all of the Company's lawfully incurred liabilities that were so incurred in whole or in part with funds provided by the County for the provision of fire and rescue services in the County, and will assume responsibility for the provision of fire and rescue services in the area theretofore served by the Company, through the Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue, and the ownership of the real and personal property of the dissolved Company shall remain with the County in order to maintain fire and rescue services in the area.

4. Upon dissolution, any portion of the real property that formerly belonged to the Company that is not routinely used for the provision of fire and rescue services and which had, while in the ownership of the company, been made available for use to and by the community for social, civic, or other functions, will continue to be made available for those uses, subject to reasonable regulation by the Board or any successor in title for the use of that portion of the real property for the provision of fire and rescue services.

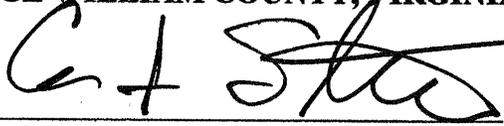
5. The purpose of the provisions of Paragraph D hereof is to ensure, to the extent possible, the continuous, uninterrupted provision of fire and rescue service to the area served by the Company. These provisions shall be interpreted and applied to achieve this purpose.

### **E. TERMS OF EFFECTIVENESS OF AGREEMENT:**

This Agreement shall be effective upon the enactment of Prince William Code Chapter 9.1, Fire Protection and Prevention, following public hearing, by the Board of County Supervisors. This Agreement shall continue in effect for so long as Chapter 9.1, Article I, of the Prince William County Code remains in effect, and it shall survive all amendments to Chapter 9.1, Article I, provided the ordinance of amendment so states. The provisions of Chapter 9.1 of the Prince William County Code shall supersede this agreement to the extent that there is a conflict.

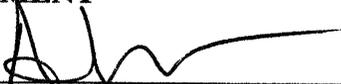
IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have duly executed this Agreement as of  
the day and year set out above.

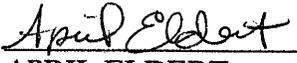
**BOARD OF COUNTY SUPERVISORS OF  
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

By:   
COREY A. STEWART  
Chairman

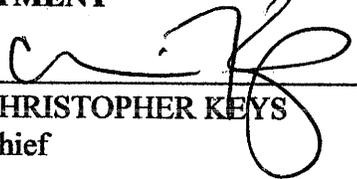
ATTEST:  
  
PHILLIP CAMPBELL  
Clerk to the Board

**COLES DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE  
DEPARTMENT**

By:   
ADAM ELDERT  
President

ATTEST:  
  
APRIL ELDERT  
Corporate Secretary

**COLES DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE  
DEPARTMENT**

By:   
CHRISTOPHER KEYS  
Chief

ATTEST:  
  
APRIL ELDERT  
Corporate Secretary

§ 27-10. Dissolution of company.

Whenever the fire/EMS department of the city, town, or county to which any fire/EMS company belongs shall ascertain that such company has failed, for three months successively, to consist of twenty effective members in the case of a fire company, or ascertain that it has failed for the like period to have or keep in good and serviceable condition, an engine, hose, emergency medical services vehicle and equipment and other proper implements, or the governing body of the county, city or town for any reason deems it advisable, such governing body may dissolve the company.

(Code 1919, § 3136; 1970, c. 187; 2001, c. [142](#).)

# **By-Laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad**

*Adopted Jan. 8, 2011; effective Feb. 1, 2011.*

<b>Article I: Title and Mission Statement</b>	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Article II: Authority and Rules of Governance</b> Describing the various governing bodies and documents that affect the way the department conducts its business.	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Article III: Membership</b> Defining six membership categories and their minimum requirements, as well as each category's voting and leadership rights.	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Article IV: Officers and Board of Directors</b> Defining qualifications, duties and terms of all elected officials	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Article V: Membership Duties and Responsibilities</b> Defining members' duties and consequences for failure to fulfill them.	<b>page 6</b>
<b>Article VI: Leave</b> Describing various forms of leave, both voluntary and involuntary.	<b>page 10</b>
<b>Article VII: Meetings</b> Scheduling of monthly and annual meetings and attendance requirements.	<b>page 11</b>
<b>Article VIII: Elections</b> Determining the qualifications of candidates, the conduct of elections, the use of absentee ballots and a pledge requirement.	<b>page 11</b>
<b>Article IX: Appeals and Impeachment Committee</b> Describing procedures for appealing disciplinary measures, and for bringing charges against elected officials.	<b>page 13</b>
<b>Article X: Other Committees</b>	<b>page 15</b>
<b>Article XI: Career Firefighters</b>	<b>page 16</b>
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<b>Article XIII: Disbandment</b>	<b>page 16</b>

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

**Article I: Title and Mission Statement**

*Section 1:* The organization described herein shall be known as the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, otherwise referred to as "the department."

*Section 2:* The mission of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad is to provide rapid emergency response, competent emergency medical care, effective fire suppression and protection, disaster preparedness and public safety education to protect the lives and property of those who live, work and visit Prince William County and the surrounding area.

**Article II: Authority and Rules of Governance**

*Section 1:* The department shall be governed by its members, subject to the requirements of these by-laws, the department's articles of incorporation, the rules and regulations of the Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association, and county, state and federal law.

*Section 2:* Department members shall attend regular monthly meetings to conduct the department's business, as further described in Article VII. All decisions requiring membership approval shall be made by majority vote, determined by a show of hands. A quorum of 12 or of 20% of eligible voting members, whichever is greater, must be present before any membership meeting can be initiated. Proxy votes may be assigned by voting members except as otherwise proscribed by these by-laws, under such circumstances as shall be further defined by standard operating procedures.

*Section 3:* Department business shall be conducted between meetings by the department's board of directors and its elected officers, defined in Article IV. The department president shall be responsible for issuing administrative rules and regulations governing the department's business operations, to be known as administrative standard operating procedures (SOPs). The department chief shall be responsible for issuing operational rules and regulations governing the use and staffing of department apparatus, as well as rules and regulations pertaining to operational personnel roles and responsibilities, to be known as the chief's standard operating procedures.

*Section 4:* Additional rules and regulations governing the department, to be known as departmental standard operating procedures, also may be adopted by a majority of the members voting at a regular monthly meeting; provided, however, that such departmental regulations may not conflict with SOPs already issued by the department president or chief and must conform to the limitations of Section 1 above.

