

LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

COMBINED FIRE RESCUE SYSTEM

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015



Emergency Services
Consulting International





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April 2015 – Chief's Message

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I present the Loudoun County Combined Fire Rescue System Strategic Plan. This plan is the collective effort of many contributors within the LC-CFRS and the policy makers on behalf of the communities we serve. The driving force behind this plan Plan is a team comprised of a cross section of the combined fire and rescue system, each helping to develop a common vision for our organization.

Work on this plan officially began in October 2014, when the Strategic Planning Team convened to identify the key stakeholders and development process. During the first meeting, team members agreed that for this plan to be meaningful, the plan needed to be grounded in reality and not viewed as just a “wish list.” True to this tenant, the elements contained within this Plan are attainable goals that will assist our combined fire rescue system to chart a course for the future.

A second retreat was held in December 2014. More than seventy representatives from the LC-CFRS and Loudoun County Government came together to build upon the Strategic Planning Team’s initial work. During the second retreat, policy initiatives, goals and objectives were developed to create the basis for this strategic plan. Information was gathered through an open, honest and ongoing dialogue. In March 2015, through an on-line survey, the stakeholders prioritized the policy initiatives, establishing the framework for the strategic plan document.

Following the introduction of this Plan to the Board of Supervisors and to the Combined Fire and Rescue System, work will proceed to accomplish the goals that support each of our strategic priorities. The Plan, which is viewed as a “living” five-year roadmap, will be reviewed and updated annually, ensuring our system grows to be a stronger, more vibrant organization that is well connected with our community.

In closing, I would like to thank the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, the County Administrator, each of the Strategic Planning Team members, and our stakeholders for the support and effort to make this plan a reality.

W. Keith Brower, Jr. Fire and Rescue System Chief
Loudoun County Combined Fire Rescue System



A Brief History

The fire and rescue service for Loudoun County consists of the sixteen (16) volunteer Fire and Rescue companies and the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management (hereinafter referred to as “the Department”).

The volunteer companies are the foundation of the LC-CFRS. Each, organized and chartered under the Code of Virginia, provides community-based fire and rescue services throughout Loudoun County. For more than a century, out of an enduring desire to safeguard the public, hundreds of Loudoun County residents have volunteered in these companies and their history of service is woven into the fabric of our community.

Currently the Department is responsible for the management of nine program areas: Administrative Services, Emergency Medical Services, Operations, Fire and Rescue Training, Communications and Support Services, Asset Management, Fire Marshal’s Office, Volunteer Coordination, and Emergency Management. The Department, headed by the Chief, who is a Loudoun County Department head, provides operational staffing, training, and support to all members of the system. The Department is the designated Public Safety Answering Point (PSASP) for 9-1-1 emergency calls and operates the Fire Marshal’s Office, which is responsible for all fire prevention code-related fire inspections, public fire and life safety education and investigations of fires, explosions and hazardous materials incidents. Finally, the Department coordinates Emergency Management functions and related disaster services, special events planning, and participates in County-wide strategic planning and GIS/mapping programs.

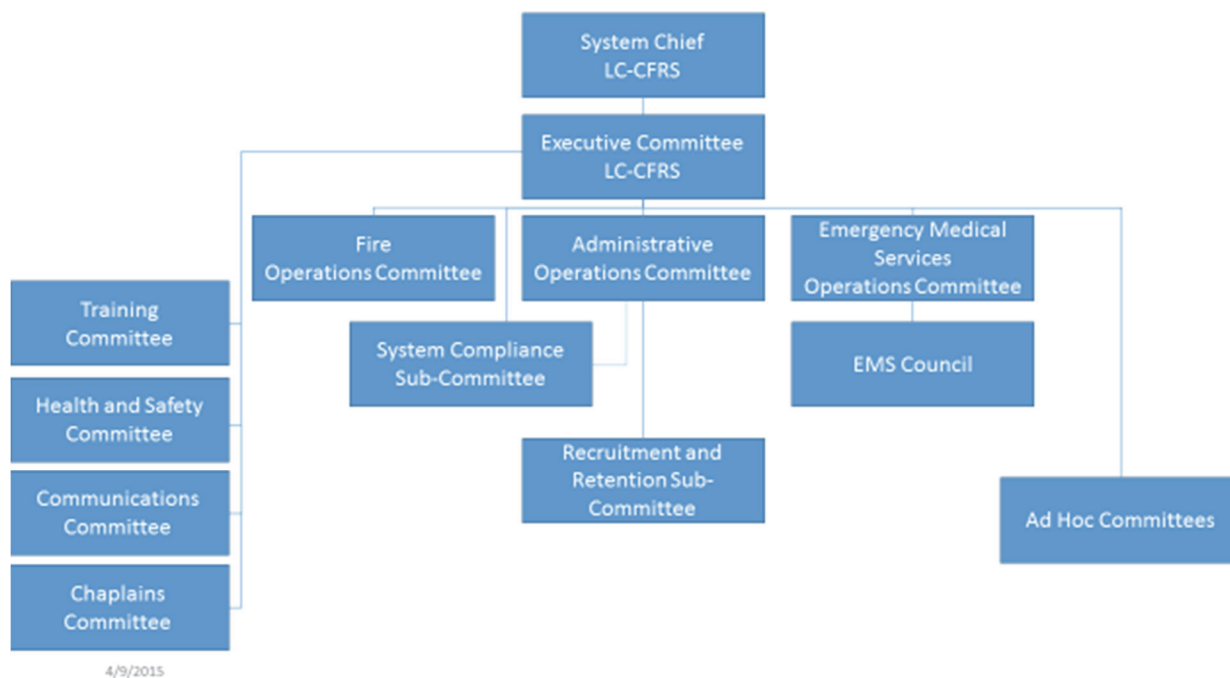
In 2005, the Board of Supervisors approved the Loudoun County Fire and Rescue Service Plan, which has served as a guide in the development of budget and policy considerations. While this Service Plan proved successful in many areas, the new governance structure of the LC-CFRS mandates a new strategic plan.

