



December 2, 2013

Re: HCFMO Budget Plan, FY 2014-15

Attached is the FY2014-15 Budget Plan for the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office (HCFMO). The purpose of this report is to provide an executive summary about the FY 2013-14 results and the FY 2014-15 annual budget. In addition, it provides an overview of the agency's future plans to provide a link between current performance, the annual budget process, and the annual operations plan.

Key highlights included in this report are:

- HCFMO programs are on track and within budget;
- The proposed target budget is expected to provide adequate funding for all planned activities;
- There is a need for \$160K in additional funding for the SOB/Game Room initiative;
- Continued growth in population and service demands will require additional funding in the future;
- Changing expectations in fire/arson investigation and other regulatory practices will create additional service delivery challenges and opportunities; and
- HCFMO is uniquely positioned, and well-prepared, to meet these challenges.

All items included in this report have been anticipated in the FY2014-15 Budget; other opportunities may arise during the fiscal year. As needed, HCFMO may place those requests and recommendations on the court agenda for consideration at the appropriate time.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Montgomery".

Mike Montgomery
Director / Fire Marshal



Budget Plan FY 2014-2015

Executive Summary

December 2013



Purpose

Budget Plan FY2014-2015: Executive Summary

Published December 2013 by the

Harris County Fire Marshal's Office

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The purpose of this report is to provide an overview about the FY 2014-15 budget plan and outlook for the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office (HCFMO) for the next fiscal year.

The Budget Plan provides highlights about the agency's performance this fiscal year and expectations for the next fiscal year. In addition, it provides an overview of the agency's three-year Strategic Plan, including "stretch" goals. Following approval of the annual budget, HCFMO will update the Strategic Plan. Thus, the Budget Plan provides a link between past performance, the annual budget process, and future plans. Specifically, this Plan:

- Provides an overview of the HCFMO mission, operational philosophy, and organization;
- Provides summary data about results and expectations;
- Identifies key assumptions, issues, and concerns; and
- Describes the HCFMO budget in terms of key perspectives—mission, public service, financial stewardship, internal processes, and professional development.

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Authorized under Chapter 352 of the Local Government Code, the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office ("HCFMO") is a specialized law enforcement agency whose mission is to safeguard life, property, and the environment for the citizens of Harris County through cost-effective fire inspection, fire/arson investigation, and emergency response services.

The Fire Marshal is appointed by Commissioners Court to a term not to exceed two years. Except for administrative support staff, HCFMO employees are certified as "fire protection personnel" by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection ("TCFP"); and where required by law, as "peace officers" by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement ("TCOLE").

 HCFMO Harris County Fire Marshal		HCFMO at a Glance
Established	1974	
Major Missions	Fire/Arson Investigation Fire Inspection/Code Enforcement Emergency Response Coordination of Fire Protection Training/Education Homeland Security Readiness	
Senior Leadership	Mike Montgomery Fire Marshal James Bolton Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal Ops Laurie Christensen Asst. Chief, Support Services Rodney Reed Deputy Chief, Planning Bob Royall Asst. Chief, Emergency Operations	
2013-14 Operating Budget, adjusted	\$ 7.9 MM	
	original	\$ 6.8 MM
2014-15 Proposed Budget	\$ 8.0 MM	
Authorized Positions	71	
Sworn	61	
Civilian	8	
Grant-funded	2	

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Overview

The Harris County Fire Marshal's Office ("HCFMO") was established in 1974. Authorized under Local Gov't Code Chapter 352, the HCFMO is a specialized law enforcement agency whose mission is to safeguard life, property, and the environment for the citizens of Harris County through cost-effective fire inspection, fire/arson investigation, and emergency response services. The Fire Marshal is appointed by Commissioners Court to a term not to exceed two years. Except for administrative staff, HCFMO employees are certified as "fire protection personnel" by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection ("TCFP"); where required by law, employees are licensed "peace officers" by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement ("TCOLE").

Mission

We will use available resources to effectively safeguard the lives and property in our community through reasonable standards for fire and life safety, fire and life safety inspections, fire/arson investigation, and specialized emergency response and training.

Vision and Expectations

We will provide services that meet or exceed regulatory requirements & customer expectations Every one. Everywhere. Every time.

Core Values

Integrity ❖ Commitment ❖ Excellence

Strategic Priorities for FY 2013-14

- Provide "best possible" service delivery with available resources.
- Continue to implement the strategic staffing plan
- Seek opportunities to reduce general fund needs

Key Accomplishments for FY2013-14

- Able to maintain the safe and effective delivery of essential services and meet all budget goals
- Used fees and grant funding where possible to upgrade services and reduce load on general fund
- Completed transition plan for fire protection services in FPZ 4 (Stafford)
- Obtained approval for critical capital improvement projects (CIP)
- Established standards of professional competency for investigators that meet or exceed Texas Forensic Science Commission recommendations
- Continued fire certification programs in partnership with Lone Star College System
- Supported strategic planning efforts of local fire departments and emergency service districts
- Created stand-alone Planning/Logistics Section to support HCFMO operations
- Continued use of contract administrative services in lieu of permanent positions
- Completed position equalization process and *Step Plus* compensation plan
- Continued investment in technology and web-based enterprise solutions

Change is shaping today's reality

Simply put—what got us *here* won't get us *there*.

Rapid population growth, improved technology, and the explosion of social media have created new demands for government services. Yet, there is a persistent desire to control government spending.

We are quietly urged to be more efficient, to “do more with less”; at the same time we are struggling to meet new standards of public expectation. In many cases, traditional methods are rapidly becoming ineffective and inefficient. As examples:

- The Texas Forensic Sciences Commission review of the Willingham-Willis arson case has radically affected the way arson cases are investigated, prosecuted, and defended across the country;
- More stringent standards for certified personnel will create training challenges and opportunities;
- Higher rates of commercial development demand more efficient, risk-based inspection models; and
- Changes in long-time county policies may affect the successful HCFMO “mobile office” concept.

Key Assumptions

- **The urbanization of Harris County will continue.** Harris County is big, unique, spreading out, and growing fast. Most growth is in unincorporated areas outside Beltway 8. Continued urbanization will increase the demands for fire protection and prevention services in unincorporated areas.
- **The economic recovery is well underway, but the public sector will take time to recover.** Key people were lost, core services were reduced, and many programs remain on “pause”. There is residual concern about agencies growing “too fast, too soon”; yet, service demands could soon outpace our ability to provide them.

- **Special districts will provide fire /rescue and EMS in unincorporated areas.** Emergency Services Districts collect over \$100 million for fire/rescue, EMS, and related services. At the maximum tax rate, ESDs could collect an additional \$60 million. While there are disparities in funding and service, consolidation into a single county fire department would not reduce costs; it would only shift cost.
- **There is a need for specialized, County-provided fire services.** Specialized services—fire inspection, code enforcement, fire/arson investigation, and hazmat response—must be consistent across the entire county. Likewise, there is a growing need for information services, strategic fire protection planning, and fire prevention advocacy. Given no county fire department, HCFMO is the logical provider for these county-provided services.
- **The HCFMO role will continue to change.** As evidenced by the wildfires of 2011, there is a need for HCFMO to expand its role of coordination, information, and research about fire protection service delivery across the county. Likewise, HCFMO anticipates more pressure for adoption of higher minimum standards for firefighters, fire inspection, fire/arson investigation, hazardous materials response, and agency accreditation.
- **The available labor pool is slowly shrinking.** Two factors may affect HCFMO's ability to quickly fill job vacancies in the future—robust economic recovery in the private sector and the need for skill sets beyond those of traditional high school/GED and basic fire protection training.
- **Proposed changes in county policies may affect HCFMO operations.** With few exceptions, HCFMO personnel are classified as “essential safety personnel” subject to 24-hr emergency response and off-shift recall, with assigned, take-home vehicles. The effectiveness of these mobile offices may be impaired by proposed policy changes.

Strategic Priorities for FY 2014-15

- Promote community safety and economic development.
- Maximize performance with proactive planning.
- Be responsible stewards of resources and taxpayer dollars.
- Empower employees to provide the best possible public service.

These strategic priorities are the foundation for HCFMO strategic goals and objectives this fiscal year.

