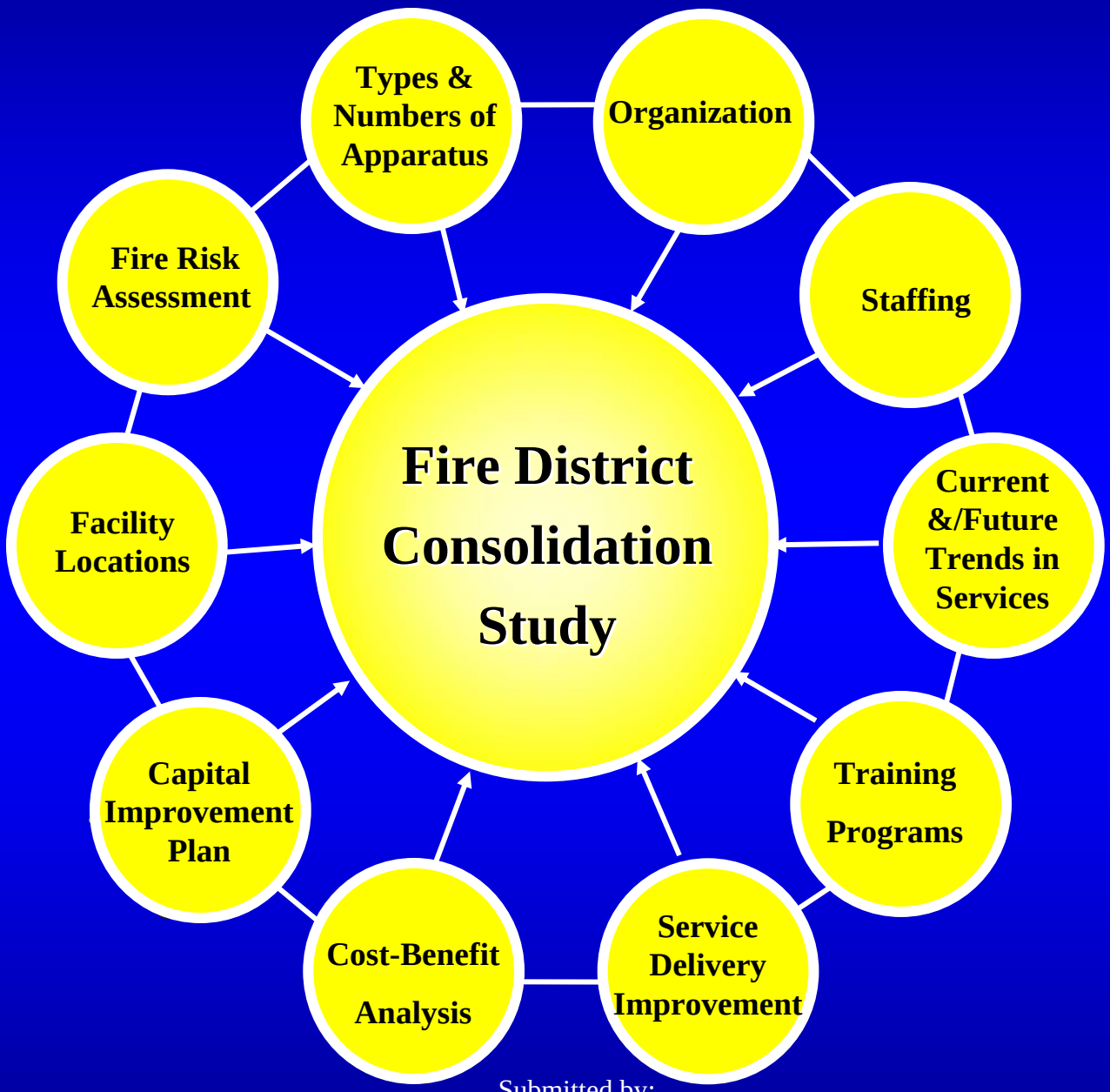
A Fire District Consolidation Study
Township of Monroe, New Jersey



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May 25, 2011

Mr. Wayne Hamilton
Business Administrator
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One Municipal Plaza
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Dear Mr. Hamilton:

I am pleased to submit with this letter our Fire District Consolidation Study for the Township of Monroe, New Jersey.

We would like to acknowledge the tremendous assistance that we received from officials in the Township and Fire Districts and the staff and paid and volunteer firefighters and officers. The Study Team was impressed with the strong commitment and outlook of the Township and fire services personnel in Monroe Township.

If you have any questions concerning the information, findings and recommendations contained in this Study, please contact my office.

Sincerely,

Leslie D. Adams
President
LDA/pat

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS. . . . . a

STUDY METHODOLOGY. . . . . a

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT. . . . . a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. I

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION. 1

THE SETTING. 1

MONROE TOWNSHIP.. 2
- Monroe History. 3
- Monroe Demographics. 3
- Township Governance. 3

DELIVERY OF FIRE SERVICES. 4
- Monroe Fire District No. 1. 5
- Monroe Fire District No. 2. 5
- Monroe Fire District No. 3. 6
- Tri-District Fire Advisory Council. 7

CHANGING FIRE SERVICE TRENDS. 8
- Concern About the Environment. 9
- Scientific and Technological Advancements. 11
- Fiscal Constraints. 11
- Role of Fire Departments. 12

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

STUDY FRAMEWORK. 14
Standards and Accepted Practices. 15

OTHER REGIONALIZATION EFFORTS AND STUDIES. 17
1989 Monroe Township Fire Districts Report. 17
1999 Central Monroe Fire District No. 3 Report. 17
2002 League of Women Voters Study of Monroe Fire Districts. 18

PLAN DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. 19

CHAPTER TWO - CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS. 20

HISTORY & BACKGROUND OF THE FIRE DISTRICTS. 20
Establishment of the Current Fire Districts. 21

CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
CHAPTER 43. FIRE PREVENTION. 22
43-4 Local Enforcement. 22
43-6 Duties of Enforcing Agencies. 22
43-12 Permit Fees. 23

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1. 23
Organization Structure. 24
Services Provided. 25
Staffing. 26
Unit Staffing 27
Vehicular Apparatus Fleet. 29
Fire Stations. 29

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

Training Program. 30
Training for Existing Members. 31
Training of New Firefighters. 33
Fire Prevention. 34
Standard Operating Guidelines. 35

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2. 36
Organization Structure. 37
Services Provided. 38
Total Staffing. 39
Paid Staffing. 39
Unit and Shift Staffing. 40
Shift Work Schedule. 40
Volunteer Staffing. 40
Vehicular Apparatus Fleet 41
Fire Stations. 41
Training Program. 42
Paid Firefighters and Officers. 42
Minimum Recruit Training. 42
Volunteer Firefighters and Officers. 44
Fire Prevention. 44
Policies and Procedures. 46
Labor Union. 47

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3. 47
Organization Structure. 48
Services Provided. 49
Staffing. 50
Unit and Shift Staffing. 50
Shift Work Schedule. 51
Vehicular Apparatus. 51

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

Fire Stations. 52
Training Program. 53
Minimum Recruit Training. 53
Fire Prevention. 53
Policies and Procedures. 55
Labor Union. 56

SUMMARY DATA: TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICTS. 57
Apparatus Summary. 58
Fire Station Summary. 58
Response Workload Analysis. 60

SUMMARY. 60

RECOMMENDATIONS. 62

CHAPTER THREE - THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION. 64

POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION BENEFITS. 64

FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION. 65
Common Dispatching. 66
Hazardous Materials Service Provision. 67
Fire Prevention Functions. 68
Provision of Incident Command. 68
Standard Incident Operating Procedures. 69
Apparatus Dispatch Assignments. 69
Availability of Reserve Apparatus. 69
Apparatus Type. 70
Cooperative Provision of Training. 71
Pre-Fire Plan Development and Use. 71

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

Fire Safety Education. 71
Joint Purchasing in Quantity.. 72

FULL FIRE SERVICES DELIVERY AGENCY CONSOLIDATION. 72
Fiscal Impact - Savings.. 73

