

# ***REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN***



## *OUR MISSION*

*Athens-Clarke County Fire & Emergency Services Department takes pride in providing prompt, dependable, and professional services to reduce the impact of emergencies in our community with dedication to education and training.*

## Preface

This updated version of the Athens Clarke County Fire & Emergency Services core Strategic Plan was written in February of 2022. There have been changes in format, community expectations, and ACC Government initiatives since the initial creation of the strategic plan in 2019. Those changes are reflected in this version of the plan. While the intent is to continually capture the progress of the initiatives it should be noted that we believe in continuous improvement and most of the strategies are on a continuous cycle of improvement.



Jeff T. Scarbrough, Fire Chief

The format of this plan follows this pattern:

**Goal:** To be healthier (Broad statement of measurable outcome connected to mission statement)

**Strategy** (What you must do well or barriers to overcome)      **Lead:** Myself (Who is responsible)

Exercise Regularly

**Initiative** (Specific program, activity to meet target) : Run for exercise

**Milestones** (Strategy targets)

- Get good running shoes
- Identify a place to run
- Run at least a mile three times a week
- Run 3 miles at least five times a week

**Strategy:** Stay Hydrated

**Lead:** Myself

**Initiative:** Drink water regularly

**Milestones**

- Drink at least 4 glasses of water a day
- Limit drinks with sugar
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day

### Plan Legend

*Text in italics indicates a revision or addition to the original plan*

**Green text** indicates the milestone is complete

**Orange text** indicates the milestone is in progress

\$ indicates the initiative is complete except for needed funding

# GOAL & STRATEGY OVERVIEW

## ***Goal 1: Provide prompt, dependable services.***

Page 4

*Description: The timely delivery of fire & emergency services is a critical measure of the responsiveness of the services we deliver. Being consistent over time with services means residents, businesses, and the community as a whole can depend on us when we are needed.*

**Strategy:** Measure service delivery through analyzing performance measures

## ***Goal 2: Provide professional services.***

Page 5

*Description: The delivery of services by highly skilled department members in a competent manner reflects the expected quality of our services.*

**Strategies:** Enhance training and education to improve service delivery to the community and the safety of responders, Maintain up to date business practices, Meet community expectations of service delivery, Improve our working partnership with Central Communications, Strengthen community relationships through outreach and partnerships, Enhance department communications for better information dissemination among shifts, battalions, and personnel

## ***Goal 3: Recruit and retain high caliber team members.***

Page 14

*Description: It is critical to our success that we recruit and retain team members that reflect our diverse community, share our core values, and have a passion for public service.*

**Strategy:** Create a culture within ACCFESD that attracts, develops, and sustains member longevity

## ***Goal 4: Seek continuous improvement.***

Page 17

*Description: The continual effort to improve incrementally lends to progressive, high level services.*

**Strategies:** Expand and enhance the Department's technological capabilities, Prepare for, pursue, achieve and maintain international accreditation to better serve our community and to embrace excellence

## Goal 1

*Provide prompt, dependable services.*

*The delivery of prompt services when someone calls 911 is a critical measure of the services we deliver. Being consistent over time with these services means residents can depend on us at a critical time in their life.*

### Strategy A

**Lead:** Fire Chief

*Measure service delivery through analyzing performance measures.*

#### Initiative

*Track response time performance data.*

##### Milestones

- *Adopt response performance policy.*
- *Fire and special operations turnout within 80 seconds 75% of the time.*
- *Medical emergency turnout within 60 seconds 75% of the time.*
- *Travel time of 240 seconds 75% of the time for first company on medical emergency responses.*
- *Travel time of 240 seconds 75% of the time for first company on fire suppression emergency responses.*
- *Travel time of 610 seconds 60% of the time for initial alarm to high rise fire suppression incidents.*

#### Initiative

*Track emergency scene staffing performance data.*

##### Milestones

- *15 personnel on scene of structure fires within 8 minutes 75% of the time*
- *Establish minimum response capability.*

#### Initiative

*Develop future performance benchmarks and the ability to capture required data.*

### **Milestones**

- *Develop loss stop time performance measure.*
- *Primary Search complete time performance measure.*
- *Intervention time performance measure.*
- *At patient time performance measure.*
- *Water on a structure fire time performance measure.*

## **Goal 2**

### *Provide professional services*

#### **Strategy A**

**Lead:** Operations Division Chief

Enhance training and education to improve service delivery to the community and the safety of responders.

#### **Initiative**

Evaluate and improve the Training Center facilities to meet current and future demands.