**Article III: Membership**

*Section 1:* Department membership shall consist of full members, life members, no more than five flex-schedule members, no more than 5 junior members, associates and honorary members.

*Section 2:* Candidates for department membership must be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma, or be at least 16 if applying for junior membership, and must live, work or worship in Prince William County, Manassas, Manassas

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

Park or a county bordering Prince William. Candidates shall be interviewed by the membership committee, described in Article X, which shall review each application and prepare a recommendation for membership vote. In unusual circumstances, as determined by the membership chair, the decision to bring an application to the full membership may be deferred to a majority vote of the membership chair, the president and the chief.

*Section 3:* All new candidates for full, flex-schedule, junior or associate membership shall serve a minimum probationary period of six months. After six months the department's members shall vote to accept or reject the candidate or to extend his or her probationary status for no more than an additional six months, after which a second vote will be held. No member may remain on probation for more than 12 consecutive months. Members on probationary status may not vote or be elected to office, but otherwise have all the duties and responsibilities of membership. Past members returning to active membership shall be placed on a probationary period whose length shall be determined by membership vote.

*Section 4:* Membership categories:

A. Full members are those assigned to a duty crew and must log a minimum of 30 hours of such service each month. Full members are required to enroll in a Prince William County-recognized entry-level firefighter or Emergency Medical Technician course within their first six months, provided such courses are available; and, to be in good standing, thereafter must either be enrolled in a firefighter or EMT course or must maintain minimum certification as a firefighter or EMT. Full members also are required to attend monthly membership meetings, to comply with standard operating procedures and to conform to the decisions of the board and of the membership. Full members in good standing have voting rights and may be elected or appointed to any department office for which they are qualified.

B. Flex-schedule membership is open to non-probationary full members who because of significant life changes are unable to maintain their commitment to a regular shift. Requests for flex-schedule status must be made to the membership for an initial period of no more than three months, and may be extended an additional three months at the membership's discretion. No member may retain flex-membership status for more than six consecutive months. To remain in good standing, flex-schedule members must log a minimum of 30 hours of service a month by staffing apparatus without a fixed schedule, and must meet the same training and participation requirements as full members. Flex-schedule members may vote but not hold office.

C. Junior members are at least 16 years old and in high school or are high school graduates under the age of 18. Junior member participation in department activities may be limited by the department chief or department president, or by membership vote establishing standard operating procedures that define minimum school performance, duty hours and other requirements for junior participation. Non-probationary junior members may vote but not hold office.

D. Associate members are those who wish to join the department in a support capacity and not as emergency responders. Associate members are required to undergo the same application procedure as operational members, likewise shall have a six-month probationary period and are required to attend monthly membership meetings and to comply with all standard operating procedures. Associate members may choose between two levels of participation:

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

a) Full associates are required to document 30 hours of service every month to remain in good standing, defined in Article V, and upon successfully completing probation shall attain the right to vote and to hold office for which they are qualified.

b) Limited associates are required to document 30 hours of service every three months, but do not qualify to vote or to hold office.

E. Life members are operational or associate members who have completed 10 or more years of service; or who are at least 55 years old with at least five consecutive years of service. Life members who wish to be inactive are entitled to all rights and privileges of membership established by these by-laws; except they may not vote or hold office unless they first log a minimum of 30 hours of service a month for at least six consecutive months.

F. Honorary membership may be bestowed by membership vote on any non-member in recognition of outstanding support and service to the department. Honorary membership, however, confers neither responsibilities nor rights or privileges.

*Section 5:* In addition to the membership categories defined above, the department chief or his authorized subordinate may occasionally need to deputize a non-member for limited purposes, including but not limited to assisting in emergencies, for ride-alongs as observers or for business reasons. Deputized members may retain such status only for the duration of the event for which their assistance has been enlisted and do not acquire any of the rights, privileges or responsibilities of regular department membership. The names of deputized members, as well as the reason for and duration of their deputy status, shall be reported to the board of directors at its next regular meeting by the chief or his authorized subordinate.

**Article IV: Officers and Board of Directors**

*Section 1:* The department's affairs shall be overseen by an elected board of directors and its elected officers. The department's elected officers shall include a president and vice president, who shall be responsible for managing the department's administrative business; the department chief, who has final responsibility for all of the department's operational aspects; the assistant chief fire, who supervises the department's fire-fighting division; and the assistant chief EMS, also known as the rescue chief, who supervises the department's emergency medical services division.

The board of directors shall consist of the president, vice president, chief, two assistant chiefs and four at-large directors. Terms of office for the vice president, two assistant chiefs and two of the four directors are one year. Terms of office for the president and chief and for two of the four directors shall be two years, with the president and chief elected in alternate years; the two-year directors likewise are to be elected in alternate years.

*Section 2:* The minimum requirements for officers and board members are as follows:

A. The department president shall have been an operational or full associate member in good standing for at least five consecutive years prior to election, including at least one year on the board in a different elected capacity. The department president may not be related by blood or marriage to either the department chief or the vice president.

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

B. The department vice president shall have been an operational or full associate member for at least three consecutive years prior to election, including at least one year on the board in a different elected capacity. The vice president may not be related by blood or marriage to either the department president or the department chief.

C. The department chief shall have been an operational member for at least five consecutive years prior to election. The department chief may not be related by blood or marriage to either the department president or the vice president.

D. The department assistant chief fire, also known as the assistant chief, shall have been an operational member for at least four consecutive years prior to election.

E. The department assistant chief EMS, also known as the rescue chief, shall have been an operational member for at least four consecutive years prior to election.

F. Each of the two-year at-large directors shall have been an operational or full associate member in good standing for at least two years post-probation prior to election. Each of the one-year at-large directors shall have been an operational or full associate member in good standing for at least one year post-probation prior to election.