HCFMO expects to meet or exceed all operational goals within the proposed budget of \$8.1 MM. HCFMO does not foresee any need for additional budget allocations or this fiscal year, but has identified priorities should additional funding become available over the next three years. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

To ensure that HCFMO activities are properly aligned with organizational goals and objectives, the goals are grouped into four perspectives as follows.

Perspective: Serve the Public

Figure 1. HCFMO exists to serve the public.



HCFMO will provide services essential to the public safety and welfare -- fire prevention, code enforcement, emergency response, and fire investigation. The public will feel confident that when emergencies arise, HCFMO is prepared to respond in a quick and effective manner. At the same time, HCFMO will be forward-thinking to support current business and stimulate economic development to enhance the future of our community.

Goal #1: Promote fire-resistant community planning

Provide effective, science-based services and mutual problem-solving techniques to target specific fire risks and address nuisance conditions. Make Harris County a safer place to live, to work, and to enjoy through increased HCFMO presence and accessibility.

Goal #2: Encourage prompt corrective actions of fire and life safety hazards

Provide inspection services that identify and cause fire and life safety hazards to be corrected in a timely way. Treat all citizens in a courteous, responsive, and reliable manner that achieves desired results. Excel at the technical aspects of service delivery to effectively anticipate and respond to customer requests, from minor incidents to major disasters.

Goal #3: Enforce fire-related laws and regulations

Develop plans, policies, procedures, and practices that effectively meet or exceed regulatory requirements and customer expectations to protect lives and property.

Goal #4: Provide cost-effective emergency response

Ensure citizens receive a good value; deliver cost-efficient services at a reasonable cost. Use technology, where practical, to improve service delivery and save taxpayer dollars.

Goal #5: Use public outreach to reduce fire risk

Provide a variety of ways for citizens to meaningfully share ideas, concerns, and questions with HCFMO leadership. Provide volunteering opportunities within HCFMO through Citizen Corps programs such as Fire Corps and CERT.

Goal #6: Coordinate fire protection services

Provide outstanding operational support to local fire departments, the public, elected officials, community partners, and others.

Perspective: Resource Management



Figure 2. HCFMO will be prepared to deliver services efficiently.

HCFMO will deliver essential public safety services that are customer-driven, affordable, and dependable. We will ensure that we provide the resources needed to deliver those services in a professional, well-managed, and sustainable way. We will spend taxpayer dollars wisely and care for the resources they provide.

Goal #1: Develop effective strategic plans

Build on current financial planning tools to provide a longer-term view of future HCFMO operations and finances. Ensure that plans identify potential challenges, support sound fiscal policies and controls, and can respond to unforeseen problems and opportunities.

Goal #2: Deliver consistent and reliable services

Maximize the use of public funds through service optimization, innovation, process improvement, competition, and other means. Conduct operations so that citizens needs are *always* met with high-quality and responsive service.

Goal #3: Practice financial & ethical responsibility

Do what is right; not what you have the right to do. Eliminate waste and activities that suggest potential conflicts of interests or favoritism. Prioritize funding to help achieve key priorities and optimize the use of current resources.

Perspective: Internal Work Processes



Figure 3. HCFMO will excel at critical internal practices.

HCFMO will seek opportunities to streamline operations and remove barriers to successful outcomes. We will ensure that opportunities are provided to HCFMO staff to create an environment of continual growth, learning, and a willingness to implement innovative technologies, work processes, and strategies that result in more efficient and effective service delivery.

Goal #1: Improve access to information

Increase the quality and frequency of internal and external communications to promote problem-solving partnerships within and outside of the organization.

Goal #2: Strengthen community partnerships

Build relationships with others involved in the governing and service delivery process, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and those we serve. Encourage community-based service delivery with collaborative relationships and a holistic approach to operational activities, programs, goals and objectives.

Goal #3: Share concerns and find solutions

Improve the quality and frequency of communication to enhance public access to information about HCFMO services, events, key issues, and emergency situations. Serve as a catalyst for change—continually seek to improve the quality of public services through risk-cost-benefit analysis, performance metrics, and other recognized management tools.

Perspective: Professional Development



Figure 4. HCFMO will know what skills, tools, and organizational climate our employees need.

HCFMO will be an example of organizational excellence – we will provide superior performance, with distinctive impact, and lasting endurance. HCFMO will strive to be a point of civic and professional pride, and to demonstrate an organizational culture that survives all challenges.

Goal #1: Develop a skilled and diverse workforce

Create a work environment that encourages HCFMO to hire, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of skilled employees capable of meeting the county’s needs. Focus on career development, leadership, and succession planning.

Goal #2: Encourage training and professional growth

Create a culture of professional stewardship by maximizing developmental opportunities for employees to ensure they are technically competent and have the core skills necessary to excel. Provide the training, technology, and proper work environment to enable our employees and volunteers to succeed and continuously improve. Support active participation on governing and advisory boards.

Goal #3: Invest in critical infrastructure

Prioritize funding for infrastructure maintenance to avoid excessive deterioration and minimize long-term operational and capital costs. Use infrastructure investments to help achieve key priorities and optimize the use of current assets.



HCFMO
Harris County Fire Marshal

Key Priorities for FY 2014-15

- CONTINUE to implement strategic plan based on balanced service delivery and population growth with available resources.
- IMPLEMENT new compensation plan for all employees at rank of Captain and below.
- COMPLETE FY2013-14 CIP projects (evidence room expansion and two (2) modular buildings)
- BUILD CAPACITY by (1) investing in technology; (2) streamlining work practices to improve efficiency, and (3) filling vacant positions.
- RECLASSIFY 2080 temp hours into one (1) FT SPECIALIST position to increase training/response capabilities.
- ADD one (1) FT SPECIALIST position to increase training/response capabilities.
- ADD two (2) FT SPECIALIST positions to increase admin/ops support capabilities.
- ADD one (1) FT SPECIALIST position to increase SOB/game room task force capabilities. **(NOT FUNDED)**
- FUND training field projects through donations, general fund, and recovery of training facility use fees.
- HOLD labor costs to 80%, or less, of total budget.
- IDENTIFY opportunities to reduce general fund obligation through FEE-based services.
- CONTINUE to incorporate contract administrative services in lieu of permanent positions, where practical.

Details about operational goals and objectives for each key priority will be presented in the Operations Plan following final budget approval.

Figure 5. Key Priorities for FY 2014-15

Conclusions

As the local AHJ—Authority Having Jurisdiction—HCFMO is the only local agency with the authority to perform the core functions of fire inspection and code enforcement, fire and arson investigation, hazardous materials response, and coordination of fire protection services in unincorporated areas of the county.

HCFMO is uniquely positioned, and well-prepared, to meet these challenges, but future service demands will require additional funding. The proposed HCFMO strategic plan provides a flexible, scalable roadmap to provide the controlled growth necessary to sustain service delivery levels in future years.



Figure 6. Strategic Goals, FY 2014-15

FY2013-14 Recap

HCFMO expects to remain within budget this fiscal year. Emphasis has been on rebuilding core services while remaining within budget. The priority has been hiring enough replacement personnel to keep pace with continued population growth in unincorporated areas. Key financial highlights include:

- 12% budget increase due to fire code revenue projections compared to FY2012-13.
- Fire code revenues significantly ahead of original projections.
- Cost-control measures have been successful.
- Completed the interim compensation equalization plan and restructured the incentive pay structure.
- Completed successful technology enhancements to streamline processes for statistical and mandatory reporting.
- Anticipated rollover of \$200,000 from the General Fund.

FY2014-15 Outlook

HCFMO expects to be able to accomplish operational goals within this year's proposed budget of \$8.1 MM. Emphasis is on capacity-building, with specific focus on (1) opportunities to invest in technology; (2) cost recovery for services provided; and (3) cautious start-up of specific activities given limited resources. Key financial highlights include:

- Anticipated increase in annual fire code revenue.
- 80% of the HCFMO budget to be spent on direct labor costs.
- Continue participation in E-Permitting initiative.
- Continue investment in training field projects with training fees, donations, and general fund.
- Continue investment in technology to further improve efficiency, accountability, and access to information.