On April 16, 2014, the Board of Supervisors adopted a new ordinance to establish the Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (“LC-CFRS”). The ordinance, which took effect July 2, 2014, integrated all emergency services organizations in Loudoun County into a new governance model designed to ensure continuity and consistency among the sixteen (16) volunteer fire and rescue companies and the Department. The LC-CFRS ordinance provides a basic framework for the new system structure under the direction of a single System Chief. It further provides for the creation of

standardized operating policies and practices under the newly formed Executive Committee and respective subcommittees. Chief Brower, as the System Chief, immediately directed the development of a Strategic Plan to serve as a roadmap for success and ensure stakeholder participation.

The following organization chart displays the structure and function of the 2015 LC-CFRS:

Figure 1: Loudoun County Combined Fire Rescue System Organization Chart





As one of the fastest growing counties in the United States, it is imperative that the LC-CFRS remain aligned toward meeting the complex challenges of providing prompt and professional fire and rescue services. By itself, the new governance structure of the LC-CFRS has already become a model system for the successful integration of an all-hazards combination fire and rescue system. This structure was borne out of tremendous hard work and a commitment by stakeholders to forge a path forward. Their accomplishments are outstanding, representing the core value of placing service above self. The development and deployment of a Strategic Plan represents the next step in meeting the challenges of a rapidly growing community.

Planning

In order for any organization, public or private, to reach its full potential, it must have a plan. An organization that knows where it is going, knows the environment in which it must operate, and identifies how to get there, will have the best chance of meeting the needs of the community and achieving its goals. The planning process that the members of LC-CFRS engaged in served to refresh the organization's commitment to excellence, build upon the success and traditions of the past, and set the path to future success.

The strategic planning process is more than the creation of a document. It challenges the membership of the organization to look critically at paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs, and desires, and it inspires individuals to work together in the best interest of the organization. Furthermore, the planning process provides the membership with an opportunity to have a voice in the development of the organization's long-term direction and future focus.

Public safety agencies – and the fire service in particular – find themselves in a competitive and complex time. Our nation's first responders are continually challenged to be more efficient while maintaining their effectiveness. Loudoun County is fortunate to have governmental leaders who are responsive to the challenges of increasing demands for service delivery. We continue to face underdeveloped infrastructure, challenges to recruit and retain volunteer members, increased population and traffic congestion, and the ability to operate within budgetary constraints.

With these issues in mind, planning teams need to have a clear understanding of their organization's direction relative to the public's expectations. Through the establishment of the strategic plan, LC-CFRS



is able to make the most efficient use of available resources while continuing to provide the highest level of fire and rescue service to the community.

This process does not end with the production of a report or with the simple establishment of goals and objectives. By nature, the plan must become elemental in the day-to-day operations of the combined fire and rescue system. Thorough dissemination and communication are essential components of implementation of an effective plan. All system members have an obligation to support the outlined goals and objectives contained herein. Successful implementation requires constant review and adjustment to assure continued relevance and focus.



Planning For Future Opportunities: Our Mission, Vision, and Values

The Strategic Planning team established a vision statement for the LC-CFRS which was endorsed at the system-wide retreat. Each volunteer company and the department with a unique mission statement and set of core values, aspires to provide essential high quality public safety services. Attributes include Teamwork, Integrity, Excellence, Professionalism, and Service.

Vision

The vision of an organization will clearly define and establish what it is they want to become. It becomes a target and guiding beacon as the strategic plan and initiatives are completed. At the conclusion of the plan, the adopted vision should be a reality and accurate portrayal of the LC-CFRS. The LC-CFRS developed the following vision statement:

Our vision is to be:

- ***An innovative organization that consistently exceeds the expectations of the public we serve***
- ***A model integrated combination system from which other agencies seek insight and guidance***
- ***An organization that is committed to the safety and professional development of our members***
- ***An inclusive organization that reflects our community***

Fire Chief's Vision

While mission statements define why an organization exists, vision statements describe how the organization wishes to be viewed within the community. A clearly defined vision statement by the Fire Chief serves as a guide for continuous improvement and provides direction and focus for the system as it serves our community.

As a part of the strategic planning process, Chief Brower shared his vision based on his more than 42 years of service to the citizens of Loudoun County.