FIRE SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BENEFITS.. 73

SUMMARY.. 74

CHAPTER FOUR - VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.. 75

OVERVIEW. 75

STAFFING OPTIONS.. 77
Option A - Provide all paid staffing of fire and rescue units.. 77
Option B - Combination of paid and volunteer staffing of units. 78
Option C - Provide fire protection with an all-volunteer approach. 79

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS. 80
Current Recruitment Efforts. 81

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS. 81
Current Retention Efforts. 84
Fire District No. 3. 84
New Jersey Volunteer Programs.. 84
Relief Funds.. 85
Tuition-Free Education. 86
Length of Service Benefit Program. 86

PUBLIC AWARENESS. 87

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN.. 87

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR. 88

TOWNSHIP AND FIRE DISTRICT SUPPORT. 88
Township Employee Participation. 89

SUMMARY. 89

RECOMMENDATIONS.. 90

CHAPTER FIVE - MONROE FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES. 94

FIRE STATION LOCATION STANDARDS & CRITERIA.. 94
CFAI Fixed Facilities Criteria. 94
NFPA 1710 Standard. 95
Fire-based Response Time Goal. 96

FIRE STATION LOCATION DETERMINATION. 96
Overview.. 96
Computerized Fire Station Locator System. 97

MAXIMUM TOTAL RESPONSE TIME. 99
Fire-Related Response Time.. 99
Approaches Used by Other Communities.. 101

AVAILABILITY OF RESPONSE TIME DATA. 103
Response Time Components. 103
Notification of Event. 104
Alarm Processing and Dispatch.. 104
Turnout Time. 104
Travel Time. 104

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

On-Scene Time. 105
Initiation of Action. 105
Termination of Incident. 105
Time Segment Responsibility. 105
Communications Center Responsibility. 105
Fire/Rescue/EMS Departments Responsibility. 106
Fire District Response Times. 106

FIRE RISKS.. 107
Fire Risk Assessment. 107
Planned Retirement Communities. 108
Assisted Living Facilities. 108
Developments Built or Near Completion - Partial Listing. 109
Developments Being Built or To Be Built - Partial Listing. 110
Rail Lines.. 111
Major Highways. 111
Summary of Risk Assessment. 111

CURRENT STATION LOCATIONS. 112
Monroe Township Fire Stations. 112

FUTURE FIRE STATION LOCATION OPTIONS.. 112
Fire Station Location Factors. 113
Current Fire Station Locations. 113
Current Fire Station Distribution Analysis. 114
Fire District Area Distribution. 124
Current Fire Station Location Analysis. 128
Station 23A. 128
Station 23B. 128
Station 51. 129
Station 57. 129

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

Scenario 1: Station 23A Relocation. 129
Scenario 2: "Clean Slate" Fire Stations. 133

MUTUAL AID. 137
The Concept. 137
Benefits of Automatic Mutual Aid. 138
Current Use of Mutual Aid. 138

MONROE TOWNSHIP-WIDE
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES. 139

SUMMARY. 140

RECOMMENDATIONS. 141

CHAPTER SIX - IMPLEMENTATION -
FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION. 143

EMPLOYEE AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION. 143

ACTION PLAN. 144

REVIEW OF STUDY. 145

HUMAN ELEMENT. 145

CUSTOMER-ORIENTED DECISIONS. 146

SELECTION OF THE FIRE CHIEF. 146

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT. 147

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page Number

TRAINING PLAN. 148

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES. 148

TRANSITION STAFFING PLAN. 148

FIRE STATIONS UTILIZED. 149

FISCAL IMPACTS. 150

Potential Apparatus Savings. 150

Alternate Sources of Funding. 150

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN. 151

ANNUAL UPDATES. 151

QUALITY OF PERSONNEL. 152

VISION FOR THE FUTURE. 152

TABLE OF FIGURES

Page Number

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION. 1

Figure 1-1: Location of Monroe Township. 1

CHAPTER TWO: CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS.. 24

Monroe Township Fire District No. 1

Figure 2-1: Organization Structure, Fire District No. 1.. 25
Figure 2-2: Staffing, Monroe Township Fire District No. 1. 26
Figure 2-3: Average Number of Members Responding on Incidents, Fire District No. 1. 28
Figure 2-4: Vehicular Response Fleet Inventory, Fire District No. 1. 29
Figure 2-5: Fire Station, Fire District No. 1.. 30
Figure 2-6: Fire Prevention Activity for 2010, Fire District No. 1. 35

Monroe Township Fire District No. 2

Figure 2-7: Organization Structure, Fire District No. 2.. 38
Figure 2-8: Staffing, Fire District No. 2. 39
Figure 2-9: Vehicular Response Fleet Inventory, Fire District No. 2. 41
Figure 2-10: Fire Stations, Fire District No. 2.. 42
Figure 2-11: Fire Prevention Activity for 2010, Fire District No. 2. 45

Monroe Township Fire District No. 3

Figure 2-12: Staffing, Fire District No. 3. 50
Figure 2-13: Vehicular Response Fleet Inventory, Fire District No. 3. 52
Figure 2-14: Fire Stations, Fire District No. 3.. 52
Figure 2-15: Fire Prevention Activity for 2010. 54

TABLE OF FIGURES

Page Number

Summary Data: Township Fire Districts

Figure 2-16: Staffing, Summary of Fire Districts. 57
Figure 2-17: Vehicular Response Fleet, Summary of Fire Districts. 58
Figure 2-18: Fire Stations, Summary of Fire Districts.. 59
Figure 2-19: Number of Incidents for 2010.. 60

CHAPTER FIVE - MONROE FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES. 94

Figure 5-1: Current Monroe Township Fire Stations. 112
Figure 5-2: Fire Districts and Station Deployment Map. 115
Figure 5-3: Population Density Map. 117
Figure 5-4: Current Travel Time Capability. 119
Figure 5-5: Current Road Mile and Population Coverage.. 120
Figure 5-6: Areas That Two or More Apparatus can Reach in 8 Minutes of Travel.. . . 122
Figure 5-7: Effective Firefighting Force Map. 124
Figure 5-8: Closest Response Station Areas Map. 126
Figure 5-9: Closest Response Fire District Areas Map. 128
Figure 5-10: Scenario 1 Travel Time Capability Map.. 131
Figure 5-11: Current Road Mile and Population Coverage.. 132
Figure 5-12: Scenario 1 Closest Station Response w/ Station 23A Relocated. 133
Figure 5-13: Scenario 2 Travel Time Capability. 135
Figure 5-14: Scenario 2 Road Mile and Population Coverage. 136
Figure 5-15: Scenario 2 Closest Station Areas Map. 137

CHAPTER SIX -
IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION.. 143

Figure 6-1: Suggested Implementation Timeline.. . . . . Follows Page 154

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Study Team extends genuine appreciation for the assistance and support provided by Township officials and staff and the firefighters, officers and members of the three Monroe Fire Districts. The Study Team sincerely appreciates the effort in obtaining data and documents, as well as, arranging for the Study Team to meet with various officers and members of the organizations.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

This Study was developed through a process involving interviews, data collection, research, literature, on-site observation of fire personnel, meetings, analysis of data, comparative evaluation with industry standards, practitioner experiences of the Study Team, and consultant experience of the Study Team in every region of the United States.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This Report is structured in chapters. Each chapter relates to a specific study area. As appropriate, the Study Team has included information on state-of-the-art fire/rescue practices to assist in understanding the basis for some of the suggestions.

ABOUT THE DATA IN THIS REPORT

In the course of gathering data for this Study, critical information on staffing, workload, practices, capital budgets, apparatus, plans, and programs were provided to the Study Team. As some of the data is relatively new, caution is required in the interpretation of the data.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Study is intended to assist Monroe Township, New Jersey, to consider consolidating its Fire Districts into more efficient and cost effective fire service delivery in order to provide improved emergency services.