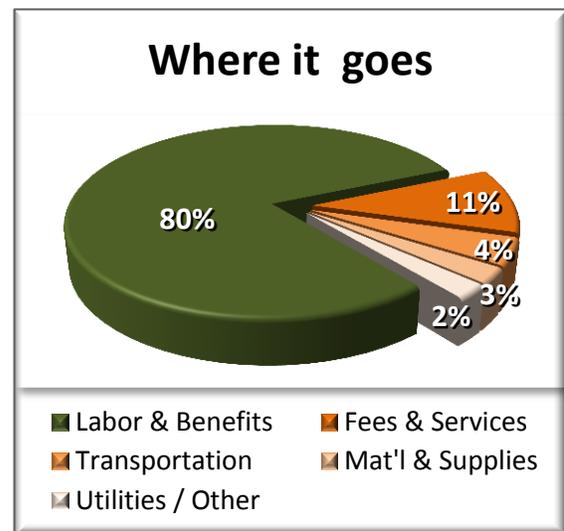
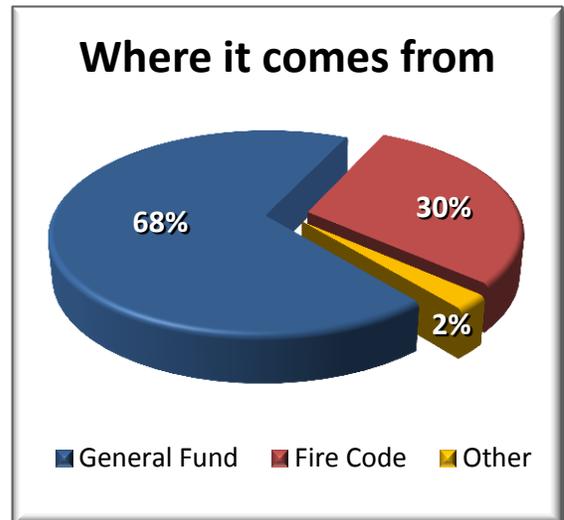


Figure 7. Source and Use of Operating Budget, FY 2014-15

Long-term Financial Outlook

HCFMO forecasts a need for capacity-building when the economic recovery allows additional funding. By the year 2020, HCFMO estimates an annual operating budget of \$10 million is required to meet identified needs. Of this, \$6.5 million is anticipated from general funds; \$3.5 million is from restricted fire code funds and other fees. This equates to an average annual increase of 5-6% over each of the next few years.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Year	Fire Inspections	Fire / Arson Investigations	Compliance Actions	Emergency Responses	Training, Drills & Exercises	Outreach Activities	Information requests
2012	9,332	776	622	192	187	54	1,585
2013-14 <i>Projected</i>	9,500	870	620	230	180	60	1,800
2014-15 <i>Budgeted</i>	10,000	900	200	240	200	65	1,920

Figure 8. HCFMO Operational Activities Summary

FY2013-14 Recap

Given continued economic recovery, HCFMO saw increases in all essential services and began cautious renewal of discretionary services. Emphasis was on “best practices” service delivery and capacity-building.

- 2% increase in fire and life safety inspections, with a 10% increase in new construction inspections
- 15% increase in fire/arson investigation activities
- 20% increase in emergency responses
- 14% increase in requests for information

Specific operational highlights include:

- Implementation of an agency Safety Program in support of national efforts to reduce first responder injuries and fatalities
- Implementation of a customer service survey
- Purchase of water tanker truck with \$240K in general funds in support of multi-year fire service contract in Commissioner Pct 1
- Have sustained remaining county fire service contracts in Commissioner Precincts 1 and 4
- Purchase of radios and new CBRNE response vehicle with \$1.4 Million in UASI grant funds

There was an increased interest in HCFMO-provided training, primarily from the petro-chemical industry. As an example, Shell Pipeline donated \$25K for the development and delivery of pipeline safety classes.

FY2014-15 Outlook

Given continued economic recovery, HCFMO expects continued increases in essential services. Emphasis will continue to be “best practices” service delivery and capacity-building. HCFMO anticipates:

- 5% increase in fire and life safety inspections, with a 15% increase in new construction inspections
- 70% decrease in compliance activities
- 11% increase in first responder training activities
- 7% increase in requests for information

Specifically, HCFMO expects the demand for inspection of new construction and specialized occupancy use, such as SOBs and game rooms, to continue to expand rapidly. The number of compliance actions will be down sharply as HCFMO hands over fire code compliance to PID Permits.

Demand for other HCFMO services is expected to remain flat or increase slightly, but more in line with population growth; around 2-3% annually. Given the need for onsite service delivery, mobility will be a key factor in response time and resource needs.

Following is a brief explanation of key planned HCFMO activities for FY-2014-15. With the exception of SOB/game room regulatory activities, all FY2014-15 programs can be accomplished with existing resources and within the proposed budget. **It will require an additional \$160K to adequately fund SOB/game room regulatory activities.**

Large-scale construction project update

In 2012, HCFMO identified a new phenomenon in building construction in unincorporated areas—multiple, simultaneous “career” projects, all with construction lasting five years or more. A “career” project is described as any project that most county inspectors would expect to encounter only once in a career. Of the seven “career” projects in FY2013-14, six are in full swing, with large-scale inspections beginning early in 2014. Acceleration of construction of the Grand Parkway between I-10 West and U.S. 59 North is expected to have a major impact on development across the northern half of the county in the near future. The location of each project is shown here.

Traditional inspection staffing models and skill sets are not adequate for these projects. Each “career” project will require multiple site visits by site-dedicated inspection teams. These inspections will require specialized inspection skills—mid-rise/high rise buildings, high-pile storage, sophisticated fire detection and alarm systems, complex suppression systems, and fire department access—once seen only in metropolitan cities. As a result, HCFMO has prioritized the hire of additional fire code inspectors with these specialized skill sets. It is a top priority to fill remaining vacant positions with qualified people, but it will be a challenge to identify and hire them.

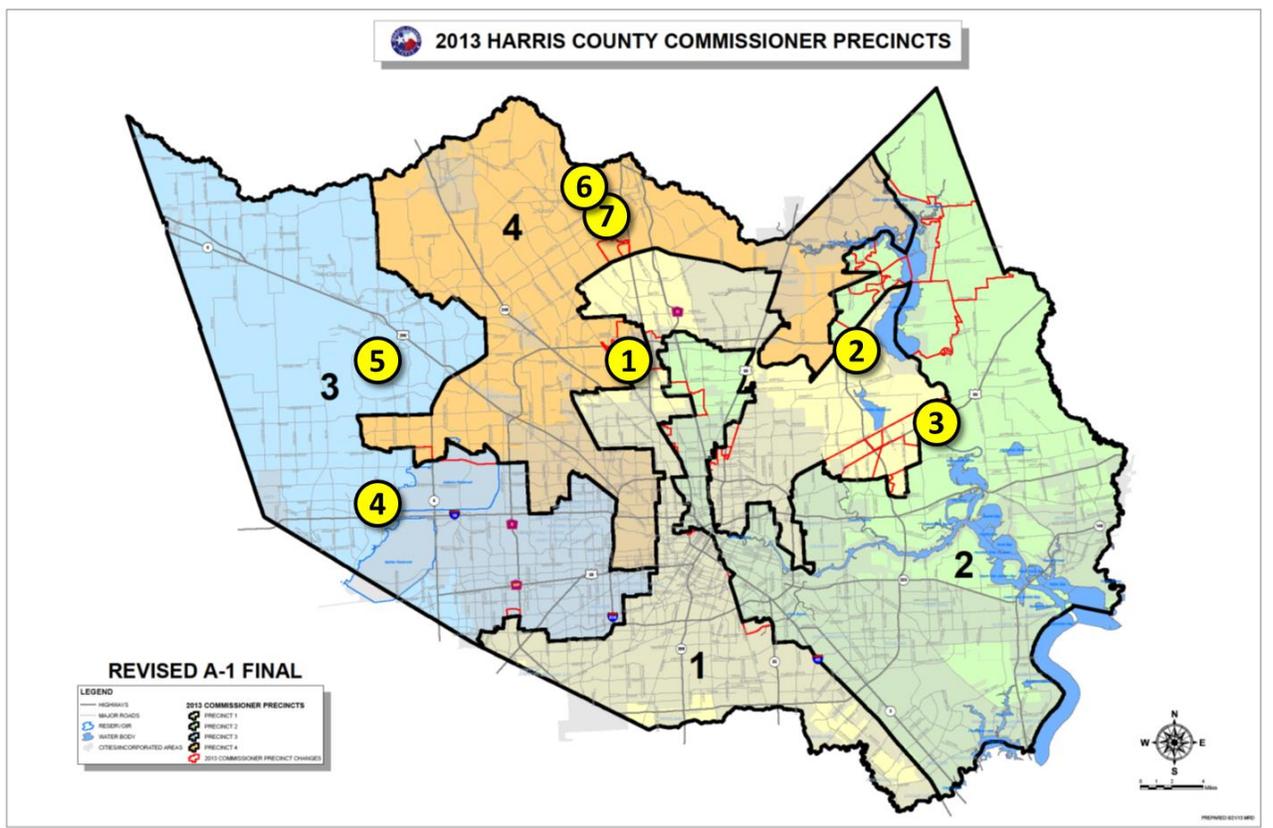


Figure 9. Large-scale development projects

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Pinto Business Park, Pct 1. 2) Generation Park, Pct 1. 3) Genan Houston Tire Recycling Facility, Pct.2. 4) Katy Ranch Crossing, Pct.3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Bridgeland Master Community, Pct 3. 6) ExxonMobil Delta project, Pct 3. 7) Springwoods Village Community, Pct 4. |
|--|---|