G. No officer or at-large board member may hold more than one elected position at a time.

*Section 3:* The duties and responsibilities of each officer and of the board of directors are as follows:

A. The department president is its chief administrative officer, responsible for the department's day-to-day business affairs and for representing the department before the public, the Prince William County Board of Supervisors and other elected officials. The president's duties are as follows:

a) The president shall preside over departmental meetings; may appoint chairs for committees other than the appeals and impeachment committee and serve as an ex officio member of all committees other than the appeals and impeachment committee, described in Article IX; prepare and submit an annual operating budget, together with proposed capital improvements, to the board of directors and, with its approval, to the Fire and Rescue Association; attend conferences and meetings relevant to the department's mission; and in all ways work to ensure the department has the resources it needs to perform its mission. The president also shall ensure that each member receives a copy of these by-laws.

b) The president shall have the authority to issue and maintain rules related to his duties, known as administrative standard operating procedures. These standard operating procedures shall be provided to the secretary to be maintained in a form readily accessible to all members, who will be responsible for knowing their contents.

c) The president shall at all times keep the department vice president apprised of his or her efforts and decisions on behalf of the department.

d) The president shall appoint a secretary, whose duties are as follows:

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

i) The secretary shall maintain a record of department and board of directors meetings and make them available to department members in a readily accessible form; shall make available absentee and proxy forms to members unable to attend monthly meetings; and shall notify members via departmental e-mail when they are no longer in good standing, as defined in Article V.

ii) The secretary also shall maintain all departmental governing documents and add to, amend or delete their contents following any changes. A copy of these documents shall be kept in a form readily accessible to all members.

e) The president also may appoint additional administrative officers, such as a sergeant-at-arms, as needed.

B. The department vice president shall chair the board of directors and assist the president in carrying out his or her duties. The vice president shall assume the president's duties and responsibilities in the president's absence or at the president's request, except that the vice president may not issue standard operating procedures.

C. The department chief is its chief operating officer, responsible for planning, organizing, directing and implementing the department's work in fire prevention and fire suppression; for representing the department before the public, the Prince William County Board of Supervisors and other elected officials; and, in coordination with the rescue chief, overseeing its emergency medical services. The chief's duties are as follows:

a) The chief shall establish department policies and procedures to ensure compliance with Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association standards and directives; may appoint chairs for all department operational committees and appoint members to task groups and committees external to the department; plan and oversee programs to maintain professional standards; respond to emergency calls and direct activities at major emergencies as required; maintain department discipline; and attend conferences and meetings to keep abreast of developments in firefighter and EMS training, equipment and science.

b) The chief shall have the authority to issue and maintain rules related to his duties, known as the chief's standard operating procedures. These standard operating procedures shall be provided to the secretary to be maintained in a form readily accessible to all members, who will be responsible for knowing their contents.

c) The department chief may appoint additional operational officers, such as a chief engineer, as needed.

d) If operational needs dictate, the department chief may seek membership approval to change the command structure by adding or removing line officers above the level of captain not already required by these by-laws. Such newly created positions shall have one-year terms of office and shall be filled by membership election in the same manner as other officers. Candidates for such newly established positions must have operational experience consistent with the minimum requirements for officers in a similar position, as described in Section 2 of this Article.

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

D. The assistant chief fire, under the general guidance and direction of the department chief, is responsible for planning, organizing, directing and implementing the department's fire prevention and suppression activities. The assistant fire chief shall assume the chief's duties and responsibilities in the chief's absence or at the chief's request, except that the assistant chief may not issue standard operating procedures. The assistant chief's duties are as follows:

a) The assistant chief shall implement and oversee adherence to the department chief's policies and procedures; assign firefighting personnel and equipment; oversee the day-to-day operations of the department's fire division; evaluate department needs for training and equipment and advise the chief accordingly; handle grievances; establish training, performance and behavioral standards for fire-fighting personnel; and attend conferences and meetings to keep abreast of developments in firefighting training, equipment and science.

b) The assistant chief may appoint additional line officers, in consultation with the chief, as follows:

i) Up to two captains, who shall have been active members in good standing for at least two consecutive years post-probation;

ii) Up to four lieutenants and four sergeants, each of whom shall have been an active member in good standing for at least one year post-probation.

E. The assistant chief EMS (also known as the rescue chief), under the general guidance and direction of the department chief, is responsible for planning, organizing, directing and implementing the department's emergency medical services. The rescue chief's duties are as follows:

a) The rescue chief shall implement and oversee adherence to the department chief's policies and procedures regarding emergency medical services; evaluate the department's EMS operations and advise the chief on training and equipment needs; assign EMS personnel and equipment as needed; handle grievances; establish training, performance and behavioral standards for EMS personnel; and attend conferences and meetings to keep abreast of developments in EMS training, equipment and science.

b) The rescue chief may appoint additional line officers, in consultation with the chief, as follows:

i) Up to two captains, who shall have been active members in good standing for at least two consecutive years post-probation;

ii) Up to four lieutenants and four sergeants, each of whom shall have been an active member in good standing for at least one year post-probation.

F. The board of directors shall provide administrative oversight of all department affairs and has fiduciary responsibility for managing the department's financial and other assets, as follows:

a) The board of directors shall meet at least once a month at the firehouse, with at

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

least 14 days' notice to the members, who shall be welcome to attend as observers. Decisions of the board shall be by majority vote; the chairman of the board shall not vote except to break a tie.

b) Board meetings shall be chaired by the department vice-president. In the event the vice president is unable to attend or the position is temporarily vacant, board meetings shall be chaired by its most senior member present, defined as the member with longest continuous service on the board.

c) The board shall approve all expenditures, review all capital improvement proposals and review and modify as needed the annual budget submitted by the president. The board may establish guidelines for spending without its prior approval by the president, the chief or their designated subordinates to meet routine minor expenses or emergencies, but shall review such expenditures on a monthly basis to ensure its guidelines are being met.

d) The board shall hire a bookkeeper from outside the department to maintain the department's financial accounts, at a level of compensation to be determined by the board. The bookkeeper shall be bonded.

e) The board shall retain a certified public accountant to conduct an annual audit of the department's books and shall post the audit within 30 days' of its completion in a readily accessible place within the firehouse.

f) The board has the authority to review, modify or strike standard operating procedures issued by the president or chief, and shall be accessible to members seeking such review or modification.

g) The four at-large directors shall serve as the department's appeals and impeachment committee, as described in Article IX.

h) Minutes of each meeting shall be made available by the secretary in a readily accessible form to all department members within two weeks of such meetings. Appended to the minutes shall be a report of money received and disbursed by the department over the previous month, together with a statement of account balances.