### **Milestones**

- Establish a committee to evaluate current conditions and future facility needs.
- Identify limitations of current facilities.
- Analyze what is working and what is not working.
- Research other training facilities.
- Create a report of findings and submit it to the department's leadership.
- Conduct a cost analysis for proposed projects.
- Explore funding options for the proposed projects. \$
- Prioritize and implement the approved projects.
- Evaluate the training center annually relative to current and future needs.

#### **Initiative**

Enhance career development program to prepare members for roles and responsibilities.

### **Milestones**

- Establish a committee to evaluate current career development programs.
- Analyze job tasks for every position and career development needs.
- Evaluate the current career development process.
- Identify any gaps in the career development process.
- Research methods to obtain career development.
- Develop a comprehensive career development outline.
- Develop needed career development programs for all levels of the organization.
- Implement the programs to facilitate personnel career development.
- Continuously review the implemented programs and revise as indicated.

### **Initiative**

Analyze and improve continuing education and training of personnel to maintain and strengthen knowledge.

### **Milestones**

- Establish a committee to evaluate continuing education and training.
- Identify limitations for continuing education and training for every position.
- Analyze continuing education and training opportunities.
- Research methods to overcome limitations.
- Conduct a cost analysis of all options.
- Create a report of findings to the department's leadership.
- Evaluate the cost and request needed funding
- Implement the approved plan to improve continuing education.
- Annually review the process and revise as indicated.

### **Initiative**

Assess and obtain all-hazard simulators and training props to prepare personnel through realistic training.

### **Milestones**

- Establish a committee to evaluate the current simulators and props used by the department.
- Analyze the current inventory and condition.

- Identify what is working and what is not working.
- Research other simulation programs and training props.
- Develop a prioritized list of simulation aids and equipment.
- Conduct a cost analysis of each option.
- Create a report of findings and provide it to the department's leadership.
- **Explore funding options.** \$
- Implement the approved plan to obtain simulation aids and equipment.
- Annually review the process and revise as indicated.

## **Strategy B**

**Lead:** Fire Chief/Deputy Chief

*Maintain up to date business practices.*

### **Initiative**

Review, evaluate, and revise the department's policies and procedures in order to provide up-to-date, refined guidance for employee safety and direction.

### **Milestones**

- Create a team from all ranks and shifts to review current guidelines.
- Identify outdated policies and procedures.
- Update and revise outdated policies and procedures.
  - o Submit drafts to department leadership.
  - o Review final drafts.
  - o Obtain approval.
- Publish policies and procedures in Target Solutions, department intranet, and in hard copy format in each station.
- Ensure each member has read and understood the updated policies and procedures.
- Annually, review policies and procedures and revise as needed.

## **Strategy C**

**Lead:** Fire Chief/Deputy Chief/Ops Div.Chief

*Meet community expectations of service delivery.*

### **Initiative**

*Provide medical response services.*

## Milestones

- *Offer Basic EMT Training/Certification to current ACCFES personnel.*
- *Require Basic EMT training/Certification to new firefighter recruits.*
- *Employ part time Medical Director.*
- *Have 100% of operations personnel Basic EMT or higher trained.*
- *All response apparatus carry an AED.*
- *Enhance medical supplies/equipment carried on apparatus. \$*
- *Deploy Continuous Quality Improvement Program to assure quality of service. \$*
  - *Add new EMS Training/CQI Lieutenant*
  - *Add new medical treatments for Basic EMT level certification*
- *Offer Advanced EMT Training/Certification to current ACCFES personnel. \$*
- *Require Advanced EMT Training/Certification to new firefighter recruits. \$*

## Initiative

*Provide emergency management/Emergency preparedness services.*

## Milestones

- *Maintain and update current Emergency Management Plans:*
  - *ACC Management Team Emergency Communications Plan/System*
  - *Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)*
  - *Hazard Mitigation Plan*
  - *Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)*
  - *Storm Ready Community*
  - *Emergency Management Ordinance*
  - *Georgia Emergency Management Agency Work Plan*
- *Develop new Emergency Management Plans:*
  - *Debris Removal Plan*
  - *Volunteer Management Plan*
  - *Points of Distribution Plan*
  - *Develop Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)*
    - *Write LEPC By-Laws.*
    - *Get approval of GEMA.*
    - *Appoint LEPC members through State Emergency Response Council.*

*Elect initial officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, ACC Hazmat Team Coordinator, ACC Emergency Management Director*

- *Executive Committee adopt LEPC By-Laws.*
- *Initiate regular meetings to take place quarterly. (in person and/or virtual)*

### **Initiative**

*Provide Technical Rescue Team.*

#### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.*
- *Develop staffed, trained, certified technical rescue team.*
- *Provide required apparatus and equipment.*

### **Initiative**

*Provide Regional Hazardous Materials Team.*

#### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.*
- *Maintain trained, certified team members.*
- *Provide required apparatus and equipment.*

### **Strategy D**

**Lead:** Operations Division Chief

Improve our working partnership with Central Communications.