Transition Plans for Fire Service Contracts

For over 35 years, the County has provided supplemental funding for emergency fire protection services in certain unincorporated areas. However, there are significant pressures to change traditional funding models from supplemental funding to full cost recovery. County officials have directed HCFMO to develop a plan to end county-funded fire protection in a smooth, orderly transition without any interruption of essential fire protection services.

The creation of Emergency Services District 75 (ESD 75) in the Baytown ETJ was a major step toward this goal. The creation of ESD 75 provides a funding mechanism for fire protection services separate from the county's general fund. As a result, \$100K in general funds has been repurposed for other HCFMO operations.

The three remaining contract areas—for the extra-territorial jurisdictions (ETJ) outside the City of Jersey Village in Pct 4, the City of Stafford, and the cities of Houston and Pearland in Pct. 1—may be more problematic. These areas may be too small or have insufficient tax base to support an ESD; alternative delivery options may be required. HCFMO will continue to work with community leaders in an effort to develop future service delivery plans, but time is needed to implement replacement programs. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

Interlocal agreements for HCFMO services

For almost 40 years, HCFMO has provided fire investigation services at the request of smaller cities and other counties that have no fire marshal. A recent review was unable to locate any agreements for these traditional arrangements. Also, Waller County has requested assistance from HCFMO to establish a Waller County fire marshal's office and to assist with the development of their fire code review and inspection process. As a result, HCFMO is working closely with the County Attorney's Office to develop draft agreements. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

Legislative changes will affect HCFMO operations

Legislative changes show that the public has certain expectations regarding fire inspections in day care homes and other structures. The department is evaluating community needs and state legislative changes that could affect HCFMO services.

Additional changes in fire investigator certification and professional development are expected as a result of the Texas Forensic Science Commission's final report on the Willingham arson/capital murder case. HCFMO has already begun its program to meet or exceed the recommendations issued by the Commission as part of an agency-wide Professional Standards program.

Finally, the fireworks industry has approached the Texas Fire Marshal's Association about a possible revamp of the Texas Fireworks Rules and enabling legislation. The association has asked HCFMO and Denton County FMO to co-chair the study committee.

The Fire Marshal will update the court on the implementation of initiatives resulting from legislation. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

LODDs create a need to review safety practices

For a short period earlier this year, the State of Texas led the nation in firefighter Line-of-Duty-deaths. As a result, there is an increased interest in fire training and safety practices. HCFMO is developing training programs and safety initiatives for delivery throughout the year. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

SOB/Game Room regulations

HCFMO is working closely with other law enforcement agencies to address the growing problem with illegal game rooms and sexually-oriented businesses (SOBs). A new Regulatory Enforcement Unit will help with these efforts; however, it will require an additional \$160K to adequately fund SOB/game room regulatory activities. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

Cross-utilization of HCFMO resources

For the past decade, HCFMO has moved toward specialization in the delivery of fire inspection, investigation, and emergency response services. This approach worked well during the initial phases of the county hazmat response team and fire code process.

However, the economic downturn of 2009-12 forced many HCMFO employees into unfamiliar roles or changes in day-to-day work assignments, and required a return to a multi-purpose approach to HCFMO service delivery. Examples of this change in philosophy include:

- Use of cross-trained personnel assigned fulltime to other assignments to respond to hazmat emergencies and large scale incidents.
- Development of a Regulatory Enforcement Unit to assist with compliance with county regulations for fire code, nuisance abatement, SOB/game room, and arson fire investigation. This unit will also be responsible for property/evidence management.

Given the success of those efforts, the diminishing distinction between inspection and investigation activities, and the growing emphasis on responder safety, HCFMO plans to continue the trend toward multi-purpose roles for HCFMO employees and work groups. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

Transition to an enterprise, Web-based solution

Given the explosion in BYOD (bring your own device) technology and the need for web-based information portals, HCFMO is fully committed to making the transition from laptop-based technology to tools that are accessible from any device—laptop, tablet, or smartphone—and on any operating system—*e.g.* iOS, Windows, or Android. Examples of this plan include:

EmergencyReporting®. This new tool is used to document fire inspections, initial fire investigations, and emergency response. For the first time, use of the *ER*® toolset allows HCFMO employees to see the entire history of a location and share that information with each other. *ER*® also contains a risk assessment tool that HCFMO will use to estimate fire risk and help local fire departments with strategic planning and emergency

response pre-planning. *ER*® also has several summary reports to help HCFMO better manage and optimize resource use and productivity.

The county's e-permitting system. Around mid-year, this tool will allow HCFMO and PID to seamlessly enter and manage permit and inspection information for new construction and other buildings.

The county's new, web-based enterprise information system under development by ITC. When complete, this system will link the many databases and information sources that exist in the county. Varying degrees of log-in protection will provide county officials and the public unprecedented, yet controlled, access to important information at any time, from any Web access point.

Develop fire field training capabilities

After some abortive attempts due to economic and other constraints, HCFMO has begun implementation of plans to revitalize the use of the fire training field. Specific to these plans are:

- Filling the vacant position of Training Manager to provide fulltime direction and leadership for all training activities
- Completion of several training props to support more advanced training in structural firefighting, hazardous materials emergencies, industrial and well site emergencies, and fire investigation
- Request for two training specialists, cross-trained as hazardous materials technicians, to provide additional fire field readiness, class instruction, and emergency response

Conclusions

As the local AHJ—Authority Having Jurisdiction—HCFMO is the only local agency with the authority to perform the core functions of fire inspection and code enforcement, fire and arson investigation, hazardous materials response, and coordination of fire protection services in unincorporated areas of the county. **HCFMO is uniquely positioned, and well-prepared, to meet these challenges.**

ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

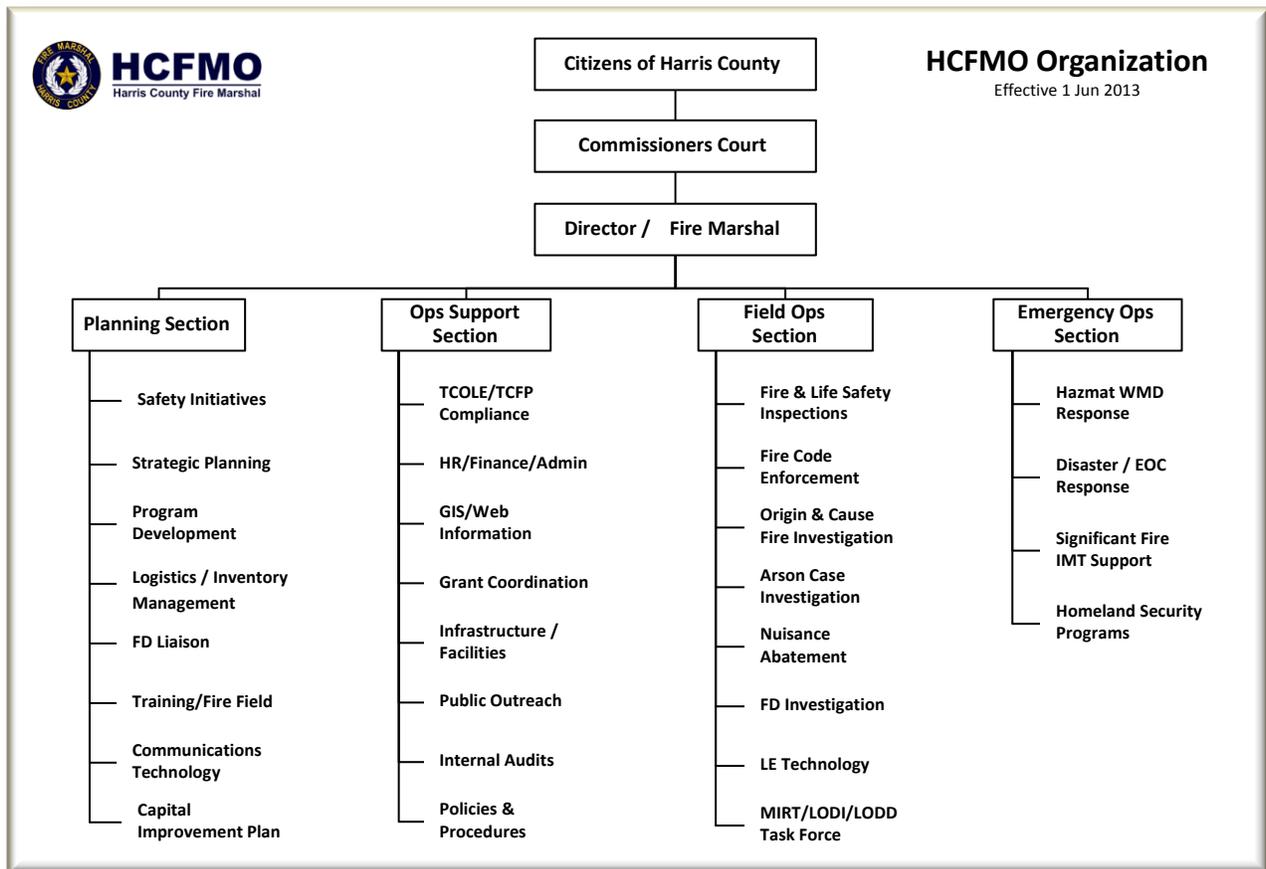


Figure 10. HCFMO Organization Chart

FY2013-14 Recap

HCFMO has continued its recovery from the economic downturn, but lingering effects remain. Personnel cuts and retirements over the past two years have resulted in an organization that is shifting from “traditionalists” and “baby boomers” to “Gen X and Y” employees. Key organizational highlights include.

- Filled only 60% of approved vacant positions; qualified labor pool is very tight due to growth in private sector
- Completed development of the Professional Competency program for investigators
- Completed implementation of an agency-wide reclassification and interim compensation plans.

FY2014-15 Outlook

The face of HCFMO will continue to change as tenured employees retire and “millennial” employees enter the workforce. Key actions include:

- Use available resources to provide the best possible customer service and build capacity
- Fill vacant positions with principled, committed personnel that reflect the growing diversity of the County.
- Implement agency-wide leadership and Professional Competence programs.
- Implement *Step Plus* compensation program for all HCFMO employees.

Long term Staffing Plan

HCFMO has taken steps necessary to provide the best possible public service with available resources and within the target budget. Short-term, these changes have provided HCMFO with the stability to continue to deliver professional, cost-effective public services and the flexibility to meet ever-changing community needs. However, it may be difficult for these practices to be sustained over time.

Given emerging community needs and a focus on capacity-building, HCFMO anticipates a need to continue to cautiously rebuild capacity over the long-term—**future service demands will require additional funding**. Two examples illustrate why HCFMO plans must include additional staffing over the next five years.

- HCFMO staff levels are similar to those in 2008-09. However, population in unincorporated areas has increased 20%, and is expected to increase another 50% by 2020.
- Likewise, the number of fire code inspections has doubled since 2008-09, and is expected to increase another 50% by 2020.

The proposed HCFMO strategic plan provides a roadmap to sustain the service delivery levels necessary

in future years. The plan is flexible and can be scaled accordingly to allow for changes in population projections or desired service levels. It provides controlled growth to minimize budget spikes and to allow smooth assimilation of new employees. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court’s consideration and possible action.

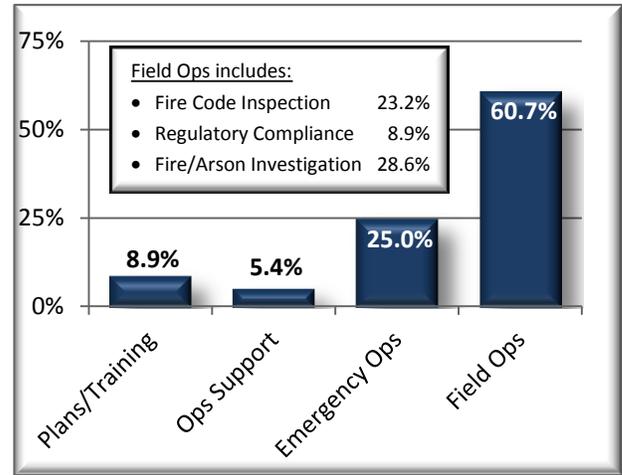


Figure 11. How we’re staffed

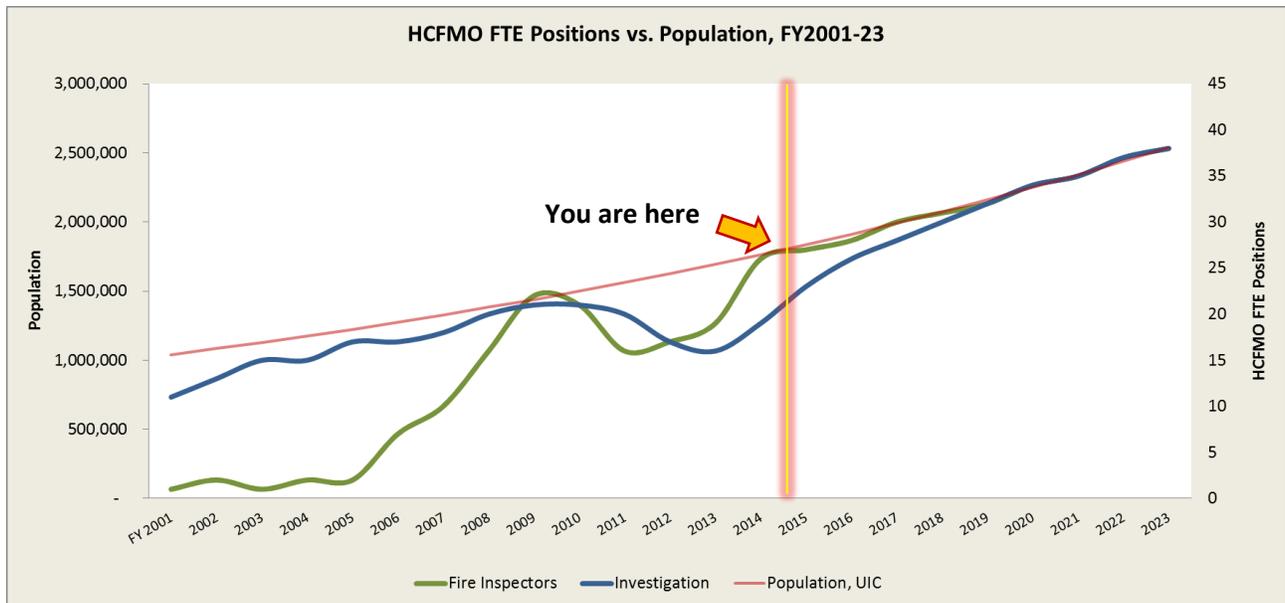


Figure 12. Strategic Staffing Plan through FY 2022-23

Proposed “Step Plus” Compensation plan

The proposed *Step Plus* compensation plan is an integral part of the agency’s ProComp standards program, and will replace the current transition pay system beginning in March 2014. Based on the military system of clearly-defined, separate career ladders and compensation plans for specialists (enlisted personnel) and supervisors (officers), the plan includes base pay “steps”, plus merit pay based on performance.

The plan is designed to provide base compensation for basic levels of certification, experience, and education, with well-defined steps for higher levels of certification, experience, and education. By design, every employee will be able to plan a career path and compensation based on agency need, interest, and performance.