**Article V: Membership Duties and Responsibilities**

*Section 1:* No active or associate member may vote or hold elected office unless he or she is in good standing with the department. To maintain good standing, members must:

A. If on operational status, be enrolled in a Prince William County-recognized course for Emergency Medical Technicians or firefighters within the first six months of being accepted as probationary members, provided such courses are available; and upon successful completion of such a course, maintain at least minimum certification as an entry-level EMT or firefighter.

B. Meet the relevant minimum service requirement: a regular crew assignment for active members, with at least 30 hours of service a month; 30 hours a month for flex members; 30 hours a month for full associates; and 30 hours every three months for limited associates. Missed hours may be made up in subsequent months, as defined in the administrative

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standard operating procedures.

C. Obey all lawful commands of superior officers.

D. Attend regular monthly meetings, as described in Article VII; or, when unable to attend, provide the proper documentation and assign a proxy vote if desired.

E. Maintain a professional appearance and decorum while at the firehouse, when responding to calls and when participating in other events as a representative of the department.

*Section 2:* In order to enforce the requirements of this article, the department shall maintain records for each member that include training courses attempted and completed; hours of service contributed on a monthly basis; attendance at monthly meetings and other department-sponsored activities; and disciplinary action taken, if any.

*Section 3:* Members failing to meet their duties and responsibilities may be placed on suspension, as follows:

A. Members failing to meet the requirements of Section I, paragraphs A, B and E of this Article shall be reminded of their obligations by the president or chief or their designated subordinates. Repeated failure to meet these requirements may result in a suspension of up to three months, to be determined by the president or chief at his or her discretion.

B. Members failing to obey lawful commands of elected or line officers while they are representing the department, or who fail to conform with the department's governing documents, may be placed on immediate suspension by such officers for up to seven days. Upon request of such officers or upon their own initiative, the chief, assistant chiefs, president or vice president may increase such suspensions up to 30 days. Alternative disciplinary measures may be taken by officers with prior approval of the chief, either assistant chief, president or vice president. Repeated failure to obey lawful commands may result in suspension by the department chief for up to six months.

C. Suspended members are considered not in good standing and therefore must cease all department involvement during the suspension period as ordered. Suspended members may be barred from the department's premises, unless their attendance is requested by the president or chief; may be required to suspend attendance at any classes underwritten by the department for the duration of the suspension; may lose their voting privileges; may be barred from participating in any department-related conferences, special trips or events; may be ineligible to receive any new department-issued apparel or other items; and may not qualify for other benefits accruing to members in good standing, including county or state exemptions provided to volunteer fire and rescue personnel and participation in the LOSAP retirement program.

D. The names of any members placed on suspension or demoted in rank, as well as the length of any disciplinary action, shall be made known to the membership at the start of the discipline.

E. A suspended member may appeal the discipline to the board of directors' appeals and impeachment committee, as described in Article IX. Lodging an appeal, however, does

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

not lift the suspension, which shall remain in place unless the appeals committee votes to revoke or modify it.

*Section 4:* Members who fail to correct the behavior that resulted in suspension may be expelled from the department, as follows:

A. Operational members failing to complete certification as an EMT or firefighter within 18 months of joining the department; or who fail to meet the requirements of Section 1, paragraphs B or E, for a third time within a period of two years; or who fail to obey the lawful commands of superior officers while in the line of duty for a second time within a period of one year, may be nominated for expulsion at a regular membership meeting by any elected officer or director.

B. Notice of such a motion must be provided to the member facing expulsion at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, and that member must be given an opportunity, if in attendance, to address the membership on his or her own behalf prior to a vote being taken. Expulsion shall be determined by a majority of those voting and may not be appealed.

*Section 5:* Members who miss two consecutive monthly meetings without proper notification, as described in Article VII, Section 4, shall be notified promptly by the secretary, via station e-mail, that a third consecutive missed meeting without proper notification shall be deemed an abandonment of the department. The secretary's notification shall explain that a third consecutive unexplained absence will result in a motion at that meeting to expel the absent member.

A. Members expelled for non-attendance have a right of appeal to the appeals and impeachment committee, as described in Article IX.

*Section 6:* In addition to their departmental responsibilities, members have a responsibility to maintain a trustworthy image within the community. Therefore, any member who is arrested, receives a moving violation or is notified that he or she is being investigated by law enforcement authorities must promptly notify the president and chief of the arrest or investigation and may be placed on administrative leave, as defined in Article VI, pending a resolution of the situation. Failure to provide prompt notification shall result in an indefinite suspension, as defined in Section 3, Paragraph C of this Article, to remain in effect until the underlying situation has been resolved.

A. Any member found guilty in a court of law of a felony or Class 1 misdemeanor shall be automatically dismissed from the department.

**Article VI: Leave**

*Section 1:* Personal leave may be extended to any member by the board because of circumstances precluding his or her ability to meet departmental responsibilities, including but not limited to jury duty, medical leave, military service or temporary job assignment out of the area. The president shall formulate standard operating procedures, to be approved by a majority vote of the board, describing for each kind of personal leave who qualifies for the leave, leave limitations, and expectations of members while on leave, if any.

*Section 2:* The department president, vice president, chief or assistant chiefs may place a member on administrative leave during an investigation by law enforcement authorities, as

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

described in Article V, Section 6; or during an internal department investigation into charges of wrongdoing. The president shall formulate standard operating procedures, to be approved by a majority vote of the board, describing the rights and responsibilities of members placed on such leave.

*Section 3:* Department officers on personal or administrative leave for more than 30 days shall resign their office, at which time a special election for a successor shall be held, as outlined in Article VIII.

**Article VII: Meetings**

*Section 1:* The department shall conduct its business at meetings the first Tuesday of each month, except that any meeting other than the annual meeting may be rescheduled by a majority vote of the membership at a regular monthly meeting. Notice of the new meeting date and time must be posted prominently in the station within one week of a vote to reschedule, at which time all members also shall be notified of the change via departmental e-mail.

*Section 2:* Monthly meetings may be postponed in extreme circumstances, in which members' safety may be jeopardized, by mutual agreement of the president and chief, who shall notify members of the rescheduled date and time as promptly as possible via the department's e-mail system and by prominent posting in the station. If continuing extreme circumstances require a second postponement, the president and chief may by mutual agreement cancel that month's meeting, with similar prompt notification to the membership.