The LC-CFRS will be

- ***A system that maintains and builds upon a collaborative relationship between all fire/EMS companies, LC-CFRS management and the established committees, work groups and governing bodies.***



- *A system that provides high quality all-risk response capabilities and specialized services to our communities and the citizens that reside in and visit Loudoun County.*
- *A system that has adequate and professional administration, support services, equipment, training, stations, and health and wellness initiatives that supply our members with what is needed to do their job while providing comfort, safety, and pride.*
- *A system that is a visible leader in integrated combination fire, rescue and EMS services for the purpose of enhancing services to all communities served by the LC-CFRS.*
- *A system that focuses on succession planning and prepares our members to assume future leadership roles with the training and skill set necessary to take the LC-CFRS to the next level.*
- *A system that integrates and demonstrates its mission statement, vision, and core values at all levels of the organization.*

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges

In order to properly formulate strategic initiatives, the internal planning team had to evaluate the external and internal organizational environment. The internal planning team combined feedback and their collective knowledge of the organization to assess the environment the department operates within. Analyzing the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC) is the first step in identifying actionable strategies for the future. These items were affirmed during the system-wide retreat by the stakeholders present.

Strengths

The identification of organizational strengths is the first step in the environment scan. An organization's strengths identify its capability of providing the services requested by its customers. The organization needs to make certain that its strengths are consistent with the issues it faces. Programs that do not match organizational strengths or primary functions should be reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on precious staff time. The internal planning team identified the following department strengths:

- Intelligence/talent/skills
- Regional involvement
- Board of Supervisors support
- Willingness to grow the system
- Community focused
- Service delivery focused
- Combination system
- Progressive technology
- Nimble/flexible/adaptive



Weaknesses

Organizational weaknesses, or lack of performance, are also an important environmental scan element. In order to move forward, the organization must honestly identify the issues that have created barriers to success in the past. Weak areas needing improvement are not the same as threats, which will be identified later, but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress. Internal organizational issues, as identified by the planning team, are typically issues that are at the heart of an organization's problems:

To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson



- Lack of consistent standards
- Leadership development/succession planning
- Lack of respect/trust/honor traditions
- Communication challenges
- EGO, "us vs. them"
- Combination system
- Technology
- Capacity to meet the mission
- Span of control
- Lack of experience
- Training requirements
- Cultural bias toward the fire service
- Inability to keep up with growth

Opportunities

An organization's opportunities and challenges are generally derived from the external environment. Opportunities are focused on existing services and on expanding and developing new possibilities inside and beyond the traditional service area. Many opportunities exist for the department:

- Cross staffing and training (outcome based)
- Enhanced risk management
- Positive cultural change
- Alternative and grant funding
- Working with health care stakeholders
- Raise LC-CFRS profile
- CAD2CAD links
- Outcome based system
- Enhanced partnerships
- Expanded community risk reduction
- Alternative staffing models
- Enhanced economies of scales
- Increased consolidated and shared services
- Increased countywide community participation



Challenges

There are conditions in the external environment that are not under the organization's control. The identification of these conditions allows the organization to develop plans to mitigate or respond when a challenge becomes an obstacle. By recognizing these challenges, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss. The internal planning team identified the following challenges:



- Unwillingness to deal with change
- Failure to meet training requirements
- Unfunded mandates
- Cost of living/economic environment
- Transportation and infrastructure
- Patience to manage change
- Being out of touch
- Regulations
- Affordable Care Act
- Technology
- Codes and standards
- Changing demographics
- Diversity
- World events/emerging threats
- Growing population
- Generational changes

Strategic Plan

Strategic initiatives fulfill the mission of the organization and provide individual members with clear direction. Strategic goals and objectives are management tools that need to be updated on an ongoing basis to identify accomplishments and to note changes within the organization and the community.

Strategic goals and objectives, as well as performance measures, should become the focus of the organization's efforts. By following these initiatives and objectives carefully, the organization will be guided into the future and should benefit from reduced obstacles and distractions.

Using the array of internal and external input collected during the retreat process, the LC-CFRS Strategic Planning Team combined the information gained with its collective knowledge of the organization and the internal and external factors that influence the outcome of the organization's services.

The team developed a specific set of strategic initiatives that serve as the focus for the organization's strategic plan:

- Communication
- Mechanisms to build trust
- Professional development
- Training
- Organizational development
- Service delivery
- Financial sustainability
- Marketing and outreach
- Diversity
- Safety and wellness
- Member recruitment and retention



After brainstorming sessions by the Strategic Planning Team that identified the policy initiatives, participants at the System-Wide retreat developed goals for each initiative and identified specific objectives for the accomplishment of each goal. Once the objectives for each goal were reviewed and



refined, the LC-CFRS identified responsible divisions, sections, groups, committees and individuals who will be assigned the objectives and will be charged with the development of operational plans for each objective.

The strategic initiatives, goals, and objectives are detailed in the following pages. As the project continues forward, operational plans will be developed that will define detailed tasks and timelines to be used to accomplish each goal. The operational plans will be made available once they are completed. Goals and objectives were established to accomplish each identified initiative. Each objective was assigned a priority to correspond with a recommended time frame for completion. Assigning a category and associated time frame provides a consistent manner in which objectives can be prioritized and accomplished within the administrative, financial, and political realities of the organization. Strategic initiatives, goals, objectives, performance indicators, and outcomes become an important part of the organization's efforts. By following these components carefully, the organization will be guided into the future and should benefit from reduced obstacles and distractions.



Definition of Terms

There are four main components to a strategic plan: Initiatives, Goals: short-/medium-/long-range, Objectives, and Critical Tasks. For purposes of this strategic plan, they are defined as follows:

Initiative – The largest overarching element of a strategic plan, an initiative is a broad enterprise where the department may have multiple areas of focus.

Goal – A smaller component of and subordinate to an initiative, a goal is focused on one particular area, but is still general in nature. If all of the goals under an initiative have been accomplished, the initiative will be considered achieved.