There are two career tracks: a Technical Specialist track and a Management track. Each track is designed to provide an employee with a long and rewarding career based on personal interest, skills set, and agency need. The plan has several benefits that include:

- A transparent and fair compensation system that replaces a more subjective “legacy” pay scale
- A better match of agency needs, employee career goals, and changing FMO employee demographics

- A predictable career advancement ladder that includes leadership; personal empowerment; and job enrichment opportunities for all employees
- Simplified payroll / budget administration, with predictable labor costs and one pay scale for all FMO specialties regardless of job assignment; and
- Strong employee support

Proposed timeline

Key elements of the plan anticipated financial impact are included in the FY2014-15 Budget Request. Implementation is scheduled to begin March 1, 2014, and is based on the higher of an employee’s current pay or qualifications. The plan provides ample time—three years—for current employees to meet any “legacy” shortfalls without financial penalty.

Estimated financial impact

Based on preliminary estimates, the financial impact for FY 2014-15 will be about \$225K—equivalent to a 4% pay raise for all employees except the department head in FY 2014-15. Forty percent is expected from fire code revenue and 60% from the general fund.

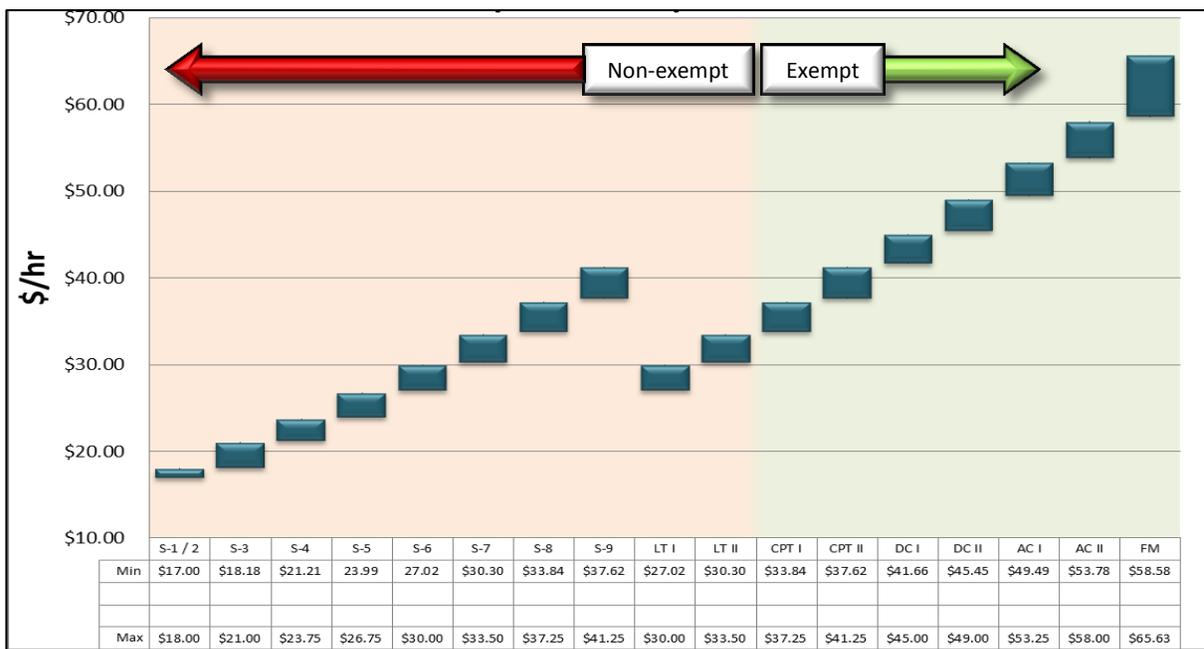


Figure 13. One Step Compensation Plan Pay Scales

HCFMO Step Plus Plan 2014-15		Time in Grade												Pos Max
Rank/Title	Pay Grade	0+			3+			5+			8+			
		Min	Mid	Max	Min	Mid	Max	Min	Mid	Max	Min	Mid	Max	
		0.5	0.75	1.0	0.5	0.75	1.0	0.5	0.75	1.0	0.5	0.75	1.0	
Director/FM	O-9	\$ 58.58	\$ 58.87	\$ 59.16	\$ 60.24	\$ 60.78	\$ 61.32	\$ 62.43	\$ 62.99	\$ 63.55	\$ 64.59	\$ 65.37	\$ 65.63	\$ 65.63
Asst Chief II	O-8	\$ 53.78	\$ 54.05	\$ 54.32	\$ 54.93	\$ 55.24	\$ 55.54	\$ 56.17	\$ 56.49	\$ 56.80	\$ 57.40	\$ 57.85	\$ 58.00	\$ 58.00
Asst Chief I	O-7S	\$ 49.49	\$ 49.74	\$ 49.98	\$ 50.53	\$ 50.80	\$ 51.07	\$ 51.63	\$ 51.91	\$ 52.18	\$ 52.72	\$ 53.12	\$ 53.25	\$ 53.25
Dep Chief II	O-6	\$ 45.45	\$ 45.68	\$ 45.90	\$ 46.42	\$ 46.68	\$ 46.93	\$ 47.46	\$ 47.73	\$ 47.99	\$ 48.49	\$ 48.87	\$ 49.00	\$ 49.00
Dep Chief I	O-5S	\$ 41.66	\$ 41.87	\$ 42.08	\$ 42.56	\$ 42.81	\$ 43.05	\$ 43.55	\$ 43.80	\$ 44.05	\$ 44.52	\$ 44.88	\$ 45.00	\$ 45.00
CAPT II	O-4	\$ 37.62	\$ 37.81	\$ 38.00	\$ 38.54	\$ 38.81	\$ 39.08	\$ 39.64	\$ 39.92	\$ 40.20	\$ 40.72	\$ 41.12	\$ 41.25	\$ 41.25
CAPT I	O-3S	\$ 33.84	\$ 34.00	\$ 34.17	\$ 34.68	\$ 34.94	\$ 35.20	\$ 35.73	\$ 35.99	\$ 36.25	\$ 36.75	\$ 37.13	\$ 37.25	\$ 37.25
LT II	O-2	\$ 30.30	\$ 30.45	\$ 30.60	\$ 31.08	\$ 31.33	\$ 31.57	\$ 32.07	\$ 32.31	\$ 32.56	\$ 33.03	\$ 33.38	\$ 33.50	\$ 33.50
LT I	O-1S	\$ 27.02	\$ 27.15	\$ 27.29	\$ 27.74	\$ 27.96	\$ 28.19	\$ 28.66	\$ 28.89	\$ 29.13	\$ 29.56	\$ 29.89	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
														\$ 26.75
Tech Specialist	S-9	\$ 37.62	\$ 37.81	\$ 38.00	\$ 38.54	\$ 38.81	\$ 39.08	\$ 39.64	\$ 39.92	\$ 40.20	\$ 40.72	\$ 40.99	\$ 41.25	\$ 41.25
Tech Specialist	S-8	\$ 33.84	\$ 34.00	\$ 34.17	\$ 34.68	\$ 34.94	\$ 35.20	\$ 35.73	\$ 35.99	\$ 36.25	\$ 36.75	\$ 37.00	\$ 37.25	\$ 37.25
Tech Specialist	S-7	\$ 30.30	\$ 30.45	\$ 30.60	\$ 31.08	\$ 31.33	\$ 31.57	\$ 32.07	\$ 32.31	\$ 32.56	\$ 33.03	\$ 33.27	\$ 33.50	\$ 33.50
Tech Specialist	S-6	\$ 27.02	\$ 27.15	\$ 27.29	\$ 27.74	\$ 27.96	\$ 28.19	\$ 28.66	\$ 28.89	\$ 29.13	\$ 29.56	\$ 29.78	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
Tech Specialist	S-5	\$ 23.99	\$ 24.11	\$ 24.23	\$ 24.65	\$ 24.86	\$ 25.07	\$ 25.50	\$ 25.72	\$ 25.94	\$ 26.34	\$ 26.55	\$ 26.75	\$ 26.75
Tech Specialist	S-4	\$ 21.21	\$ 21.32	\$ 21.42	\$ 21.81	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.20	\$ 22.60	\$ 22.80	\$ 23.00	\$ 23.38	\$ 23.56	\$ 23.75	\$ 23.75
Tech Specialist	S-3	\$ 18.18	\$ 18.27	\$ 18.36	\$ 18.80	\$ 19.02	\$ 19.24	\$ 19.70	\$ 19.93	\$ 20.16	\$ 20.58	\$ 20.79	\$ 21.00	\$ 21.00
Tech Specialist	S-2	\$ 18.00	\$ 18.00	\$ 18.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$ 18.00
Tech Specialist	S-1	\$ 17.00	\$ 17.00	\$ 17.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$ 17.00