### **Initiative**

- Develop a comprehensive plan to determine protocols, procedures, and information needs for more effective operations.

#### **Milestones**

- Form a committee of personnel.
- Identify dispatch SOPs/SOGs for our department.
- Analyze current processes for what works and what does not work.
- Research comparable call centers for information and ideas.
- Evaluate possible changes to our dispatch procedures.

- Develop a plan of implementation.
- Present the plan to Central Communications for approval.
- Implement the approved plan of action.
- Review the plan annually and revise as needed.

### **Initiative**

- Develop cross-training classes for dispatch personnel to establish better working relationships as it pertains to information needed for consistent and effective response.

### **Milestones**

- Identify communication needs and issues for our agency.
- Conduct ride-alongs.
- Form a team consisting of members of both agencies.
- Research and identify each agency's SOPs and SOGs.
- Identify any shortfalls or inconsistencies between agency SOPs and SOGs.
- Collaborate to develop and implement new SOPs and SOGs to enhance communications between agencies.
- Present the evidence to support the need for dedicated fire dispatchers.
- Support budget requests from Central Communications for fire dispatchers.
- Implement the approved plan for cross-training between agencies.
- Review quarterly for the first year and then every six months thereafter.
- Revise the process as needed.

### **Initiative**

- Develop strategies to improve efficiency and consistency with Central Communications.

### **Milestones**

- Establish a 911 steering committee.
- Analyze what is working and what is not working.
- Research industry best practices for 911 operations.
- Review all information gathered.
- Identify opportunities for improvement.

- Develop a plan of action.
- Conduct a cost analysis of improvements and prioritize the list.
- Present to the department leadership for guidance and approval.
- Implement and train members affected by the changes.
- Review quarterly and revise as needed.

## **Strategy E**

**Lead:** Deputy Chief/CRR Battalion Chief

Strengthen community relationships through outreach and partnerships.

### **Initiative**

Develop a comprehensive public information and outreach program to ensure the community is fully informed and involved.

### **Milestones**

- Create a committee of at least six members to analyze current programs.
- Identify current programs including but not limited to:
  - o Open House (s)
  - o Clowning
  - o Fire Safety House
  - o Fire Explorers
  - o Community Academy
  - o Reading at schools
  - o Smoke alarm program
- Identify target audiences for each program.
- Research other programs and methods utilized by other comparable departments.
- Analyze the department's capacity of time and finances.
- Review which methods work best for the Athens-Clarke County community.
- Create a plan of action.
- Submit the plan of action to department leadership for approval.
- Secure funding through various alternative funding sources, if necessary.
- Train personnel with alignment to specific skillsets.
- Implement the approved plans.
- Analyze the effectiveness of the implemented programs.
- Make any revisions necessary on a quarterly basis.

## **Initiative**

Develop strategies that will maximize opportunities to collaborate with all media outlets.

### **Milestones**

- Create a committee for the purposes of evaluating local and state media outlets to include, but not limited to:
  - o Radio
  - o Social media
  - o Television
  - o University of Georgia
  - o Print media.
- Evaluate the programs and outlets.
- Establish professional working relationships to overcome turnover of management and personnel.
- Evaluate internal ACCUG resources relative to a public information officer.
- Determine the value of internships utilizing local journalism students.
- Conduct a media academy to fully educate and inform participants about the depth and breadth of the department's programs.
- Integrate media personnel with different shifts and battalions.
- Incorporate opportunities for feedback sessions for analyzing effectiveness.
- Make any revisions necessary on a quarterly basis.

## **Initiative**

Develop relationships with logistical partners to support the Department and the community's needs.

### **Milestones**

- Establish a committee of at least six members to foster relationships with potential and current community partners.
- Analyze the functions, abilities, and services provided by the community partners.
- Allocate matching resources to each department or community need.
- Collaborate with local EMA to prevent duplication of efforts.
- Study limitations of local EMA staffing.

- Make recommendations based on the study results.
- Create a guide to be distributed to partners.
- Review and revise every six months.