Objective – A smaller component of and subordinate to a goal, an objective is usually defined as specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-sensitive. If all objectives under a goal are accomplished, the goal will have been accomplished.

Critical task – The smallest component of a strategic plan, critical tasks are the immediate (within 90 days) action steps needed to meet an objective. Not all objectives have critical tasks.

Short-Term Objective – An important component that needs to be accomplished within the first year to address a significant issue or provide a foundation for additional objectives.

Medium-Term Objective – A significantly complex objective that will take 1 to 3 years to implement and obtain the necessary resources.

Long-Term Objective – A complex task requiring planning, funding, and policy development that will take from 3 to 5 years for completion

Outcome – The desired consequence of an objective once accomplished.

The following are tables of those initiatives (in bold) with their subordinate goals (numbered/lettered), and goals with the subordinate objectives (numbered). Critical tasks are listed where they were identified (in bold italics).



Strategic Initiatives, Goals, and Objectives

Initiative 1 – Communication		
Communications will be conducted in a manner that utilizes all reasonable means available to ensure timely and appropriate dissemination of information to and from the organization. The LC-CFRS will ensure adequate information flow through the appropriate medium at all levels of the organization and the communities served. Adequate feedback loops will be in place to ensure effective and timely action is taken.		
Committee: Initiative Manager:		
Goal: 1A	Make effective communication (reaching appropriate stakeholders) a core value of the system (behaviors).	
Objectives	1. <i>Executive Committee will facilitate the creation of a communication model that promotes trust by ensuring the free flow of information internally.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. <i>Executive Committee will reward behaviors that support the core value.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Executive Committee will evaluate system-wide compliance with the model and engage as appropriate.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. <i>Executive Committee will appoint an ombudsman to ensure compliance (Executive Committee Actions).</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
Goal: 1B	Ensure clarity and consistency within the system.	
Objectives	1. <i>Merge SOPs/FRGs into a system-wide set of policies and procedures.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	2. <i>Executive Committee will establish a work group to accomplish the objective.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task

Goal: 1C Create a universally accessible communications model system-wide (nuts and bolts).		
Objectives	1. Evaluate current communication mechanisms.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. Executive Committee will create a work group to create a communication plan, utilizing cooperating entities.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. Promote transparency through regular and frequent evaluations of system compliance with adopted plan.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: ongoing
	4. Ensure that communication plan matches current and future needs utilizing all available portals.	
	Responsible:	Timeline:
	5. Evaluate role of social media system wide messaging.	
	Responsible:	Timeline:
	6. Continually monitor emerging technology and adopt as necessary, supported by the DIT and PIO.	
	Responsible:	Timeline:
Desired Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Executive Committee is viewed by the rank and file as a transparent group with decisions and deliberations communicated to the LC-CFRS membership at the conclusion of Executive Committee meetings. The SOGs and FRGs are combined into one complete set of easy-to-read policies and procedures. State-of-the-art technologies and platforms are utilized in communicating internally and externally. 		



Initiative 2 – Mechanisms to Build Trust		
<p>The LC-CFRS will establish, adopt, and implement an organizational philosophy that will be developed by the members and for the members. This philosophy will not be a procedure but rather a vision of how the membership wants the LC-CFRS to function. The philosophy will deal with the principles, standards and ideals that “THE MEMBERS” are committed to achieving.</p> <p>The LC-CFRS will conduct a coordinated and open roll out of the updated Strategic Planning Framework. The roll out will provide for input, feedback, and participation by all members of the organization.</p>		
Committee:		
Initiative Manager:		
Goal: 2A Provide timely and adequate communication.		
Objectives	1. <i>Create a system wide email by December 1, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Create a work group to research available tools for system members to use to provide input by July 1, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
Goal: 2B Build a philosophy of transparency among system members.		
Objectives	1. <i>Make the County “G-Drive” available to all system members within 90 days of publishing of the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. <i>All information is uploaded and kept current by July 1, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Provide a dashboard to monitor the progress of the system initiatives by December 1, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term



Goal: 2C Develop organizational opportunities for consistent interaction between all members.		
Objectives	1. <i>Establish policies that promote cross staffing by July, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	2. <i>Ensure committees and workgroups have equal representation from all stakeholders within 90 days of the publishing of the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	3. <i>Establish a workgroup to develop other opportunities for interaction for system members within 90 days of the publishing of the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
Desired Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LC-CFRS members are utilizing provided mechanisms and technologies to provide input to the executive committee on a regular basis.• A platform is used by the executive committee to post key information about the activities of LC-CFRS, which is updated regularly. This includes status updates on the progress of the strategic plan.• Opportunities abound for all members of LC-CFRS to work together, “cross-pollinating” various cultures and segments of the organization into a cohesive agency.		



Initiative 3 – Professional Development

The LC-CFRS will be an organization that provides a wide range of opportunities for its members to compete or fill positions at all levels of the organization. Opportunities for advancement and career development will include training, mentorship, continuing education, and program and project management in order to grow future leaders and managers.