The Setting

Monroe Township is located in southern Middlesex County, New Jersey, a short driving distance from malls, shopping centers, theaters, recreational park land, professional offices, four hospitals, colleges and universities and within commuting distance to New York City, Philadelphia and the Jersey Shore. The Township is just off Exit 8A of the New Jersey Turnpike.

The recently reported 2010 U.S. Census indicates the population of Monroe Township to be 39,132. It has grown substantially in residential population since the 2000 census recorded a population of 27,999 persons. Further, according to the US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2009 five-year estimates by block group the median age was 58.9 years compared to the national median of 36.5.

Monroe Township is governed by the Mayor-Council system of municipal government. With the consent of the Council, the Mayor appoints the heads of the various executive departments of the Township. The five-member Township Council is responsible for establishing policies of the Township, as well as other legislative responsibilities. The legislative power of Monroe Township is exercised by the Council.

The Office of Administration, headed by the Business Administrator, runs the day-to-day operations of the Township, under the direction and supervision of the Mayor.

Current Fire Services Delivery - Fire Districts

The participating fire services delivery agencies have a rich history of providing fire protection and related services to their respective service areas. Initially, fire services were provided by three all-volunteer -staffed organizations as separate fire companies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Subsequently, fire services in Monroe Township were provided by the volunteer fire companies as part of a consolidated "fire department" established by the Township. Today, fire services are provided by three independent fire districts established by the Township.

The current three Fire Districts are generally organized and operated similarly, although their specific programs, rank structure, number and type of apparatus, and fire stations may differ due to changing service demands and tradition. Also, the three Fire Districts differ in terms of staffing approach in that Fire District No. 1 is all-volunteer staffed, Fire District No. 2 is staffed with a combination of volunteer and paid personnel and Fire District No. 3 provides service with all-paid staffing.

Fire District No. 1

Fire District No. 1 was incorporated in 1949 and is currently, an all-volunteer staffed fire services delivery agency that operates one fire station located at 24 Harrison Avenue. Fire services are provided by the membership of the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company #1 (MTVFC#1) under contract with Fire District No. 1.

The volunteer Fire Chief in charge of operations is elected by the volunteer membership of the MTVFC. The Fire Chief is supported by a number of other volunteer command officers in the provision of incident command supervision in Fire District No. 1's area. The Study Team was advised that there are 39 active volunteer firefighters and officers serving Fire District No. 1.

Fire District No. 2

Fire District No. 2 is a combination paid/volunteer -staffed fire services agency. Although currently it is largely a paid-staffed operation, the approximately 20 volunteer members of the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company are striving to increase their level of activity in the provision of services. Two fire stations are utilized by the paid and volunteer personnel of Monroe Fire District No. 2. The new fire station located at 10 Halsey Reed Road and the

original volunteer-owned fire station located at 130 Applegarth Road continues to be utilized by the volunteer members.

The Fire Chief is appointed as an employee by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 2. He provides operational command at emergency incidents occurring within Fire District No. 2's area and also provides other administrative and supervisory duties as determined by the Board. The Fire Chief provides incident command in Fire District 2's area, when on duty, generally during daytime hours Monday through Friday. Reportedly, the staff of Fire District No. 2 totals 38, including 18 full-time career firefighters/officers, use of per diem firefighters, 8-10 volunteers and a service technician.

Fire District No. 3

Fire District No. 3 is currently an all paid staff of firefighters and officers who respond from two fire stations (23A at 359 Schoolhouse Road and 23B at 16 Centre Drive). The Chief of the Department and Captain (Fire Official) work from their offices at the Centre Drive Station. Reportedly, neither the Chief nor the Captain respond to take command of emergency incidents occurring in Fire District No. 3's area.

The firefighting staff is comprised of 32 career staff, including eight lieutenants, assigned to four rotating 24 hour shifts. Each of the four shifts is comprised of two Lieutenants and six Firefighters. Each of the two stations is staffed with one Lieutenant and three firefighters on a daily basis. Per Diem personnel are utilized to meet minimum staffing requirements.

Fire District No. 3's volunteer fire company, the Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company (CMVFC) was that was established in 1969. Reportedly, in 2001 the CMVFC was disbanded due to “lack of volunteers”. According to numerous accounts by current paid staff members and former volunteer members of the CMVFC, the volunteer organization was abolished following an extended period of time during which members of the Fire District No. 3 Board of Fire Commission reportedly “attacked” volunteer members. The Fire Chief at that time reportedly took actions seemingly inconsistent with supporting volunteer provision of fire services. The Study Team was advised that Fire District No. 3 staffing

currently totals 36, including an apparatus manager. Today, there are no volunteer members as part of the provision of fire services by Fire District No. 3.

Tri-District Fire Advisory Council

By ordinance adopted in 1990, the Monroe Township Council established a Tri-District Fire Advisory Council. The stated purpose of the Tri-District Council is as follows:

> "...for the purpose of discussing matters relating to the fire districts within the Township and advising the governing body on a semi-annual basis as to all matters relating to fire prevention within the Township".

During the course of the conduct of this project the Study Team was advised that the Tri-District Council provided a forum for communications among the fire district representatives attending meetings. Reportedly, there may have initially been a number of accomplishments relating to improved fire district coordination and creating more of a "team effort" subsequent to the establishment of the Tri-District Council. However, more recently, there has been very limited accomplishments, meetings are not held on a regular basis and it is not clear who is the Chairman of the Tri-District Council.

Fire and Rescue Services Consolidation

The joining of fire and rescue organizations, referred to variously as merger, regionalization and consolidation, is a means by which an increasing number of municipalities across the United States are responding to a variety of municipal issues. These issues include fiscal constraints, increasing workload, new and increasing demands and the need to become more cost efficient and productive.

There are two primary forms of consolidation. One approach is functional cooperation and consolidation relating to specific fire and rescue functions, e.g., dispatch, training, provision of command, purchasing, joint response (mutual aid) and provision of specialty services such as hazardous materials response underwater rescue and urban search and rescue. The second

form of consolidation is the implementation of full organizational merger that results in one fire and rescue service agency serving the resulting larger service area. Typically, the full consolidation of two or more fire service delivery agencies, in this case fire districts, results in the following:

- One fire department;
- One employer;
- One set of rules and regulations;
- One personnel management system;
- One union contract;
- One chain of command; and,
- One work schedule.

The national experience regarding fire services consolidation indicates major improvements in service to the public and internal efficiencies that have a positive impact on the public. Several key improvements typically include:

1. Improved incident command and coordination;
2. Improved fireground operations by following the same standard operating procedures and working together increasingly as a team;
3. Reduced apparatus maintenance and upkeep effort required on the part of on-duty firefighters;
4. Reduced response times of apparatus, thus providing emergency service to incident scenes quicker by dispatching the closest unit via mutual aid;
5. Improved firefighter safety; and,
6. Improved ability to specialize in certain fire services areas.

National experience and that of the Study Team has made it clear that there are potential significant service improvement benefits, and cost reduction and avoidance opportunities that would benefit the taxpayers/customers (residents and business people) of the Township.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Service Provider Input Related to Monroe Consolidation

During the interview process of this Study individuals interviewed expressed their opinions, hopes and concerns regarding the consolidation of fire services delivery in Monroe Township. The Study Team noted that while there was no consistency in opinions. The predominance of opinions could be summarized as follows:

A. A majority of those interviewed considered the creation of one fire services agency to be in the best interest of the Township. Some considered one united fire district the best approach and others were of the opinion that the fire services delivery agency should be a Township Department;

B. A substantial number of the volunteer members of Monroe Fire Company No. 1 expressed the concern that creating one fire services organization might not be beneficial to their volunteer membership; and,

C. A number of current fire district commissioners were of the opinion that the three current fire districts should continue as currently organized;

History seems to indicate an apparent trend that is of concern to the Study Team. Fire District No. 1 seems to be very supportive of volunteer members as indicated by the many active volunteers serving with the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company No. 1. However, the current volunteer membership of the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company (Fire District No. 2) appear to be struggling to maintain involvement in fire services delivery and being called on to volunteer at the new fire station that does not seem to be designed with volunteers in mind.. Moreover, in the past, the Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company, which was part of Fire District No. 3, was abolished with reports of lack of support and encouragement of volunteerism by the fire leadership and fire commissioners.