## **Strategy F**

**Lead:** Deputy Chief/Operations Division Chief

Enhance department communications for better information dissemination among shifts, battalions, and personnel.

### **Initiative**

Standardize formal communications that proficiently conveys information throughout the organization.

#### **Milestones**

- *Provide email to all members of the department.*
- *Deploy scheduling technology solution for overtime scheduling.*
- Create a team of six personnel to identify current forms of formal communications.
- Analyze the strengths and deficiencies of the following:
  - o Email
  - o Texts
  - o Memoranda
  - o Letters
  - o Target Solutions
- Determine appropriate method of use for each form of formal communications.
- Report findings to the leadership for approval.
- Create SOPs to implement any new methods.
- *Distribute updated methods and train personnel accordingly.*
- Review annually and revise as needed.

### **Initiative**

Enhance informal communication to improve the dissemination of information within the organization.

### **Milestones**

- Create a committee of at least six members to evaluate current methods of informal communications.
- Analyze current usage of communications amongst personnel.
- Evaluate findings.
- Determine appropriate forms of communication to use with personnel.
- Establish procedures for the use of communications that affords transparency of information.
- Educate members on the appropriate forms of communications.
- Review and revise as needed.

### **Initiative**

Formalize after action reviews to better educate personnel throughout the organization.

### **Milestones**

- Form a team of captains to work with the training division to research current after-action report methods.
- Determine the current effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- Research other organizations for accepted standards.
- Adapt findings to fit the organization.
- Create a guide for conducting after-action reports to ensure consistency and share of information between personnel.
- Submit the guide for approval.
- Educate and train personnel on the approved guide.
- Review and revise as needed.

## **Goal 3**

*Recruit and retain high caliber team members.*

### **Strategy A**

**Lead:** Fire Chief

Create a culture within ACCFESD that attracts, develops, and sustains member longevity.

### **Initiative**

Develop a consistent and comprehensive hiring process to attract quality applicants.

#### **Milestones**

- Create a team to identify target audiences that would improve the department's recruitment pool.
- Research recruiting processes from comparable fire departments and organizations.
- Evaluate the recruiting process and ACCFES.
- Establish a marketing/recruiting team of department members to engage recruits.
- Share the plan with Human Resources and solicit feedback.
- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.* \$
- Implement the marketing/recruiting plan through the team, utilizing:
  - o Social media
  - o Job fairs
  - o Community events
  - o Websites
  - o Print media
- Analyze the feedback from the process.
- Identify any additional needs.
- Revise the current plan as needed and implement.

### **Initiative**

Implement strategies to enhance the quality of life and promote retention for ACCFESD members and families.

#### **Milestones**

- Create a team to develop survey.
- Create the survey.
- Survey the entire department to identify quality of life concerns.
- Create a team consisting of department members and human resources to analyze the survey results and define current needs of the department.
- Publish the findings through Target Solutions.
- Allow feedback from department members, consisting of a two-week timeframe.

- Add any additional concerns from the feedback.
- Evaluate the department's current programs and identify any additional resources needed to include but not be limited to:
  - o Chaplain program
  - o Family support plan
  - o Mentor program
  - o Employee assistance program
  - o Critical incident stress management
  - o Wellness program
- Determine the appropriate programs to address the needs.
- Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.
- Identify approved programs.
- Inform members of the programs and the process to enroll in them.
- Monitor the programs to determine effectiveness.
- Review the programs every six months and make any revisions needed.

## **Initiative**

Create strategies to ensure succession planning within the department.

## **Milestones**

- Create a team consisting of a battalion chief, captain, and lieutenant to identify critical duties within the fire department requiring succession planning.
- Survey/interview the identified critical duty positions and teams.
- Develop a plan for continuity of operations.
- Identify and recruit interested members.
- Select the interested members.
- Train the selected members.
- Monitor and revise the process as needed.

## Goal 4

*Seek continuous improvement.*

### Strategy A

**Lead:** Support Services Battalion Chief

Expand and enhance the Department's technological capabilities.

#### Initiative

Develop IT support system with the department to decrease dependency on outside services.

#### Milestones

- Create a committee within the fire department, including current IT support providers.
- Identify department personnel with an interest in IT support roles.
- Identify the current process for IT support.
- Analyze what works and what doesn't work.
- Research the IT support processes currently being used by ACCPD and other comparable departments in public safety.
- Create a report of findings and determine the process moving forward.
- Conduct a cost analysis of options.
- Develop a plan of action that includes changes.
- Present to the department leadership for approval.
- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding*
- Implement the approved plan.
- Review the process as needed based on feedback.
- Conduct any approved revisions as needed.