*Section 3:* The department's annual meeting shall be held the first Tuesday in June. The department's officers and directors shall be elected at that time, as described in Article VIII.

*Section 4:* All members in good standing are expected to attend the department's monthly meetings. Members who cannot attend a meeting because of conflicting commitments shall notify the department secretary at least two hours prior to the meeting of their anticipated absence, on a form provided for that purpose by the secretary. Members who repeatedly fail to attend meetings without providing prior documentation explaining their absence will be subject to disciplinary measures, as described in Article V. Absent members may assign their proxy vote to another member in good standing, provided they use a form provided for that purpose by the secretary and return the proxy to the secretary not less than two hours before the start of a meeting. Proxy voting without proper documentation will not be recognized.

*Section 5:* All monthly meetings shall be chaired by the president; or in the president's absence, by the vice president; or in the president's and vice president's absence, by the chief. The conduct of each meeting and its order of business shall follow but not be limited by Robert's Rules of Order. The department secretary shall keep minutes of each monthly meeting and make them available to all members in a readily accessible form no more than two weeks after each meeting.

*Section 6:* The president may appoint a parliamentarian to settle disputes about meeting procedures, and may appoint a sergeant-at-arms to help maintain order at meetings.

**Article VIII: Elections**

*Section 1:* Election of the officers and directors described in Article IV shall take place at the

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

department's annual meeting, with newly elected officers and directors assuming office at 0001 hours July 1. All operational members in good standing and full associates in good standing, as defined in Article V, are eligible to vote but must be present to cast a ballot unless submitting an absentee ballot, as described below. Proxy ballots will not be recognized in the election of officers and directors.

*Section 2:* The nominating committee shall present a list of all members eligible for each office to the general membership at its April meeting. Candidate eligibility will be determined using June 30 as the cut-off date for length-of-service requirements for each office; existing certifications will be used to determine eligibility under the county's uniform rank structure requirements for line officers. Members who have not made qualifying certifications available to the nominating committee, or who achieve additional qualifying certifications by the end of the month, have until April 30 to submit such certifications to the committee. No changes in eligibility will be allowed for that election cycle after April 30.

*Section 3:* Nominations of candidates shall be made by the nominating committee at the May monthly meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, at which time the nominating committee will ensure that any such nominees are qualified for the offices for which they have been nominated. No additional nominations will be accepted once the May monthly meeting has adjourned.

*Section 4:* The nominating committee chair shall be responsible for preparing and making readily available absentee ballots to all department members within two weeks after the May meeting. Such ballots will list all qualified candidates nominated for each office at the May meeting and shall be made available in both paper and electronic forms. Paper ballots must be signed by the voting member to be counted; members wishing to preserve the secrecy of their ballot may instead place an unsigned ballot into a plain envelope, which in turn shall be placed into a larger sealed envelope that shall be signed to confirm the voter's identity. E-mailed ballots that are not sent from a voting member's departmental e-mail account will not be counted. Absentee ballots in any form must be received by the secretary no less than two hours before the start of the annual meeting to be counted.

*Section 5:* Any department member standing for election or corporate officer must agree to sign a waiver and pledge, prior to taking office, acknowledging that he or she is a public official who will enforce and comply with these by-laws.

*Section 6:* Election shall be by secret ballot, in the following order: president or chief, vice president, assistant chief fire, assistant chief EMS, one of two two-year directors and both one-year directors. The candidate receiving more than 50% of the votes cast for a position shall be declared the winner. If there are more than two candidates for a position and none receives at least 50% of all votes cast, a run-off election shall be held between the two-highest vote getters and the candidate receiving the most votes shall be declared the winner. If there is only one candidate for a position, that candidate shall be declared winner by acclamation.

*Section 7:* A member may be nominated for more than one position, but may not serve in more than one elected capacity at the same time. A member with multiple nominations shall have his or her name withdrawn from all subsequent balloting once he or she wins an office.

*Section 8:* If an elected position falls vacant more than 120 days before the annual meeting,

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nominations to temporarily fill the position shall be taken from the floor at the first monthly meeting following establishment of the vacancy and a special election will be held at the next monthly meeting, following the procedure described above. An officer elected in a special election will serve the full unexpired portion of the term.

**Article IX: Appeals and Impeachment Committee**

*Section 1:* The department's four at-large directors shall serve as its appeals and impeachment committee, empowered to hear appeals from members placed on suspension and to hear impeachment charges brought against an elected officer. The committee also shall hear appeals from department members expelled without a membership vote, as provided in Article V, Section 5A.

*Section 2:* Appeals regarding suspensions shall be conducted as follows:

A. Any department member placed on suspension for more than one week may file an appeal with the appeals and impeachment committee. Appeals must be filed in writing, with a copy provided to each of the four directors, and may be delivered via the department's e-mail system or in hard copy to each of the committee members' station mailboxes.

B. Appeals must include the appellant's name, the name of the disciplining officer and the officer's stated reasons for the suspension. The written appeal also must include an account of the events leading up to the suspension, as the disciplined member understands them, and a statement explaining why the discipline is excessive or unfair and why it should be overturned or modified.

C. On receiving an appeal, the committee shall provide a copy to the disciplining officer and shall convene a hearing at the department station within seven days of the filing, with prompt notice of the hearing date and time provided to the disciplining officer and the appellant. Hearings shall be scheduled for non-working hours, and the committee shall make every effort to accommodate the scheduling needs of all parties.

D. The committee's most senior member, defined as the member with the longest departmental tenure, shall serve as the non-voting committee chair and shall conduct the proceedings. The committee's three other members shall hear testimony, may question all witnesses and shall have equal vote in determining the outcome. A majority vote of the three voting committee members shall be required to modify or revoke a suspension.

E. The hearing shall begin with a presentation by the appellant, followed by a response from the disciplining officer, and end with a concluding statement by the appellant. Both the appellant and the disciplining officer may produce witnesses on their behalf, and may produce other evidence, if any, to support their positions. The burden of proof shall rest with the appellant to demonstrate that the discipline he or she received was arbitrary and capricious; or excessive; or driven by personal animus; or not in accordance with due process as defined in these by-laws, and the appellant shall state what relief he or she is seeking.

F. Because the burden of proof is on the appellant, his or her failure to appear at a properly scheduled hearing shall result in dismissal of the appeal and an affirmation of the discipline imposed. A dismissed appeal may not be appealed.