The Study Team noted what appears to be a potential trend in the reduction of volunteer involvement in the delivery of fire services in Monroe Township. If this trend continues and

volunteers continue to reduce their level of activity due to lack of support and recognition the cost increase to the Monroe Township taxpayers will be substantial.

Finally, the Study Team noted a substantial amount of disagreement and open antagonism between the members and leaders of the current Fire Districts to the extent of legal and other actions being pursued. These types of activities hinder the essential team approach to fire services delivery in the Township and further negatively impact volunteer fire services personnel in their effort to continue their volunteer service.

Issues Potentially Hindering Public Safety Team Effort

The Study Team observed and/or was advised of a number of potentially significant issues that exist in the current Fire District structure that seem to hinder the delivery of fire services through a team approach. There appear to be several issues that are detrimental to the delivery of fire services operating in a safe manner, including :

1. Lack of accomplishments and active involvement of the Tri-District Advisory Council;
2. Seemingly undue influence reportedly exerted by paid staff during elections;
3. Fire District commissioner election issues, some resulting in court action;
4. Small numbers of votes being cast in Fire District commissioner elections;
5. Threats of or actual legal actions relating to Fire District issues;
6. Antagonistic behavior at Fire District commissioner meetings;
7. Lack of cooperation between Fire District commissioners;
8. Refusal by Fire Districts to provide requested information without undue written requests;
9. Reported events of lack of support to volunteers by paid staff of Fire District/s
10. Inadequate command supervision at Fire District incidents;
11. Increased response times due to location of Fire District boundaries;
12. Lack of teamwork and mutual support between members of Monroe Township public safety services providers—fire, emergency medical and police;
13. Volunteer fire company dissolution in one Fire District;

14. Paid Fire chief at Fire District No. 3 not responding to take command of incidents—a potential safety and liability issue;
15. Paid Captain at Fire District No. 3 not routinely responding to take command of incidents—a potential safety and liability issue; and,
16. Lack of integrated command structure between Fire Districts.

This is not to say that Fire District commissioners do not have good intentions. Further, it is not to say that paid and volunteer firefighters and officers do not have good intentions and work within the constraints of the current organization structure to provide quality fire services. These issues relate to the current organization structure and the geographic boundaries of the current Fire Districts.

Model Monroe Fire Services Delivery Options

There appears to be a number of options for model fire and rescue services delivery in Monroe Township. These include the following:

A. Merging the current three independent fire districts by dissolving each of the current fire districts and forming a new unified fire district;

B. The dissolution of the current three independent fire districts and the formation of a Monroe Township municipal fire department.

C. Merging two of the current primarily paid-staffed fire districts (Fire District No. 2 and Fire District No. 3) into one fire district while Fire District No. 1, which is currently all-volunteer staffed, remains separate; and,

D. Retaining and strengthening the current three independent fire districts through improving the role of the Tri-District Fire Advisory Council, providing a Township fire chief for consistency and coordination, considering changing fire district boundaries, implementing a master labor contract and increasing the emphasis on volunteer staffing of services provision Township-wide.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Action Plan

As the Township charts an appropriate course of action, the Study Team strongly recommends that an advisory committee should play a major role during the review process. Therefore, the Study Team recommends that a Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee be formed by the Mayor to provide input and coordination.

In the view of the Study Team, a Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee should be appointed with a membership representative of various Township and Fire District officials, public safety service providers and stakeholders, possibly including:

1. The Board Chairman of each of the three Fire Districts;
2. A Representative of the League of Women Voters;
3. A current Councilman;
4. The Township Business Administrator;
5. A former Fire District fire chief;
6. A volunteer chief officer each from Fire Districts 1 and 2;
7. The IAFF Local 3170 union President;
8. The Township Police Chief.

The review process steps suggested to be followed by an appointed Monroe Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee leading to the development of fire services consolidation recommendations include the following:

1. Mayor appoints the Committee members and chair person;
2. Committee organizes and determines review process;
3. Fire District Consolidation Study Report reviewed;
4. Gain relevant input from interested parties;
5. Clarify any observations, conclusions and recommendations based on input;
6. Evaluate significance of input cited by stakeholders, staff and volunteers; and,

7. Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee provides report to Mayor and Council stating observations, conclusions and recommendations on fire and rescue services consolidation.

A Suggested Timeline for this Advisory Committee work process is included as part of the final chapter of this Study report.

Selection of the Fire Chief

Regardless of the option/s selected, possibly the most important staffing decision to be made by the authority having jurisdiction (as suggested by the Advisory Committee and determined by Monroe Township) will be the selection of a Township-wide Fire Chief. The individual selected for this crucial position will not only administer and command the day-to-day functioning of the fire services, but will "set the tone" for this new consolidated approach. The Fire Chief should have a comprehensive vision for the future of fire service delivery, and should be seen as a progressive fire services leader and innovator. This individual will be expected to lay the groundwork for a state-of-the-art fire and rescue service delivery process that is respected in the Monroe Township region and in the State of New Jersey.

This individual should be selected from a pool of extremely qualified candidates with, among other attributes, experience in medium to large fire department/s, successful combination fire department/s, regional fire service delivery experience, a strong applicable educational background and Executive Fire Officer and/or Chief Fire Officer designation. An ordinance establishing the position requirements and authority is needed. Qualified, interested candidates for this critical position should be recruited and selected from both inside and outside the Monroe fire services. The Study Team suggests that the Township consider filling this position through a national search.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Volunteer Involvement

The Township has made it clear as to the desire and intention that the fire services delivery be a combination paid and volunteer -staffed fire service delivery approach. The leadership of the volunteer fire companies have indicated their concern that they may be excluded as part of the new approach and not involved in emergency fire and rescue service delivery in the future. This planning document includes a number of recommendations for the Township, the volunteer fire companies and the volunteer members that are intended to retain and regenerate the involvement of volunteer members of the communities in the delivery of fire and rescue services.

The maintenance and enhancement of volunteer involvement in fire protection of the Township will not be an easy task. In the opinion of the Study Team, who have provided planning services for more than 100 volunteer fire agencies, it is possible to maintain a team effort on the part of all involved: Township, paid firefighters, volunteer fire companies and volunteer members. Each must make a commitment to this task and consider following through with essential tasks and actions.

As an indiction of the cost effective nature of utilization of volunteer fire staffing **the citizens of Monroe Township are reaping major substantial benefits from the all volunteer fire services system in Fire District No. 1. To provide the same level of service with full-time paid personnel in the fire station providing the response of three fully paid-staffed units (engine, ladder and command officer) would require at least $2.7 million each fiscal year for personnel wages at an average annual salary of $60,000 (not including benefits) per employee on the 24X72 hour schedule as is currently used in Fire District No. 2 and No. 3.**

Fire Stations Utilized

All current fire station facilities utilized by the current Fire Districts are owned either by the Fire District or the volunteer fire companies who have been receiving compensation from the

Districts for use of their facilities. With the implementation of a consolidated approach, the compensation to the volunteer fire companies for facility use should continue.

Potential Apparatus Savings

With the implementation of consolidation an apparatus fleet reduction may be possible. This fleet reduction could provide the following type of decrease in future apparatus costs and a potential revenue from the disposition of current surplus units as follows:

- Twenty-year life cycle replacement cost savings.
- 20-year annual operating and maintenance expense savings.
- Revenue (or trade-in value) from sale of excess apparatus.

In summary regarding apparatus, the Township, fire districts and volunteer fire companies could incur a 20-year life-cycle savings in the cost of purchasing and maintaining apparatus and a potential one-time revenue could result from the sale or trade-in of surplus apparatus. These savings would only be realized if the suggested changes are made as outlined in this Plan. Moreover, the savings would accrue to the owner of the apparatus: fire district, volunteer fire companies and/or Township.