Figure 14. Step Plus Pay Scale

Title	Pay Grade	Formal Education	Min Exp	AR	TCFP Cert	Highest NIMS	Specialized Training	Instructor	Major Project		
Director/FM	O-9	4-yr degree	15	**	Master	IC/S-400	TCFP Dept Head, EFO/CFO	SME	***		
Asst Chief II	O-8	4-yr degree	10	*	Advanced	IC/S-400	EFO/CFO	SME	***		
Asst Chief I	O-7S	HS or GED	10	*	N/A *	IC/S-400	NFPA FO 4, CPSE FO *	SME	***		
Dep Chief II	O-6	4-yr degree	8	*	Intermediate	O-305	NFPA FO 3, CPSE FO *	SME	***		
Dep Chief I	O-5S	HS or GED	8	*	N/A *	PSC/OSC/LSC/FASC	NFPA FO 3 *	SME	***		
CAPT II	O-4	2-yr *	6	*	Intermediate	400	CPSE FO	Level II	***		
CAPT I	O-3S	HS or GED	6	*	Intermediate	300	NFPA FO 2	Level II	***		
LT II	O-2	60-hr *	4	*	Intermediate	200	NFPA FO 1	Level I	***		
LT I	O-1S	HS or GED	4	*	Intermediate	200	NFPA FO 1	Level I	***		
Tech Specialist	S-9	2-yr degree	15	*	Master	400	*****	Level III	MP 2		
Tech Specialist	S-8	HS or GED	12	*	Advanced	400	****	Level II	MP 1		
Tech Specialist	S-7	HS or GED	8	*	Advanced	300	"C" level tech *	Level II	--		
Tech Specialist	S-6	HS or GED	6	*	Intermediate	300	"B" level tech *	Level I	--		
Tech Specialist	S-5	HS or GED	4	*	Intermediate	200	"A" level tech *	Level I	--		
Tech Specialist	S-4	HS or GED	2		Basic	200	--	--	--		
Tech Specialist	S-3	HS or GED	1		Basic	100, 700, 800	--	--	--		
Tech Specialist	S-2	HS or GED	0		Basic	100, 700, 800	--	--	--		
Tech Specialist	S-1	HS or GED	0		--	--	--	--	--		
<i>Tech Specialties:</i>	Investigator			*	Agency Review						
	Inspector			**	Commissioner Court discretion						
	HazMat Tech			***	Included in Job Description						
	Instructor			****	Agency Approved 3rd Party Certification (e.g. ICC / SERTC / IAAI / NICET/ etc...)						
	Admin			****	Peer/Admin Review Board						
TIG credit, if not required				<i>Notes:</i> EFO/CFO may substitute for NFPA FO I-IV							
Master/PhD	6	For LT II, may substitute 10 yrs experience for 2-yr degree									
CFO/EFO	5	For CAPT II, may substitute 5 yrs experience for each 30 hrs college credit									
Bachelor	4	Admin specialist cap is S-6 pay grade.									
Associate	2	Equivalent TCOLE certification required for AIU or REU assignment and pay grade.									
60 hours	1										
High School/GED	0										

Figure 15. Step Plus Pay Scale requirements

FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE HIGHLIGHTS

FY2013-14 Recap, YTD

This year, HCFMO identified two types of capital asset needs—facilities and vehicles. Key CIP highlights are:

- Two facility improvements at the Atascocita complex in Pct 4 were recommended and approved for funding in the June CIP Report as “New Priority Projects”
- The “Conex” burn prop is nearing completion
- The new vehicle purchase plan was approved by Fleet Services and procurement is underway.

FY 2014-15 Outlook

With increased service demands there will be need for additional facilities and vehicles. Based on projections and approved CIP projects, the current locations at the Atascocita and Wilshire complexes should provide sufficient room to meet short-term expansion needs.

HCFMO will continue to work closely with FPM and others to determine cost-effective solutions to meet future needs.

Vehicle performance will continue to be closely monitored to balance the goals of lowest practical cost and efficient service delivery.

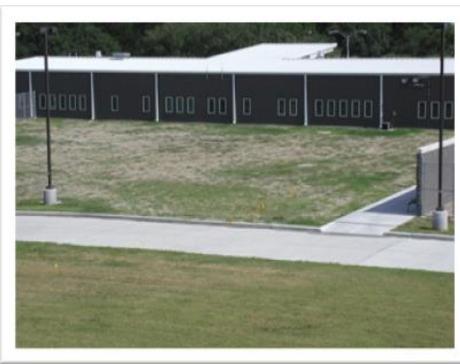
HCFMO expects to continue to move forward on all CIP plans within approved timeframe and budget, subject to financing and availability of resources. Key CIP highlights include:

- Continue to work with FPM and PID A&E to schedule construction of priority facilities projects (Evidence Building/T-Building Expansion).
- Continue investment in training field projects with training fees, donations, and general fund.
- Plan acquisition of replacement vehicles.

HCFMO Atascocita Complex Expansion



Evidence building. Originally built in 2006, this 720 square-foot building is no longer large enough to meet Agency needs and new compliance requirements. HCFMO had proposed a phased construction plan to increase the size of this building to 3,000 sf. PID A&E has recommended a single-phase build out that will increase total storage space to 3,800 sf. The expansion is budgeted at \$560K; HCFMO has allocated \$60K; additional funding is pending using Fire Codes funds where possible to reduce impact on other sources. A&E design and construction support began in mid-November, with a planned completion of mid-2014.



Modular Office Building. Originally built in 2006, the 10,000 square-foot main office building is no longer large enough to meet Agency needs. The expansion is budgeted at \$180K; HCFMO has allocated \$60,000; additional funding using Fire Code funds where possible to reduce impact on other sources. To control cost and expedite expansion, HCFMO has proposed a phased plan that uses modular office buildings to be placed in a “quad” layout behind the existing building and adjacent to the planned evidence building. A&E design and construction support began in mid-November, with a planned completion of mid-2014.