G. The committee has the authority to sustain, overturn or modify a suspension based on the evidence and testimony presented at an appeals hearing. It also has the authority to rebuke a disciplining officer if it finds that the officer acted out of personal animus or without respect to due process as defined in these by-laws.

*Section 3:* An appeal over automatic expulsion for abandoning the department, as described in Article V, Section 5, Paragraph A, may be filed only within the 30 days immediately after the member has been notified of the expulsion. Timely appeals must be filed in writing, with copies to each of the four committee members, and must set forth the circumstances resulting in non-attendance, the reasons for lack of proper notification to the department and why the appellant believes his or her expulsion should be set aside.

The appeal and impeachment committee shall determine whether the written appeal raises enough issues to warrant a hearing, in which case it shall schedule and conduct proceedings in the manner prescribed in Section 2 of this Article. A unanimous committee decision not to conduct a hearing, when based on the statement provided by the appellant, is final; but the dissenting vote of one of the four committee members shall be sufficient to cause a hearing to be scheduled.

*Section 4:* Any elected officer who fails to perform the duties of his office; or who misuses the powers of his or her office; or who through his or her unprofessional conduct brings disrepute to the department or casts it in an unfavorable light in the community, may be impeached according to the following procedure:

A. Any five members of the department may bring impeachment proceedings against an elected officer by signing four copies of a statement of particulars laying out the grounds for such action. The signed statements should be delivered to each of the four members of the appeals and impeachment committee, with an electronic copy sent to each at his or her department's e-mail account.

B. On receiving such a request, the committee shall provide a copy of the statement of particulars to the officer being impeached and schedule a hearing, during non-working hours, no less than 14 and no more than 30 days thereafter. Notice of the hearing and the statement of charges shall be posted in a prominent place within the department.

C. Any department member with knowledge of the alleged offenses, or of evidence disproving them or casting them in a different light, will be required to promptly communicate this information to the committee.

D. The impeachment hearing shall be open to all department members in good standing.

E. The committee's most senior member, defined as the member with the longest departmental tenure, shall prosecute the case to the rest of the committee. Prosecution of the case shall include the original statement of particulars; any additional evidence that has been presented to the committee, both in support of and in opposition to the charges; and relevant testimony from department members.

F. The impeached officer has the right to present evidence, to produce witnesses, to cross-examine witnesses and to speak on his or her own behalf. The impeached officer has the right to be represented by another department member of his or her choosing.

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G. The committee's three other members shall hear testimony and examine evidence, may question all witnesses and shall have the right to call additional witnesses, as they see fit. A unanimous vote of the three voting committee members shall be required to sustain the charges.

H. A department member found guilty of impeachable offenses shall be stripped immediately of his or her office but retains all other rights and responsibilities of department membership. The committee's decision will be final.

*Section 5:* A committee member who is appealing a suspension; or who is the subject of an impeachment proceeding; or who is a witness to the events resulting in the impeachment charge shall be excused from those proceedings. The remaining three members of the committee shall reach unanimous agreement on a temporary replacement for the recused member; but if they are unable to reach unanimous agreement, the department president shall assume the temporary role; or if the president is similarly recused, the vice president.

**Article X: Other Committees**

*Section 1:* The organizational work of the department shall be performed by several standing committees, and by such additional committees as the president or chief may from time to time appoint. Either the president or the chief shall appoint the chair of each committee, but membership on all standing committees shall be open to any operational, associate or life member in good standing. Committees shall report their activities to the general membership at each membership meeting following any committee activity, and at that time shall provide the department's secretary with a written copy of meeting minutes and any committee correspondence.

*Section 2:* The provisions of this article shall not apply to the appeals and impeachment committee, described in Article IX.

*Section 3:* The standing committees shall include the following:

A. The nominating committee shall be appointed the first Tuesday in March and charged with preparing a proposed slate of officers to present to the general membership at its regular meeting the first Tuesday in May. The nominating committee's responsibilities include the following:

a) The committee shall prepare a list of all members qualified for each position to present at the April meeting, and shall thereafter confirm that all candidates meet the minimum qualifications for the positions for which they are being nominated, as further described in Article VIII. It also will contact each candidate on its slate to confirm that he or she is prepared and willing to serve in that position if elected, and is willing to sign the waiver and pledge described in Article VIII, Section 5. The committee chair is responsible for preparing absentee ballots, as further described in Article VIII, Section 4.

b) Members of the nominating committee are not restricted from nominating themselves to any office.

B. The membership committee shall accept and review all applications for department

**By-laws of the Coles District Volunteer Fire Dept. and Rescue Squad**

membership, shall interview each applicant individually and shall contact each applicant's references. The committee also shall determine whether an applicant meets the membership requirements of Article III; shall ascertain what level of membership the applicant is seeking; and shall evaluate whether the applicant has the capacity and motivation to fulfill membership requirements. The committee chair shall present each qualified application at a general membership meeting, together with the committee's findings and its recommendation to accept or reject the applicant for membership.

**Article XI: Career Firefighters**

*Section 1:* The department chief and president or their designees shall be responsible for the daily supervision and activities of the career firefighters.

*Section 2:* All career firefighters shall be allowed to attend regular department meetings and social functions, but shall hold no office nor be allowed to vote.

**Article XII: Amendments**

Amendments to these by-laws must be proposed in writing at a regular department meeting and must be posted for a minimum of 21 days thereafter in a prominent spot within the firehouse. A vote on proposed amendments may be taken at the first regular meeting following the 21-day period, at which such proposals may be debated and modified by a majority vote of those present. Once debated and modified, amendments to these by-laws must be approved by three-fourths of voting members present and any proxies they may hold.

**Article XIII: Disbandment**

This department shall not be disbanded except in conformity with legal requirements, and then by a three-fourths vote of the membership following a published or served notice of the meeting given at least one month before the vote is taken. The vote for disbandment shall be made by roll call. Proxy votes will not be permitted.