Alternate Sources of Funding

The Study Team is aware of a number of potential alternate past and future sources of funding that should be considered by the Township and the Fire Chief and authority having jurisdiction. They include:

A. United States Fire Administration (USFA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program for grants and funding;
B. U.S. Department of Homeland Security Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program for equipment for first responders;

C. USFA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program;
D. Federal Office of Hazardous Materials, Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant program;
E. Fire inspection and plans review fees;
F. False alarm charges; and,
G. National Fire Academy Training Assistance funding.

There are a number of potential alternate sources of funding for various aspects of the provision of fire and rescue services. The consolidated fire services and Township are encouraged to aggressively research and seek out these and other opportunities for funding. Some of these sources have the potential for substantial ongoing sources of revenue and others may be one-time project specific grants or other funding. Fire departments that pursue alternate sources of funding find the revenue beneficial to service delivery and many times supplement the normal primary source/s of funding.

Vision for the Future

The following is a summary of the vision for the future of a Monroe Township consolidated fire services delivery approach:

A. Uniform policy direction provided by consolidated authority having jurisdiction - based on the consolidation option/s selected;
B. Operational command and administration by a progressive Fire Chief;
C. Organization structure including the divisions of Operations, Fire Prevention, Training and Safety, and Planning and Research;
D. Rank structure including Fire Chief, deputy chiefs, assistant chiefs, captains, lieutenants and firefighters;
E. Implementation of a state-of-the-art fire and rescue training program;
F. Delivery of pre-hospital EMS first responder service delivery, as needed;
G. Operation of an aggressive fire prevention program, including firefighter/officer building inspections on a planned periodic basis;
H. Operation of four fire stations, or five, if justified in the future based on development;

I. Operation of four engines and two trucks;
J. Apparatus fleet to include two engines and one ladder truck for reserve service;
K. Substantial volunteer participation in the operations Township-wide;
L. Apparatus maintenance provided by a shop with an apparatus maintenance staff;
M. Assignment of at least an officer and two firefighters (total staff of 3) to each engine and truck;
N. Assignment of civilian personnel to appropriate staff positions, including budget, personnel, planning; and,
O. One union contract.

Quality of Personnel

In the conduct of comprehensive studies and plans such as this one, it is not unusual for fire personnel to resent a study and/or fail to participate in the study. In the Township, Fire Districts and Fire Companies, the Study Team was most impressed with the attitudes and quality of personnel. This positive impression includes the paid staff, members of International Association of Fire Fighters, volunteers, Township officials and staff. They expressed pride in a number of the very progressive programs and initiatives by the participating organizations. This pride and accomplishment is well deserved.

In the judgment of the Study Team, the stakeholders in Monroe Township (residents, business officials, elected and appointed officials, and visitors) can be very proud of the employees and volunteers of the respective fire organizations. It was a pleasure for the Study Team to work with members on the current model merger programs and those that should be considered for the future.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide a brief overview of Monroe Township in the development of this Fire District Consolidation Study.

This Chapter also provides basic information regarding the participating fire services delivery agencies; the background and framework for the development of this Study; a discussion of current and local fire service trends; previous regionalization efforts and studies in the Township; fiscal issues; and, a reiteration of the key Study components as outlined by officials.

THE SETTING

The participating Monroe fire districts are located in southern Middlesex County in central New Jersey. They are surrounded by the following other municipalities:

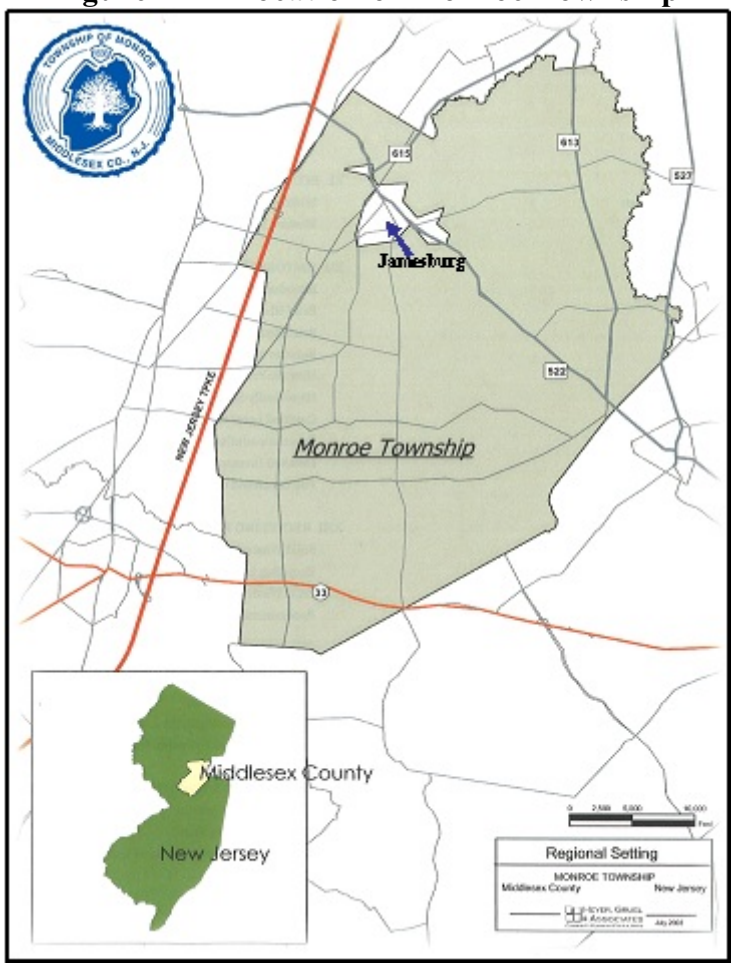
- Borough of Jamesburg, Surrounded by Monroe Township
- Borough of Helmetta
- Borough of Spotswood
- Borough of Englishtown
- Township of Old Bridge
- Township of Cranbury
- Township of South Brunswick
- Township of East Windsor, Mercer County
- Township of Millstone, Monmouth County
- Township of Manalapan, Monmouth County

Figure 1.1 illustrates the regional location of Monroe Township within the State of New Jersey and southern Middlesex County.

INTRODUCTION

THE SETTING (Continued)

Figure 1-1 - Location of Monroe Township



MONROE TOWNSHIP

Monroe Township is located in southern Middlesex County, New Jersey, a short driving distance from malls, shopping centers, theaters, recreational park land, professional offices, four hospitals, colleges and universities and within commuting distance to New York City, Philadelphia and the Jersey Shore. It is just off Exit 8A of the New Jersey Turnpike.

INTRODUCTION

MONROE TOWNSHIP (Continued)

Monroe History

The first foreign settler to immigrate to Monroe was James Johnstone, of Ochiltree, Scotland, who came to what was then known as East Jersey in 1685. He was offered 50 acres of land and 25 acres for each additional family member that came along with him.

On Feb. 23, 1838, Monroe, named after the fifth President of United State - James Monroe, broke away from South Amboy and was incorporated as an independent municipality by the New Jersey State Legislature. Originally, Monroe was a part of Piscataway, and then a part of South Amboy. The 1838 incorporation of Monroe Township originally included Spotswood, Helmetta, and Jamesburg, as well as parts of Cranbury and East Brunswick.

Monroe Demographics

The recently reported 2010 U.S. Census indicates the population of Monroe Township to be 39,132. It has grown substantially in residential population since the 2000 census recorded a population of 27,999 persons. Further, according to the US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2009 five-year estimates by block group the median age was 58.9 years compared to the national median of 36.5.

Township Governance

Monroe Township is governed by the Mayor-Council system of municipal government. With the consent of the Council, the Mayor appoints the heads of the various executive departments of the Township. The five-member Township Council is responsible for establishing policies of the Township, as well as other legislative responsibilities. The legislative power of Monroe Township is exercised by the Council.

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Administration, headed by the Business Administrator, runs the day-to-day operations of the Township, under the direction and supervision of the Mayor.