#### Initiative

Evaluate and improve a comprehensive plan to better utilize the technology available to the department.

### **Milestones**

- Form a committee to determine the department's technological needs and to determine what is available.
- Select department members interested in training classes (train-the-trainer).
- Create a survey for dispersal to department members to obtain feedback on station needs.
- Review the findings from the survey.
- Standardize available technology and equipment at the station level by utilizing a list of needs for standardization.
- Perform a cost analysis for equipment to be standardized.
- Develop a plan of action for each station.
- Present the plan of action to department leadership for approval.
- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding*
- Implement the approved plan.
- Review the process as needed based on feedback.
- Conduct any approved revisions as needed.

### **Initiative**

Identify, evaluate, and research computer software requirements for current and future needs.

### **Milestones**

- Create a committee to address software needs for the department.
- Identify the current software being used by the department.
- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the current software.
- Research the software being used by comparable departments.
- Research software for fire department use currently available.
- Perform a cost analysis for software needs.
- Develop a plan of action for software.
- Present the findings to the department leadership for approval.
- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding*
- Obtain the software.
- Train personnel on the new software.

- Implement the new plan and install the software for station use.
- Review the software being used and obtain feedback.
- Revise as needed and as determined by department needs.

## **Strategy B**

**Lead:** Fire Chief/Deputy Chief/CRR Battalion Chief

Prepare for, pursue, achieve and maintain international accreditation to better serve our community and to embrace excellence.

### **Initiative**

Form team or committee structure with management components as needed to pursue and maintain accreditation.

#### **Milestones**

- Identify the needed team or committee structure(s) for the various components of the accreditation process.
- Create the management oversight positions to lead the teams or committees, as well as the process overall.
- Establish team or committee member criteria.
- Determine the composition of the teams or committees.
- Solicit participation to meet the composition of the teams or committees.
- Develop and complete the selection process.
- Provide for the needed educational components provided through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International to ensure the relevant members have the needed training.

### **Initiative**

Prepare a community-driven strategic plan.

#### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding*
- Hold an external stakeholder meeting where community members provide feedback on program priorities, service expectations, concerns and strengths perceived about ACCFESD.
- Provide internal stakeholder work sessions to evaluate (and update if necessary) the mission, vision and values; determine internal strengths and weaknesses,

external opportunities and threats; establish critical issues and service gaps, determine goals and objectives to achieve over five years.

- Determine a work plan for the accomplishment of each goal and implement the plan.
- Annually evaluate objectives accomplished with the plan.
- Report annual plan progress to internal and external stakeholders.

### **Initiative**

Conduct a community hazards and risk assessment utilizing the CPSE/CFAI Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual criteria.

#### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.*
- Obtain instruction on hazard and risk assessment, and standards of cover preparation.
- Perform community hazards and risk assessment.
- Evaluate historical community emergency response performance and coverage.
- Establish benchmark and baseline emergency response performance objectives.
- Establish and publish the Community Risk Assessment - Standards of Cover.
- Maintain, and annually update the Standards of Cover document.

### **Initiative**

Conduct and document a self-assessment of the department utilizing the CPSE/CFAI Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual criteria.

#### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.*
- Obtain instruction on writing a CFAI self-assessment manual.
- Assign self-assessment manual category and criterion writing to the department accreditation committee/team members as appropriate.
- Review self-assessment and ensure all reference items are in order.

## **Initiative**

Achieve agency accreditation by the CFAI.

### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.*
- Apply for “Candidate Agency” status with the CFAI.
- Prepare for CFAI Peer Assessor Team visit.
- Upload Strategic Plan, Standards of Cover, and Self-Assessment Categories and Criterion for review and comment by CFAI Peer Team.
- Host CFAI Peer Team site visit for accreditation review.
- Receive CFAI Peer Team recommendation to CFAI for Accredited status.
- Receive vote during the CFAI hearings in favor of Accredited status.

## **Initiative**

Maintain accreditation with the CFAI.

### **Milestones**

- *Evaluate the cost and request needed funding.*
- Submit required Annual Compliance Reports.
- Attend CFAI “Dayroom Discussion” web-meetings for continued education.
- Participate in the accreditation process by providing “peer assessors” for external department review and identification of possible best practices.
- Participate in the annual CPSE Excellence Conference for continued education and networking with other accreditation teams and accredited agencies.
- Submit Annual Compliance Reports as required by CFAI policies.
- Establish succession development of internal accreditation team in preparation for next accreditation cycle.