MOTION: PALMER

May 15, 1996  
Regular Meeting  
Res. No. 96-31

SECOND: GLUFLING

RE: ENDORSEMENT OF PRIORITY UNIT STAFFING DURING  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

WHEREAS, in concert with the battalion command structure and the establishment of battalion chiefs on a 24-hour basis, each volunteer battalion has developed a listing of priority units that will be continuously staffed; and

WHEREAS, the continuous staffing of these priority units will ensure that emergency coverage will be provided County-wide by the minimum number of units necessary to maintain the proper response; and

WHEREAS, endorsement of this proposal should be done with the understanding that it will change as required based on continuing analysis of population densities, call volumes, and availability of personnel; and

WHEREAS, development of priority units will in no way preclude the staffing of additional units, and departments will be expected to meet and exceed staffing requirements as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee has reviewed the proposal and recommends its adoption;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Fire and Rescue Association does hereby endorse the attached priority unit staffing proposal.

ATTACHMENT

**Vote:**

**Ayes:** Reavis, Young, Bird, Hickerson, Palmer, Griffith, Glufling, Bizjak, Logsdon (for Sullivan),  
Rand, O'Neal, Crawford

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent from Vote:** None

**Absent from Meeting:** Mercer, Hardesty

**For information:**

Battalion Chief Kevin McGee

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*Dina L. Muddiman*

Secretary to the Fire and Rescue Association

**PRIORITY STAFFING DURING VOLUNTEER HOURS**  
**May 9, 1996**

**Goal:** To identify the deployment of priority tactical units and to attempt to achieve staffing of these units in order to ensure appropriate response to requests for fire and rescue services. Priority unit designation is based on the population density of the response area covered by each station.

**Background:** The priority unit designation was intended to provide identification of the strategic deployment of fire and rescue units in a manner that will match personnel resources to the response needs of the community. The priority staffing designation takes population density of the area covered by each station into account recognizing that such differences impact response travel time, incident call volume, and volunteer staffing pools. This designation does not preclude additional units from being staffed once the priority units are adequately staffed.

Units were selected for priority staffing based on the presumption that not all incidents can be responded to within rigorous response time goals. Response times will fall along a distribution curve in which some incidents will be within response time targets while others will exceed those same response targets. Proper evaluation of response times should therefore be determined through fractile analysis rather than by mean average analysis.

The priority unit designation will be a dynamic process that should be evaluated periodically to determine if conditions have changed or if emergency service needs are being met in a timely efficient manner and if resources are adequate to meet those needs.

**Battalion 1**

**Station 4 Medium Density**

- Rescue squad

**Station 5 Low Density**

- BLS tactical unit

**Station 8 Medium Density**

- BLS tactical unit

**Station 11 High Density**

- BLS tactical unit
- Engine company
- Medic unit

**Station 15 Low Density**

- BLS tactical unit

Note:

1. Tanker 5 and Tanker 15 will be staffed through home response.

**Battalion 4**

**Station 6 Medium Density**

- BLS transport unit
- Engine company

**Station 7 Medium Density**

- BLS unit

**Station 16 Low Density**

- Engine company (single pull) during peak period. Home response from 2300 hours until personnel leave for work.

Note:

1. Single pull to be used for special tactical unit staffing and tanker service.

**Battalion 5**

**Station 10 High Density**

- Engine company
- Ambulance company
- Medic unit

**Station 13 High Density**

- Engine company
- Medic unit
- Ambulance company

**Station 18 Medium Density**

- Engine company
- Ambulance company

**Note:**

1. Special tactical unit coverage will be provided in battalion.

**Battalion 6**

**Station 2 High Density**

- Engine company
- Ambulance company

**Station 12 High Density**

- Engine company
- Ambulance company

**Station 14 High Density**

- Engine company
- Ambulance company

Note:

1. Designates Truck Company 12 as primary special tactical unit.
2. Designates a medic unit to be in service 24 hours per day rotated between stations.

**Battalion 7**

**Station 3F High Density**

- Engine company
- BLS transport unit or medic unit

**Station 3R High Density**

- Engine company
- BLS transport unit or medic unit

**Station 17 High Density**

- Engine company
- BLS transport unit or medic unit

General Notes:

1. Engine company response will be a Class A pumper with minimum staffing requirement.
2. Medic unit distribution will be covered by Medic 13, Medic 52, and a Battalion 7 unit on the east end. Other east end medic units will rotate duty. Medic unit coverage on the west end will be covered by Medic 51 and a rotation of units in Battalion 1 and Battalion 4. Medic 52 may occasionally be transferred to the west end pending an ALS call distribution evaluation.
3. Battalion 5, 6, and 7 will have two trucks and one rescue squad. Battalion 1 will have one rescue squad and home response truck company service.

**MOTION: PETERS**

**March 21, 2007  
Regular Meeting  
Res. No. 07-09**

**SECOND: LOGSDON**

**RE: APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION TO WORK TOWARD  
STAFFING ONE ENGINE AND EITHER ONE BLS OR ALS  
TRANSPORT UNIT IN EVERY STATION**

**ACTION: APPROVED**

**WHEREAS**, the Fire and Rescue Association is charged with the responsibility to develop policy and procedures to assess the delivery of emergency services to the citizens of Prince William County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fire and Rescue Association exercised this responsibility and directed a work session to be held on priority staffing of fire and rescue units; and

**WHEREAS**, the work session resulted in multiple recommendations for the DFR Planning Office and the FRA Planning Committee to explore and make recommendations including an analysis of priority staffing of units; and

**WHEREAS**, the FRA Planning Committee has addressed these issues and recommends working toward staffing one engine and either one BLS or ALS transport unit in every station; and

**WHEREAS**, these recommendations have considerable impacts and need further study by each FRA member department for resolution;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association does hereby approve the recommendation to work toward staffing one engine and either one BLS or ALS transport unit in every station.