DELIVERY OF FIRE SERVICES

Fire protection and related services are provided to the Township by three fire districts established pursuant to New Jersey Law, Title 40A, Fire Districts. Each of the three fire districts is governed by a five-member elected board of fire commissioners and has or has had the following:

- An elected Board of Commissioners Chairman
- An appointed or elected fire chief;
- Paid civilian administrative employees;
- Paid civilian mechanic support employees;
- Paid firefighting employees;
- A labor contract with the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF);
- Paid legal counsel;
- Volunteer fire company;
- Volunteer firefighting members of the fire company; and,
- Active fire prevention and inspection programs.

Fire District No. 1 was created by Ordinance No. 32-81 and Fire District No. 2 was created by Ordinance No. 33-81 in December 1981. Fire District No. 3 was created by Ordinance No. 2-83 in January 1983. The Fire Districts were created independent of each other and the Township.

The Fire Districts were established by geographical area within Monroe Township with Fire District No. 1 being comprised of approximately 11 square miles, Fire District No. 2 approximately 15 square miles and Fire District No. 3 approximately 17 square miles.

INTRODUCTION

DELIVERY OF FIRE SERVICES (Continued)

Originally, when the Fire Districts were established, there were three volunteer fire companies who contracted with their respective fire districts to provide fire services. The fire companies submitted an annual budget requests to their Fire District. The Fire District commissioners review, amend and approve the requests, as deemed appropriate. The volunteer fire company originally associated with Fire District No. 3 was reportedly abolished within the last ten years.

The three Monroe Township Fire Districts are generally described in the following sections.

Monroe Fire District No. 1

Fire District No. 1 operates one fire station located at 24 Harrison Avenue. Fire services are provided by the all-volunteer membership of the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company #1 (MTVFC#1) under contract with Fire District No. 1. The MTVFC#1 was incorporated in 1949.

The Fire Chief, who is elected from the volunteer members of the MTVFC#1, provides operational command at incidents occurring in the Fire District No. 1 area. Fire services are provided utilizing four primary units including a pumper, rescue pumper, ladder truck and a brush unit. Reportedly, there are 55 volunteer members of the MTVFC#1 including six officers, 39 active members and 6 probationary and 4 junior members. The Study Team was advised that, until recently, Fire District No. 1 employed up to three paid firefighters who worked during daytime hours. Currently, Fire District No. 1 is all-volunteer staffing.

Monroe Fire District No. 2

Two fire stations are utilized by the paid and volunteer personnel of Monroe Fire District No. 2. The original volunteer-owned fire station is located at 130 Applegarth Road and continues to be utilized by the more than 20 volunteer members of the Applegarth Volunteer Engine Company No. 1. This Applegarth fire station has been utilized since approximately 1967

when initially built by the volunteers. The new fire station, completed in 2010, built by Monroe Fire District No. 2 is located at 10 Halsey Reed Road. The Study Team was advised that the intent was for this new fire station facility to house both paid and volunteer personnel.

The Fire Chief is appointed as an employee by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 2. He provides operational command at emergency incidents occurring within Fire District No. 2's area and also provides other administrative and supervisory duties as determined by the Board.

The Halsey Reed Road station is staffed on a 24 hour basis with a career Lieutenant and three career Firefighters on four rotating shifts making a total complement of four career Lieutenants and 12 career Firefighters. Per diem personnel are utilized to minimum staffing requirements. The paid staff of the Fire District also includes a Service Technician for maintenance.

The primary apparatus fleet utilized by the career and volunteer firefighters and officers of Fire District No. 2 include two pumpers (rescue and supply), aerial ladder and a tanker pumper.

Monroe Fire District No. 3

Fire District No. 3 staffs and responds from two fire stations (23A at 359 Schoolhouse Road and 23B at 16 Centre Drive).

INTRODUCTION

DELIVERY OF FIRE SERVICES (Continued)

The Chief of the Department and Captain (Fire Official) work from their offices at the Centre Drive Station. Reportedly, neither the Chief nor the Captain respond to take command of emergency incidents occurring in Fire District No. 3's area. In the opinion of the Study Team, this staffing/assignment approach is very unique and is unsafe in that the apparatus lieutenants or other junior personnel must provide the command function.

The operational fire apparatus assigned firefighting staff is comprised of eight lieutenants and 32 firefighters assigned to four rotating 24 hour shifts. Each of the four shifts is comprised of two Lieutenants and six Firefighters. Each of the two stations is staffed with one Lieutenant and three firefighters on a daily basis. Per Diem personnel are utilized to meet minimum staffing requirements.

The Study Team was advised that as with Fire Districts No. 1 and No. 2, originally fire services were provided by a volunteer fire company; the Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company (CMVFC) was that was established in 1969. Reportedly, in 2001 the CMVFC was disbanded due to "lack of volunteers". According to numerous accounts by former volunteer members of the CMVFC the volunteer organization was abolished following an extended period of time during which members of the Fire District No. 3 Board of Fire Commission "attacked" volunteer members. The Fire Chief took actions seemingly inconsistent with supporting volunteer provision of fire services. Today, there are no volunteer members as part of the provision of fire services by Fire District No. 3.

Tri-District Fire Advisory Council

By ordinance adopted in 1990, the Monroe Township Council established a Tri-District Fire Advisory Council. The stated purpose of the Tri-District Council is as follows:

INTRODUCTION

DELIVERY OF FIRE SERVICES (Continued)

> "...for the purpose of discussing matters relating to the fire districts within the Township and advising the governing body on a semi-annual basis as to all matters relating to fire prevention within the Township".

According to the ordinance, the membership of the Council includes:

- Each fire chief, or designee;
- A representative from each of the Boards of Fire Commissioners;
- A member of the Township Council; and,
- A member appointed by the Mayor.

The Chairman of the Tri-District Council is to be elected from the membership of the Council.

During the course of the conduct of this project the Study Team was advised that the Tri-District Council provided a forum for communications among the fire district representatives attending meetings. Reportedly, there may have initially been a number of accomplishments relating to improved fire district coordination and creating more of a "team effort" subsequent to the establishment of the Tri-District Council. However, more recently, there have been very limited accomplishments, meetings are not held on a regular basis and it is not clear who is the Chairman of the Tri-District Council.

CHANGING FIRE SERVICE TRENDS

The fire service today is changing nationwide for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the changing complexities of the communities served. A variety of trends and issues in local government are requiring municipalities to consider change in the fire service as part of an overall strategy to solve a number of problems. While the issue of recruiting and retention of volunteers in the fire service is a complex and challenging problem for local

communities served by volunteers, a brief review of several other trends and issues affecting local municipalities and their fire services are outlined in the next few sections.

More than any period in recent history, changes in local governments are having, and will continue to have, a significant impact on the fire service. The fire service, known for its traditionalism, is having to confront these changes at an unprecedented rate. Certain trends for the next decade are becoming more apparent. These can be categorized into five general headings:

1. Concern about the environment;
2. Scientific and technological advancements;
3. Fire and injury prevention and public education;
4. Fiscal constraint; and,
5. Changing role of fire departments.

Concern About the Environment

During the 1980s, worldwide concern about the environment impacted every facet of life. Businesses and industries had to respond responsibly by adapting ways of doing business to protect the environment. "Changes in the natural environment may necessitate revolutionary changes in the fire service," stated Herman W. Brice, Chief Fire Administrator, Palm Beach County Fire Rescue. Brice, a noted fire expert, referred to water shortages and concern about water runoff as issues which may force the fire service to develop alternate means of extinguishment. With a perceived increase in global warming among major scientists, there may be an increase in the number of natural disasters to which the fire service must respond.

INTRODUCTION

CHANGING FIRE SERVICE TRENDS (continued)

Part of this attitude towards the environment stems from an overall concern of ones safety. The public is demanding that risks be reduced, and that they be shielded from potential harm. This results in legislation and regulations regarding hazardous materials, and increased pressure for code enforcement.

This concern for personal safety extends beyond the general public. Fire service personnel who previously showed little concern for their own well-being, especially in emergency situations, are increasingly aware of the inherent work with dangers. They are demanding that their risks of injury and illness be reduced through standards, regulations, training, safe equipment, and personal protection. These demands are increasing personnel and other costs associated with the fire service, and are necessitating changes in the way fire suppression is conducted. The demands are also resulting in increased focus by management on the employee as a valuable resource.