Committee:

Initiative Manager:

Goal:
3A **Establish minimum qualifications and training for positions.**

Objectives	1. <i>Define universal group positions based on function/responsibility within the system by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Research and identify local/regional/national training and qualifications by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Establish and define personal growth pathways for each group by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term

Goal:
3B **Ensure the provision of responsible leadership at all levels of the system.**

Objectives	1. <i>Identify avenues to educate and mentor system members for continuous succession planning.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	2. <i>Develop ways to encourage and entice system members to engage in professional development.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing

Desired Outcomes:

- All members of LC-CFRS clearly understand the qualifications and skill sets required for the position they hold.
- All members of LC-CFRS clearly understand the qualifications and skill sets required of each leadership position in the agency.
- Opportunities to attain the qualifications and skill sets are available for members pursuing positions of increased responsibility and authority.
- A formal mentoring program is in place.
- Each position of higher responsibility and authority are actively mentoring and developing subordinate members to prepare them for succession to the higher position.



Initiative 4 – Training		
All training provided by the LC-CFRS will be conducted in accordance with local, state and federal mandates as well as the unique needs of the communities served. Training will be conducted in a manner that maximizes the size, economies of scale, and extraordinary amount of skill and human capital present in the LC-CFRS. All members of the System will have access to continuous, lifelong learning opportunities to ensure their readiness.		
Committee: Initiative Manager:		
Goal: 4A Identify ways to increase participation in training classes.		
Objectives	1. <i>Optimize the use of distance learning and use of technology for Loudoun specific core curriculum by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Identify resources and technology available within 90 days of publishing of the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	3. <i>Create flexible class schedules to accommodate member's needs by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
Goal: 4B Update the master training calendar.		
Objectives	1. <i>Conduct a needs assessment to identify students and minimum training requirements before March 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. <i>Revise/consolidate FRG's to create a minimum qualifications flowchart by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term



Goal: 4C Increase regional collaboration		
Objectives	1. <i>Identify regional classes and distribute to system on a quarterly basis.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	2. <i>Designate a Loudoun training representative to provide input regionally of Loudoun's training needs by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Provide logistical and material support/assistance to facilitate participation in regional classes.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	4. <i>Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to do "instructor swaps".</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
Goal: 4D Encourage knowledgeable and experienced people to be involved in training delivery.		
Objectives	1. <i>Develop a program to identify SME's locally and within the COA region by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Provide reliable and constructive feedback in order to develop an instructor cadre.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing



Goal: 4E		Develop and enforce system wide policies for participation, conduct and expectations for students and instructors.	
Objectives	1. <i>Design a student handbook that outlines rules for class participation by June 2015.</i>		
	Responsible:		Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Provide support at the station level to assist students.</i>		
	Responsible:		Timeline: Ongoing
	3. <i>Establish a process for review of student performance, issues and consistent handling of issues by June 2015.</i>		
	Responsible:		Timeline: Short-term
	4. <i>Provide volunteer representation on policy development and program guidance by June 2015.</i>		
	Responsible:		Timeline: Short-term
Desired Outcomes:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The training master calendar is up-to-date and readily available to all LC-CFRS personnel.• Multiple methods of training are available to all personnel, including use of technology, distance learning programs and flexibly scheduled training sessions.• LC-CFRS is actively participating and providing assistance in regional training efforts, thereby enhancing regional training quality and LC-CFRS member participation opportunities.• Subject matter experts are readily identified and sought out for participation in training sessions within LC-CFRS and the region.• Rules of conduct and student-instructor participation are clearly articulated and uniformly enforced.			



Initiative 5 – Organizational Development

The LC-CFRS will continue to be an industry leader in combination regional fire and emergency medical services. The LC-CFRS will adapt, grow, and maintain flexibility as it expands service delivery capabilities. This will be accomplished through a standardized assessment, a coordinated and transparent roll out of the strategic plan, and the utilization of operational implementation plans. System and cooperative service agreements will be developed in a manner that protects and addresses the needs of citizens and members.

Committee:

Initiative Manager:

Goal: Create and implement a system wide process for development and implementation of
5A policies.

Objectives

1. Create a committee to define/develop system wide policy framework within 90 days of the publishing of the strategic plan.

Responsible:

Timeline: Critical Task

2. Establish and implement a (PDMP) for development, implementation and review/updating of system policies, procedures and standards by December, 2015.

Responsible:

Timeline: Short-term

Goal: Formalize the annual strategic planning process using the existing committees and groups.
5B

Objectives

1. Communicate and solicit annual input/changes for the plan by September 2015 and every September thereafter.

Responsible:

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Conduct an annual review for the adopted strategic plan by October 2015 and every October thereafter.

Responsible:

Timeline: Ongoing

3. Develop and submit strategic plan update to the Executive Committee by November 2015 and every November thereafter.

Responsible:

Timeline: Ongoing



Goal: 5C Ensure system resource assessment and allocation review to meet identified risks.		
Objectives	1. <i>Conduct annual resource needs assessment by October 2015 and every October thereafter.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	2. <i>Create an annual needs/priority report to the Executive Committee by November 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Implement a process to identify opportunities for utilization of combination resources/staff to fill identified needs by December 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. <i>Develop a process for requesting resource support from the system by January, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
Desired Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An LC-CFRS committee has developed a process to review, revise and create new and existing policies on an ongoing basis.• The LC-CFRS strategic plan is reviewed and updated annually through the use of existing committees and work groups.• Resource status is continuously monitored and adjusted, with resources consciously allocated and reallocated to address priorities and meet the LC-CFRS mission.		