**Vote:**

**Ayes:** Arrington, Hoffman (for Young), Bird, Hickerson, Keys (for Barr), Baum, Davis, Griffith, Hool, Peters, Logsdon, Pitkin, McGee, Brubaker

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent from Vote:** None

**Absent from Meeting:** None

**For Information:**

Chief Tom Pitkin, FRA Planning Committee Chairman  
Battalion Chief Steve Kersse, Planning Officer, DFR

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**Secretary to the Fire and Rescue Association**

MOTION: PETERS

March 21, 2007  
Regular Meeting  
Res. No. 07-10

SECOND: LOGSDON

RE: APPROVE FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION POLICY  
TITLED STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE RESPONSE  
TIME STANDARD

ACTION: APPROVED

WHEREAS, the Fire and Rescue Association is charged with the responsibility to develop policy and procedures to assess the delivery of emergency services to the citizens of Prince William County; and

WHEREAS, the Fire and Rescue Association exercised this responsibility and directed a work session to be held on priority staffing of fire and rescue units; and

WHEREAS, the work session resulted in multiple recommendations for the DFR Planning Office and FRA Planning Committee to explore and make recommendations on the following items: provide an analysis of priority staffing of units, recommend definitions for units and measures, identify gaps from the proposed priority staffing of units and current situation, and perform a deployment study to include basic and advanced life support; and

WHEREAS, the FRA Planning Committee has addressed these issues and made recommendations included in the staff report; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Prince William County Fire and Rescue Association does hereby approve Fire and Rescue Association policy titled Standards of Performance Response Time Standard;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy shall be implemented on July 1, 2007.

Attachment

**Vote:**

**Ayes:** Arrington, Hoffman (for Young), Bird, Hickerson, Keys (for Barr), Baum, Davis, Griffith, Hool, Peters, Logsdon, Pitkin, McGee, Brubaker

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent from Vote:** None

**Absent from Meeting:** None

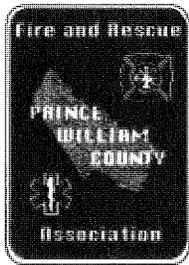
**For Information:**

Chief Tom Pitkin, Planning Committee Chairman  
Battalion Chief Steve Kersse

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Secretary to the Fire and Rescue Association



**PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY  
FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION  
POLICY**

NUMBER: 2.0.3
PAGE: 1 of 5
EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/07
ISSUED BY: <i>MSM</i>

CHAPTER: 2 – Planning <hr/>	SUBJECT: Standards of Performance Response Time Standard
SECTION: 0 – Policies	

1. **Purpose:**

1.1. The purpose of this policy is to establish response time standards for fire and rescue units operating within Prince William County.

2. **Authority:**

2.1. Section 9-85(a)(2) of Article VI, Chapter 9 of the Prince William County Code provides that the Fire and Rescue Association "...shall establish uniform procedures and policies for the provision of a comprehensive fire and rescue system within the county..." and "...Such procedures and policies shall be binding on the member companies of the association, and the on the county department fire and rescue."

3. **Definitions:**

3.1. **Dispatch Time** The point of receipt of the emergency alarm at the public safety answering point to the point where sufficient information is known to the dispatcher and applicable units are notified of the emergency.

3.2. **Emergency Incident** Any situation to which an emergency services organization responds to deliver emergency services and other forms of hazard control and mitigation. The determination of performance measures relating to response times this will include priority 1, 2 and 3 emergencies as defined in the dispatch priority.

3.3. **Initial Full-Alarm Assignment** Personnel, apparatus, equipment, and resources ordinarily dispatched upon notification of a structural fire. This is addressed in Prince William County by the initial alarm dispatch complement.

3.4. **Primary System Measures** The measures used to demonstrate overall system performance.

- 3.5. **Response Time (Travel Time)** For the purposes of this policy, response time will begin at the time of dispatch and end when the first unit arrives on the scene of the incident. Response times will be calculated from CAD data.
  - 3.6. **Secondary System Measures** Internal measures of service delivery.
  - 3.7. **Turnout Time** The time beginning when units acknowledge notification of the emergency to the beginning point of response time. In Prince William County this will be time stamped by MDC acknowledgement or voice notification to the Office of Public Safety Communications by radio.
4. **Policy:**
- 4.1. Standards of performance are based on the historical performance of emergency response within Prince William County. The establishment of such standards must take into account the probability of achieving these standards based on the jurisdiction's ability to distribute resources for the provision of fire and rescue response.
  - 4.2. The worst-case scenario presented to fire and rescue providers includes the flashover point for structure fires and irreversible brain damage secondary to cardiac arrest for EMS incidents. This is generally defined to occur within four-to-eight minutes of the onset of the emergency.
  - 4.3. No jurisdiction is capable of meeting the response demands based entirely on the worst-case scenario 100 percent of the time. Therefore, it is more realistic to consider response times based on a tiered approach that involves challenging and realistic response time criteria based on the identified factors. Such factors should take into account the distance response units will be required to travel to reach the scene of the incident and the workload for each station.

Number: 2.0.3

**ASSOCIATION POLICY**

Page 3 of 5

4.4. The response-time goals for the fire and rescue system will comply with the following table of primary system measures:

Measurement	Sub-Category	Units Included	Time Standard	National Quality Standard	PWC Goal
Turnout Time	All Stations	All units	60 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
Response Time (Travel Time)	Emergency Incident Response	Includes any official FRA member vehicle/unit	240 seconds or less	Local FRA measure	TBD
	1 <sup>st</sup> Engine on Scene (Suppression)	Engines, Wagons, Quints	240 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	Initial First-Alarm Assignment	Includes all units on the initial dispatch of the emergency incident	480 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	ALS Response	Includes any ALS response vehicle	480 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD

4.5. The secondary measures for system delivery will comply with the following table of measures:

Measurement	Sub-Category	Units Included	Time Standard	National Quality Standard	PWC Goal
Response Time (Travel Time)	1 <sup>st</sup> BLS Response on Scene	Includes any FRA member vehicle/unit	240 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	1 <sup>st</sup> BLS Response Transport on Scene	Includes BLS ambulances and ALS ambulances	240 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	1 <sup>st</sup> ALS Response on Scene	Includes all ALS ambulances and ALS engines	480 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	1 <sup>st</sup> ALS Response Transport on Scene	Includes all medic units	480 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	1 <sup>st</sup> Ladder on Scene	Includes all towers and ladder trucks	480 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD
	1 <sup>st</sup> Rescue on Scene	Includes all heavy rescue units	480 seconds or less	90% of all incidents measured	TBD

5. **Responsibilities:**

5.1. **Each Fire and/or Rescue Department**

Take appropriate steps to progress toward achievement of these response-time goals.

5.2. **Fire and Rescue Association Executive Committee**

Evaluate response-time goals at least annually and revise to take into account geographic, demographic, and technologic changes.

5.3. **Planning and Information Officer**

Compile the response time goal information and present the findings to the Executive Committee.