Concerns for the employee are extending beyond fireground safety issues. Employee assistance programs, wellness programs, physical fitness programs, and critical incident stress debriefings (CISD) are emerging as common approaches to employee health and safety.

Changes in the American workforce also affect the fire service. Increasingly, women and minorities are becoming vital members of the fire service. While many fire departments have started addressing these overdue workforce changes, many still have the attitude that "it won't happen to my department". The impact of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* is yet to be fully recognized by the fire service. Legislation may cause the service to rethink its philosophy regarding qualifications to be a firefighter in today's world.

Proliferation of regulations is having a significant impact on the fire service. Occupational safety and health organizations have started enforcing regulations pertaining to the fire service and other public service agencies. New regulations regarding hazardous materials, and the recent regulations on blood-borne pathogens, have placed significant requirements

on the fire service with regard to training of personnel, providing proper protection, and providing the resources necessary to fully implement the regulations. For the future, the work environment in the fire service will become more regulated from both outside and inside the fire protection community. While most of these regulations should enhance the fire service's preparedness, it will increase the costs associated with operating a 21st century fire department.

Scientific and Technological Advancements

The technological trends will make the work of persons involved in fire and safety services easier yet more challenging. The increasing sophistication of electronic detection and early activation of suppression systems will reduce the risk of devastating fires. Computer technology will enhance not only notification and dispatch specialties, but also the response sequence and maintenance of data. With improved data management systems brought about by the increased utilization of computers, the fire service will be able to provide more timely and complete evaluation of community needs, and the appropriate response to meet these community needs.

Improvements in technology may also enhance the ability of fire personnel to perform certain functions, such as fire inspections, plans reviews and dispatching. Further, technology is likely to impact the staffing requirements to perform these functions. Overall, improved technology may help in preventing fires and in providing more efficient work performance. The end result is an anticipated decrease in the number of personnel in the fire service work force.

Fiscal Constraints

In local government, municipal administrators and elected officials have become frustrated with the loss of revenues and fiscal constraints imposed at the state and federal level. While revenues are being reduced, labor costs continue to rise. This has caused significant pressures

on the municipalities to reduce other services to an even greater extent or raise taxes. Unfortunately, fiscal constraints can create suspicion and friction between administrators/elected officials and service providers.

Increases in legal action and litigation, both as a result of labor disputes as well as other legal issues, have also negatively impacted the availability of revenues to reward good employee performance or enhance services. Municipal officials indicate that, as fiscal constraints have increased as a result of decreased revenues, litigation and associated expenses have increased.

These examples are only a few of the fiscal constraints that are negatively impacting local governments and causing officials to search for viable alternatives to include merging local government agencies.

Role of Fire Departments

The future of the fire service will include not only an expanded role for fire departments, but also a more complex one. As noted earlier, fire service personnel will be increasingly required to protect the environment, promote public safety and education. Moreover, emergency medical services in the fire service will become more important as the fire problems decrease, and the average population in the U.S. ages.

Additionally, fire service personnel will require excellent interpersonal skills in order to interact well with the public. Customer service, a key to success in business, has become a more important part of the fire service.

Increasingly, Americans are demanding satisfaction, not only in consumer products, but also in public services, such as fire protection, for which they are paying. The degree of liability increases for paid services. In the future, fire departments will be held more accountable to the citizens of their community for the services.

INTRODUCTION

CHANGING FIRE SERVICE TRENDS (continued)

This concept of accountability is likely to evolve into a quality assurance program, where a fire department's performance will be evaluated and measured against standards set by the community.

At the national level, progressive municipal officials and fire administrators are recognizing the inevitable changes. In making predictions about the future of fire service, Chief Brice of Palm Beach stated that "due to budget constraints, increased demand for service, and increased levels of training and certification requirements by state and federal agencies, emergency services providers and local governments will find it necessary to consolidate smaller departments into regional service providers to take advantage of broader tax bases."

Chief Brice also stated that more cooperation will be required in certain functional areas, such as training, in order to be cost-effective in providing the support services.

The recent financial crisis has forced tax payers and local governments to closely examine resources allocated to various services. Managers, including fire service managers, are being challenged with providing better and more services with fewer resources. Progressive fire service leaders are accepting this challenge by working with government and the community in a partnership to provide essential services without an increasing in resource allocation.

The trends impacting the fire service today and tomorrow should result in improved fire service, safer communities, safer work environment, and an informed customer—the taxpayer. Professional fire personnel, both paid and volunteer, should be prepared for the challenge.

INTRODUCTION

STUDY FRAMEWORK

The Study Team utilizes a modern industry-based framework for its analyses that is comprehensive and systematic. The framework incorporates the model developed by the Accreditation Committee of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), a program of accreditation for and by fire and rescue agencies and personnel.

This fire department accreditation process is currently under the auspices of the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Employing this model as a framework for the Joint Fire Services Plan provides established criteria for review and will provide the reader with information on the latest thinking in the fire service.

It should be noted that a PSSi Study Team member is a certified Peer Assessor with the CFAI and a second Study Team member served for several years on the CFAI Board of Directors.

The analysis categories included in this model, and to be used as a general guide during this Study, are as follows:

1. Governance and Administration;
2. Community Assessment;
3. Goals and Objectives;
4. Programs;
5. Physical Resources;
6. Human Resources;
7. Training and Competency;
8. Essential Resources; and,
9. External Systems Relations.

Within each of these categories are criteria and considerations that were weighed by the Study Team in conducting this analysis. Criteria in these categories that were applicable to the Joint Fire Services Plan areas were utilized.

STUDY FRAMEWORK (continued)

In addition, the Study Team has developed a significant amount of customized material, applicable specifically to local fire departments. At the same time, there are several generic components that do not, based on their nature, vary from one system to the next, such as the description of the basic types of apparatus and equipment, the fire station location analysis model, and basic apparatus maintenance guidelines. As applicable, the Study Team has employed these basic criteria.

Standards and Accepted Practices

The Study Team utilized published fire protection standards and information on accepted principles and practices for the operations and management of fire and EMS services as background and guidelines for the conduct of this Study. Some of the key organizations with standards and publications utilized, as appropriate, as part of this planning effort include:

1. National Fire Protection Association;
2. Insurance Service Office (ISO) Commercial Risk Services, Inc.;
3. International Association of Fire Chiefs;
4. International Association of Fire Fighters;
5. International City Management Association; and,
6. Federal and State OSHA.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) follows a nationally-recognized process for the establishment of many standards that are applicable to fire protection operations and administration. In many jurisdictions, some of the NFPA standards have been adopted and fully implemented while other NFPA standards are utilized as general guidelines for pursuing further improvement in safety and services. The following list includes some of the key NFPA standards:

INTRODUCTION

STUDY FRAMEWORK (continued)

Name of Standard	NFPA Number
Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications	1001
Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications	1002
Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications	1021
Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector, Fire Investigator, and Fire Education Officer	1031
Developing Fire Protection Services for the Public	1201
Fire Service Training Reports and Records	1401
Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program	1500
Fire Department Incident Management System	1561
Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Resources	1710/20
Pumper Fire Apparatus	1901
Aerial Ladder and Elevating Platform Fire Apparatus	1904

These and other written standards and nationally-recognized documents, such as the current edition of the NFPA Fire Protection Handbook, were utilized by the Study Team as a framework for this planning project.

INTRODUCTION

OTHER REGIONALIZATION EFFORTS AND STUDIES

There have been a number of previous studies involving Monroe Township fire services delivery, and, more recently, Fire District consolidation. The studies include the following:

1989 Monroe Township Fire Districts Report

The 1989 Monroe Township Fire Districts Report was a project undertaken by a fire services consultant under contract with the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 3. The 1989 study involved all three Monroe Township Fire Districts with a focus on staffing needs during particular times of the day.