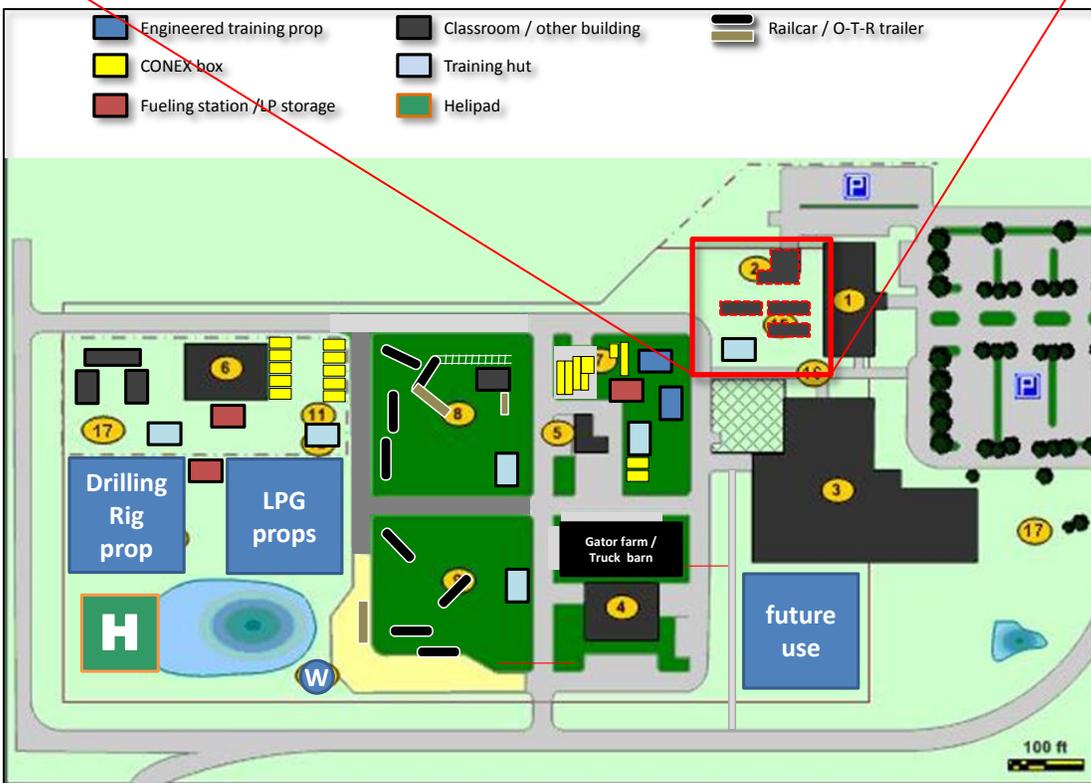
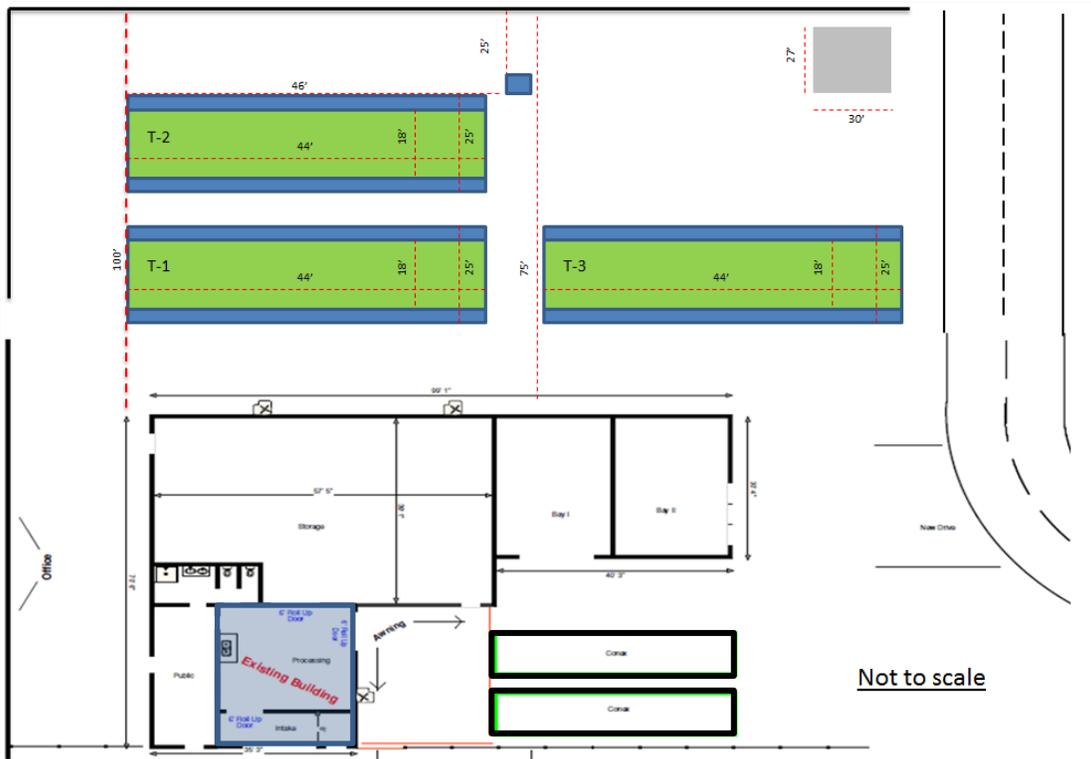


Figure 16. Planned Atascocita complex expansion

As the local AHJ—Authority Having Jurisdiction—HCFMO is the only local agency with the authority to perform the core functions of fire inspection and code enforcement, fire and arson investigation, hazardous materials response, and coordination of fire protection services in unincorporated areas of the county.

HCFMO is uniquely positioned, and well-prepared, to meet these challenges, but future service demands will require additional funding. The proposed HCFMO strategic plan provides a flexible, scalable roadmap to provide the controlled growth necessary to sustain service delivery levels in future years.

In summary, HCFMO does not foresee any need for increased budget allocations this fiscal year, but has identified strategic priorities should additional funding become available. It is anticipated that funding increases of about 8% per year over the next ten years will be needed to reach strategic goals. When appropriate, recommendations may be placed on the agenda for the court's consideration and possible action.

APPENDIX A. FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

Service	Description	Provider	Annual HCFMO Cost	Funding Source	Comments
Fire Suppression	Emergency fire response, rescue, and related stop-loss activities	ESDs, Others by contract with County	\$ 250,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current funding program through FY 2014
Specialized Emergency Response	Hazardous materials, large scale disasters, and homeland security	FMO	\$ 1,900,000	General fund Fees Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase use of on-shift FMO resources to augment HMRT response
Fire Prevention	<u>New construction</u> Plan review, Permits, Fire code inspections and enforcement	PID FMO	\$ 1,600,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor fees to recover actual costs
	Periodic inspection of existing buildings	FMO	\$ 1,000,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint-based inspections, plus state-mandated inspections State standard (NFPA 101-2012)
Fire Investigation	Detailed O&C, arson, fraud, juvenile fire stoppers	FMO	\$ 1,700,000	General fund Donations Seized assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full 24/7 coverage Continue use of part-time fire investigators
Training and Education	Specialized certification Hazmat, NIMS, internal CE, other	FMO	\$ 100,000	Fees LEOSE General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and adjust fees to recover actual costs
	Public outreach, regional information source	FMO	\$ 70,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve website offerings
Coordination and Advocacy	Large incident management, Legislation, grant / project coordination	FMO	\$ 80,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current programs as directed by court
Notes: Current approved budget is \$6,700,000.			\$6,700,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 67 authorized positions

Figure 17. HCFMO Budget “Base” model, FY 2013-14

Service	Description	Provider	Annual HCFMO Cost	Funding Source	Comments
Fire Suppression	Emergency fire response, rescue, and related stop-loss activities	ESDs, Others by contract with County	\$100,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue program funding through transition
Specialized Emergency Response	Hazardous materials, large scale disasters, and homeland security	FMO	\$2,000,000	General fund Fees Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add capacity through multi-task personnel
Fire Prevention	<u>New construction</u> Plan review, Permits, Fire code inspections and enforcement	PID FMO	\$2,400,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor fees to recover actual costs Implement IFC 2012
	Periodic inspection of existing buildings	FMO	\$2,500,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement risk-based inspection model Revise inspection standards
Fire Investigation	Detailed O&C, arson, fraud, juvenile fire stoppers	FMO			Donations Seized assets
Training and Education	Specialized certification Hazmat, NIMS, internal CE, other	FMO	\$750,000	Fees LEOSE General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and adjust fees to recover actual costs Add 2 positions
	Public outreach, regional information source	FMO	\$250,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop programs for high-risk population
Coordination and Advocacy	Large incident management, Legislation, grant / project coordination	FMO	\$100,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current programs as directed by court
Notes: 20% increase over FY2013-14 original budget; 2% over FY2013-14 adjusted budget.			\$8,100,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71 authorized positions

Figure 18. HCFMO "Requested Budget" Model, FY2014-2015

Service	Description	Provider	Annual Cost	Funding Source	Comments
Fire Suppression	Emergency fire response, rescue, and related activities	ESDs, Others by contract with County	\$ 20,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete phase-out of county-funded contract services
Specialized Emergency Response	Hazardous materials, large scale disasters, homeland security, and EMS coordination	FMO	\$ 2,700,000	General fund Fees Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance full 24/7 coverage Add 4 positions
Fire Prevention	<u>New construction</u> Plan review, Permits, Fire code inspections and enforcement	PID FMO	\$ 2,300,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to recover actual costs with fees Add 7 positions
	Periodic inspection of all existing buildings, based on risk	FMO	\$1,900,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk-based inspections of comm / public buildings Add 6 positions
Fire Investigation	Investigate all fires, arson, fraud, juvenile fire stoppers	FMO	\$ 2,350,000	General fund Donations Seized assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance full 24/7 coverage Add 8 positions
Training and Education	Specialized certification Hazmat, NIMS, internal CE, other	FMO	\$400,000	Fees LEOSE General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand partnerships, intern programs
	Public outreach, regional information source	FMO	\$210,000	Fees General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve website Add 1 position
Coordination and Advocacy	Large incident management, Legislation, grant coordination, project coordination	FMO	\$120,000	General fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current programs Add 1 positions
Notes: Accounts for 5-6% increase over each of five fiscal years			\$10,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 98 authorized positions 	

Figure 19. HCFMO "Projected" Model, FY 2019-20