Initiative 6 – Service Delivery		
The LC-CFRS will staff and operate in a manner that addresses the immediate and long-term core and specialty service delivery needs of the communities served. A service delivery analysis will be conducted to ensure the necessary training, equipment, technology, automation, and specialty resources are present to provide maximum effectiveness and efficiency.		
Committee: Initiative Manager:		
Goal: Become an accredited fire and rescue agency through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). 6A		
Objectives	1. <i>Executive Committee identifies a self-assessment coordinator and forms an assessment team by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>The self-assessment coordinator and team will attend the CPSE self-assessment training workshop at the closest session occurring before July, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	3. <i>The coordinator and team will develop and adopt a work plan to implement the self-assessment process using the Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM) as a guide upon completion of the self-assessment workshop.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
Goal: Identify and address gaps in Heavy Rescue service delivery. 6B		
Objectives	1. <i>Operations chief establishes a working group to define expectations, roles and outcomes for heavy rescue incident types and system differences (e.g., structure, extrication, and technical rescue for confined spaces; swift water; rope; vertical; and trench) by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>The heavy rescue working group will identify the tools and training required to successfully perform the heavy rescue mission by July, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	3. <i>The heavy rescue working group will identify the most strategically advantageous deployment of heavy rescues to meet response time objectives and will forward deployment recommendations to the operations chief by December, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	4. <i>The heavy rescue working group will formulate draft policies for the heavy rescue program and will forward same to the operations chief by July, 2017.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term



Desired Outcomes:

- The LC-CFRS self-assessment coordinator and team have received training at a CPSE Self-Assessment Workshop, and have created a work plan for conducting a self-assessment using the FESSAM Guide.
- The LC-CFRS heavy rescue working group has formulated a gap analysis in the heavy rescue services as compared to industry best practices.
- The LC-CFRS heavy rescue working group has identified tools, equipment and training needs for the heavy rescue services, and has identified the most advantageous deployment of heavy rescue resources to meet the programs response time objectives.
- The LC-CFRS heavy rescue working group has developed draft policies for operational consideration.



Initiative 7 – Financial Sustainability		
LC-CFRS is committed to identifying and utilizing varied and innovative revenue resources to fund operational and structural improvements, and to lessen the burden of its operations on the tax payer. LC-CFRS will demonstrate exceptional fiscal stewardship and seek to capture additional revenue through the expansion of partnerships, enhanced reimbursable services, and development of value added services.		
Committee:		
Initiative Manager:		
Goal: Assess current fee structure and determine potential additional service cost recovery opportunities.		
7A		
Objectives	1. Within 90 days of the publishing of the strategic plan, an assessment team will be formed by the executive committee to conduct review of additional potential revenue recovery methods.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. The assessment team will conduct a review of current fee practices; identify additional recovery revised sources by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. The assessment team will present fee study findings and recommendations to Executive Committee by September, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. The assessment team will complete implementation of EMS revenue recovery program by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	5. The assessment team will continue fee recovery education through joint efforts with community outreach.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
Goal: Enhance system fiscal health through a central procurement process for commonly used equipment and supplies.		
7B		
Objectives	1. Educate LC-CFRS personnel on current procurement procedures within 90 days of publishing the strategic plan.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. Conduct an assessment of current equipment/supply needs to determine potential areas for standardization within 90 days of publishing the strategic plan.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	3. Integrate findings into procurement process within 180 days.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term



Goal: 7C Pursue alternative funding sources for the system.		
Objectives	1. Hire an alternate funding administrator for FY 2017 (in June).	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	2. Using best practices identify and pursue alternate funding sources by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. Assess outcome of pursuit of alternate funding by September, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. Once the process is established, educate and train LC-CFRS personnel on obtaining utilization of alternate funding sources by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term



Goal: 7D Ensure sound fiscal stewardship through ongoing assessment of current/future needs.		
Objectives	1. <i>Identify potential cost saving mechanisms within 90 days of publishing the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. <i>Perform annual system wide audits.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	3. <i>Educate the LC-CFRS personnel about the budget process and deadlines by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. <i>Develop and disseminate the annual budget calendar that aligns with the county process.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	5. <i>Establish a reward system for individuals or organizational elements that identify cost savings by FY 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	6. <i>Educate LC-CFRS personnel regarding new county fraud and waste program by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
Desired Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LC-CFRS has leveraged the service fees in place and has implemented additional service fees to enhance the agency's fiscal sustainability.• LC-CFRS has leveraged a centralized procurement process whereby equipment and replenishable supplies are standardized and purchased in bulk to reduce unit costs.• The newly hired LC-CFRS alternate funding administrator has identified and secured alternative funding sources and has trained all personnel in the proper access of these funds.• LC-CFRS personnel participate in identifying cost savings or cost-avoidance opportunities, and are rewarded for identifying those opportunities which result in actual savings.• LC-CFRS personnel are familiar with the county-aligned budget process and timelines as well as the fraud and waste program		

Initiative 8 – Marketing and Outreach		
Marketing and outreach by the LC-CFRS will focus on community partnerships and engagement. This initiative will specifically address key stakeholder groups in a manner that customizes communication and outreach efforts for each stakeholder and community need. The LC-CFRS regional model will maximize effectiveness through outreach and communication measures that provide accurate, timely, and appropriate messaging and marketing. Outreach measures will clearly articulate the proven and potential benefits of services provided by the LC-CFRS.		
Committee:		
Initiative Manager:		
Goal: 8A Deliver common messaging system-wide.		
Objectives	1. <i>Develop a message to promote the new LC-CFRS. Deliver the message to internal stakeholders within 90 days of publishing the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	2. <i>Deliver the message developed in Objective 1 above to external stakeholders within 180 days.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Deliver the system wide messaging on a cyclical basis.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
Goal: 8B Create a consistent, positive image.		
Objectives	1. <i>Develop a marketing team and marketing plan, with key stakeholders identified, for LC-CFRS by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Obtain a dedicated marketing coordinator within 90 days of publishing the strategic plan.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Critical Task
	3. <i>Develop community events to promote community partnership by July, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	4. <i>Develop and leverage media relations.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing



Desired Outcomes:

- LC-CFRS personnel are engaged in marketing their agency internally and externally with frequent, consistent and positive messaging.
- The newly acquired LC-CFRS marketing coordinator has developed a marketing plan which has identified key stakeholders and effective messaging methods to reach those stakeholders.
- LC-CFRS has hosted and assisted other partner agencies in community events to educate the communities served about the services LC-CFRS provides.



Initiative 9 – Diversity		
LC-CFRS is committed to being an organization that reflects the communities served. The LC-CFRS is committed to celebrating and discussing its strength of diversity. The LC-CFRS will maintain a proactive approach in ensuring it establishes and maintains a high-level of cultural competency that results in enhanced service delivery to the communities served.		
Committee:		
Initiative Manager:		
Goal:		
9A Foster a positive public trust.		
Objectives	1. Determine the level of diversity with the county by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. Provide cultural and diversity awareness training to new and existing system members by December, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. Integrate cultural and diversity programs into marketing and outreach initiatives by July, 2016.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	4. Develop and enforce a system policy that defines our system's diversity philosophy by July, 2016.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
Goal:		
9B Foster an environment in which diversity thrives within our organization (system).		
Objectives	1. Determine the level of diversity within our system by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. Ensure recruitment techniques align with the cultural diversity and demographics of the county, focused towards serving the citizens by December, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. Share the status of our internal diversity with all system members by July, 2015.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. Promote conditions which positively influence, embrace and encourage a culturally diverse membership.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing



Desired Outcomes:

- LC-CFRS has developed and circulated the agency's cultural and diversity philosophy and has developed policies and practices which reinforce that philosophy.
- LC-CFRS has developed and implemented cultural and diversity training program and delivered it to all personnel.
- The LC-CFRS has incorporated the cultural and diversity philosophy into its marketing and outreach efforts.
- LC-CFRS has determined the diversity make-up of the county and of the members within the agency.
- LC-CFRS recruitment efforts reflect the diversity philosophy of the agency and make a concerted effort to reflect the county diversity demographics without compromising on bona fide occupational qualification standards.
- The LC-CFRS working environment reflects a commitment to diversity and inclusion in both principle and action.



Initiative 10 – Safety & Wellness		
LC-CFRS will develop and participate in activities that promote physical, mental, and integrated safety and wellness components throughout the organization, resulting in a healthier, safe, and thriving membership.		
Committee:		
Initiative Manager:		
Goal:		
10A Improve behavioral health for system members.		
Objectives	1. <i>Make existing EAP available to volunteer members by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Create a behavioral health coordinator position by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Validate NFFF stress first aid as a model to pursue by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. <i>If objective #3 above is validated, develop a train-the-trainer and deployment plan by July, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	5. <i>Develop a contract to secure a behavioral health specialist, to include a referral process, by December, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
Goal:		
10B Complete an audit and validate the remaining recommendations from the Meadowood Report, including an EMS review.		
Objectives	1. <i>Conduct a final review/audit of the Meadowood Report and list the status of each recommendation by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Identify the feasibility of recommendations contained in the report for July, 2015 implementation.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term

Goal: 10C Establish a comprehensive “Fit-for-Life” program across the system.		
Objectives	1. Implement an annual medical clearance program for all members.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	2. Develop a flexible assessment process through member’s personal physicians (system funded) by July, 2017.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	3. Adopt an EMS/Administrative specific physical/medical standards program by July, 2016.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. Establish a voluntary system-wide, validated work performance testing program by July, 2018.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	5. Develop a program which utilizes allied organizations’ standing programs (e.g., Near-Miss, presumptive illness language) by July, 2018.	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
Desired Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The newly acquired LC-CFRS behavioral health coordinator has contracted for a behavioral health specialist and together have evaluated and validated the NFFF Stress First Aid program, incorporating it into a train-the-trainer program. The Stress First Aid program has been taught to all members of the LC-CFRS. The LC-CFRS EAP has been extended to all volunteer personnel. The Meadowood Report has been evaluated and the status of the recommendations published for all personnel to review. Recommendations which were not completed from the Meadowood Report have been identified and their feasibility assessed. Those found to be feasible have been acted upon; those found not to be feasible were also listed and the reason they were not acted upon stated. LC-CFRS has developed specific medical/physical standards for each position in the agency. LC-CFRS has developed a flexible, comprehensive medical physical assessment process, complete with an annual clearance for duty program and a voluntary, validated work performance testing program. LC-CFRS has incorporated elements of allied organizations’ standing programs, such as Near-Miss reporting and presumptive illness language. 		



Initiative 11 – Member Recruitment & Retention

The LC-CFRS is committed to the safety and well-being of its members. The men and women of the LC-CFRS are second to none and deserving of respect and honor from the system and community. The necessary resources and programmatic elements will be provided to ensure adequate recruitment and retention programs.

Committee:

Initiative Manager:

**Goal:
11A**

Recruit capable, willing and self-motivated individuals as potential system members.

Objectives	1. <i>Identify specific system-wide functions and assess current needs/levels for those functions by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Develop a dynamic marketing strategy to attract potential system members by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	3. <i>Determine opportunities to reduce the burden for system participation by December, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	4. <i>Align recruitment and retention committee with LC-CFRS R&R activities program by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term



Goal: 11B Retain and develop current system members.		
Objectives	1. <i>Improve incentives for system membership by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
	2. <i>Identify system members with critical qualifications and retain.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline:
	3. <i>Develop a succession plan for key positions by December, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	4. <i>Identify at risk members and develop specific retention efforts to incentivize their retention by December, 2016.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Medium-term
	5. <i>Regularly assess effectiveness of retention programs.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Ongoing
	6. <i>Align recruitment and retention committee with LC-CFRS R&R activities program by July, 2015.</i>	
	Responsible:	Timeline: Short-term
Desired Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The LC-CFRS recruitment and retention committee has evaluated the current burden placed on membership in the agency, eliminating those deemed unnecessary and streamlining processes where appropriate.• The LC-CFRS recruitment and retention committee has identified the needs and functions of the various positions in the agency in order to recruit appropriately through various marketing strategies.• The LC-CFRS recruitment and retention committee has developed incentives to retain valued members of the agency.• The LC-CFRS recruitment and retention committee has developed a succession plan to retain key positions and develop successors to those positions.• The LC-CFRS recruitment and retention committee has identified a process whereby at risk members are incentivized to stay engaged with the agency.		



Implementation Methodology

“The three major keys to successful strategic planning and implementation are commitment, credibility, and communication.”¹ These three critical elements are best addressed by appropriate prioritization and completion of objectives, consistently seeking and utilizing input from LC-CFRS members and communicating plan status on a consistent basis, and measuring compliance for the established timelines.

Prioritization of Objectives

Through an on-line survey, the stakeholders were asked to prioritize, assign responsible parties, and develop operational plans for the goals, the top ten of which are listed below. Upon approval of the Executive Committee, objectives that can be accomplished over the course of the current and following fiscal years within the limits of existing program maintenance budgets will receive highest priority.

1. Make Effective Communication (Reaching Appropriate Stakeholder) a Core Value of the System (Behaviors)
2. Create and Implement a System-wide Process for Development and Implementation of Policies
3. Establish Minimum Qualifications and Training for Positions
4. Retain and Develop Current System Members
5. Provide Responsible Leadership Continuity
6. Provide Timely and Adequate Communication
7. Improve Behavioral Health for System Members
8. Ensure Clarity and Consistency Within the System
9. Build a Philosophy of Transparency Among System Members
10. Identify and Address Gaps in the Heavy Rescue Service Delivery

LC-CFRS Member Input and Communication

Once the operational plans for each objective are developed, the committees will forward to the executive committee for review and approval.

¹ Ahoy, Chris, Associate Vice President of Facilities Planning & Management, Iowa State University, September 1998.

2015 Implementation Timeline

The LC-CFRS Strategic Planning Team is committed to a regular schedule of status updates and accountability monitoring. The Team has set an implementation schedule for 2015 to ensure regular communication and commitment to the strategic plan:

- February-April 2015 – Chief provides summary of strategic plan initiatives and goals to membership, partner agencies, and interested community stakeholders.
 - March 2015 – Prioritize goals.
 - April 2015 – Strategic plan kick off. Presentation to the Board of Supervisors and the system members. Assign responsible parties and begin development of operational plans.
 - Quarterly Meeting – Strategic Planning Team meeting to track progress of operational plan development and objectives prioritization.
- Annual budget development plan review – Strategic plan is reviewed and prioritized in accordance with budget development and annual planning priorities.

In addition to the quarterly planning meetings, the Strategic Planning Team will meet on an annual basis to assess progress, celebrate accomplishments, and ensure the ongoing viability and validity of the LC-CFRS Strategic Plan.

To help maintain communication about the organization's progress in meeting its goals to the membership, LC-CFRS leadership has committed publishing quarterly regular status reports and minutes resulting from the Team's quarterly and annual meetings.



Appendix

Fiscal Year 20__/____
Month Year (Q__)

Strategic Plan Implementation Quarterly Score Card and Update

Implementation Timeline Status: On Target – Delayed or Deferred – Not Currently On Target





Appendix B – Committee Objective Weighting Tool

OBJECTIVES					NOTES
BENEFIT TO LC-CFRS					
1=No Clear Benefit					
2=Possible Benefit					
3= Clear Benefit					
4= Absolute Benefit					
FEASIBILITY					
1=Not sure it can be done					
2=Can be done but need resources/staff					
3=Have resources but not staff					
4=Have staff but not resources					
5=Have resources and staff					
6=Already started will be done					
PERCEIVED NEED					
1=Little or no need					
2=Some need					
3=Nominal Need					
4=Strong need					
5=Absolute need					
FISCAL/FUNDING					
1=No funds identified					
2=Need substantial funds					
3=Realign budget to find funding					
4=Currently Funded					
5=Saves Department money					
TOTAL:					
COMMENTS:					



Appendix C – Operational Plan Worksheet

Initiative:	Managing Chief:	Dept. Program:
	Committee Lead:	Dept. Program Manager:
Goal:		
Objective:		

#	Task	Responsible Party	Start Date	Completion Date	Cost Estimate	Comments
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						