The recommendations of the 1989 Report that could be considered relevant to the current Monroe Township Fire District Consolidation Study include:

- Establish a Council of Fire Districts in an effort to diminish the scope and intensity of "turf wars";
- Establish a Council of Fire Districts to become the focus of a unifying effort in the delivery of fire services;
- That the three Fire Districts operate as if they were one fire department;
- Develop a plan of standard operating procedures to facilitate the coordination among the operating companies;
- Save precious Dollars through centralized purchasing, coordinated apparatus replacement and maintenance; and,
- Implement innovative approaches to volunteer recruitment and retention.

1999 Central Monroe Fire District No. 3 Report

The 1999 Central Monroe Fire District No 3 Report was undertaken by a fire services consultant by contract with Fire District No. 3's Board of Fire Commissioners. The Report was a study of Fire District No. 3 focused on operations, staffing and deployment.

OTHER REGIONALIZATION EFFORTS AND STUDIES (continued)

The recommendations of the 1999 Report that could be considered relevant to the current Monroe Township Fire District Consolidation Study include:

- Appoint a career fire chief to provide strong leadership, implement rules and regulations and respond on calls for incident command;
- Continue to recruit and train volunteer firefighters;
- Consider innovative approaches to maintaining volunteer firefighters.

2002 League of Women Voters Study of Monroe Fire Districts

The 2002 Study coordinated by the League of Women Voters was an effort to conduct a study to examine the organizational structure and financing of the fire protection service provided to the residents of Monroe Township.

The 2002 Study was comprehensive and addressed a broad range of subjects, including:

- History of the Fire Districts;
- Fire District Organization;
- Fire Prevention Bureaus
- Fire Companies;
- Fire Response Time;
- Equipment;
- Communications;
- First Aid Squad;
- Commissioners;
- Accountants and Attorneys;
- Elections;
- Budgets;
- Budget Comparisons; and,
- New Firehouses.

INTRODUCTION

OTHER REGIONALIZATION EFFORTS AND STUDIES (continued)

The 2002 Study addressed many substantial and potentially problematic aspects of having three Fire Districts in Monroe Township. An over-riding concluding concern expressed by the Study involved the goal of maintaining the volunteer aspect of fire services provision. The Study concluded by describing the loss of the Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company in 2001.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

In developing this Fire District Consolidation Study for Monroe Township, the primary general goal was to define and prepare model consolidated fire service options. Further, it was to prepare an implementation planning information for model fire services delivery for use with the Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee. Therefore, the next phase of this fire and rescue services delivery planning process would be the appointment of the recommended Advisory Committee.

CHAPTER TWO
CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

This Chapter provides information on the current structure and organization of the fire districts and fire companies serving Monroe (NJ) Township.

HISTORY & BACKGROUND OF THE FIRE DISTRICTS

The following history of the current fire districts within Monroe (NJ) Township was graciously provided by the League of Women Voters of Monroe Township and is paraphrased as follows:

In the 1800s the Township established a fire protection fund with an annual appropriation of $400.00. This fund was used to provide $25.00 per fire response in the Township to the Cranbury, Englishtown, Hightstown, Jamesburg and Spotswood fire companies.

The northern end of Town was the responsibility of Spotswood; further south to central Monroe was the responsibility of Jamesburg; the southwestern part of Town was the responsibility of Cranbury and Hightstown; and the southeastern part of Monroe was the responsibility of Englishtown and Manalapan.

Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company 1 was formed in 1948 and incorporated in 1949 as the first fire company in Monroe Township. The fire station was located at a gas station on Spotswood-Englishtown Road and Monmouth Road. The first Fire chief was Van Applegate, Sr.

Applegarth Volunteer Engine Company 1 was founded in 1967. Its first station was a garage owned by Vincent Ely who became their first Fire Chief.

The third fire company, Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company, was founded in 1969. Their first fire chief was Robert Axelrod and they were located in a township garage on Schoolhouse Road.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND (Continued)

The Monroe Township Fire Department was established October 4, 1971, comprised of the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company No.1, the Applegarth Volunteer Engine Company No. 1and the Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company. This establishment was enabled by Monroe Township Ordinance No. 205, Section 41-2.

Establishment of the Current Fire Districts

In 1977, the Monroe Township Fire Company No. 1 and the Applegarth Volunteer Engine Company No. 1 filed a petition asking for fire districts to be established in the Township. Prior to that time the fire companies were functioning under a state statute requiring that each of the three fire companies equally divide an annual appropriation of $36,000. This arrangement was the basis of significant discontent. Litigation ensued ultimately resulting in the establishment of the current fire districts.

Fire District No. 1 was created by Ordinance No. 32-81 and Fire District No. 2 was created by Ordinance No. 33-81 in December 1981. Fire District No. 3 was created by Ordinance No. 2-83 in January 1983. The Fire Districts were created independent of each other and the Township.

The Fire Districts were established by geographical area within Monroe Township with Fire District No. 1 being comprised of approximately 11 square miles, Fire District No. 2 approximately 15 square miles and Fire District No. 3 approximately 17 square miles.

Each of the three fire companies contract with their respective fire districts to provide fire services. The fire companies submit an annual budget request to their Fire District for their review. The Fire District commissioners may review, amend and approve the requests.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND (Continued)

An intra-relationship between the fire districts may occur within a Tri-District Fire Advisory Council established to discuss equipment, training, purchasing, safety procedures and other matters of mutual concern. Participation in this Council has waned in recent times.

Operational and response coordination with fire companies neighboring Monroe Township is predicated on, as needed, "mutual aid" agreements between the three fire districts and adjacent townships. Fire District No. 1 coordinates with the towns of Helmetta, Spotswood; District 2 with Plainsboro, Millstone, Cranbury, East Windsor, Hightstown and West Windsor and Fire District No. 3 with Jamesburg. There are no automatic aide arrangements with neighboring township fire companies.

CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
CHAPTER 43. FIRE PREVENTION

Pursuant to the Optional Municipal Charter Law of 1950 and Section 3-19 of the Monroe Township Code, Ordinance 0-5-2007-019 was approved and signed by Mayor Richard Pucci on May 9, 2007. This Ordinance amended the Monroe Township Code Chapter 43 entitled "Fire Prevention" as follows [excerpts]:

> SECTION 1.
>
> 43-4 Local Enforcement.
>
> Pursuant to the State of New Jersey the Uniform Fire Code shall be enforced locally within the established limits of Fire District No. 1, Fire District No. 2 and Fire District No. 3 of the Township of Monroe, County of Middlesex and State of New Jersey.
>
> 43-6 Duties of Enforcing Agencies

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

TOWNSHIP CODE (Continued)

The local enforcing agencies shall enforce the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code and the codes and regulations adopted under Article II in all buildings, structures and premises within the established boundaries of their respective fire districts, other than owner occupied one and two family dwellings, and shall faithfully comply with the requirements of the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code. Any bureau of the fire prevention or fire prevention agency created by any said fire districts, in addition to the duties assigned herein, shall enforce within each fire district the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code.

43-12 Permit Fees.

Fees shall be consistent with all Fire Districts within the Township of Monroe as outlined in the Code of the Township of Monroe Chapter 39-3. The fees for enforcement of this Article payable to the local enforcing agencies established in the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code, life hazard registration fees, permit fees and other fees prescribed by the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code shall be the applicable fees utilized by the Fire Districts.

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

The Monroe Township Fire Company #1 operates from their station at 24 Harrison Avenue, Monroe Township, NJ. 39 active members, six probationary members and four junior members staff a pumper, a ladder truck, a squad truck and a brush truck as required.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Class rating for Fire District No.1 is Class 4/9.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Organization Structure

Governance of the Monroe Township Fire District No. 1 is provided through a fire commission established commensurate with the laws of the State of New Jersey. Additionally, the Monroe Township Fire Company #1 is incorporated with volunteer executive and operational officers and members. Operationally, Fire District No. 1 is headed by a fire chief with full command authority who reportedly responds regularly to command fire services incidents in the Districts response area. The organizational figure below outlines these three entities.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

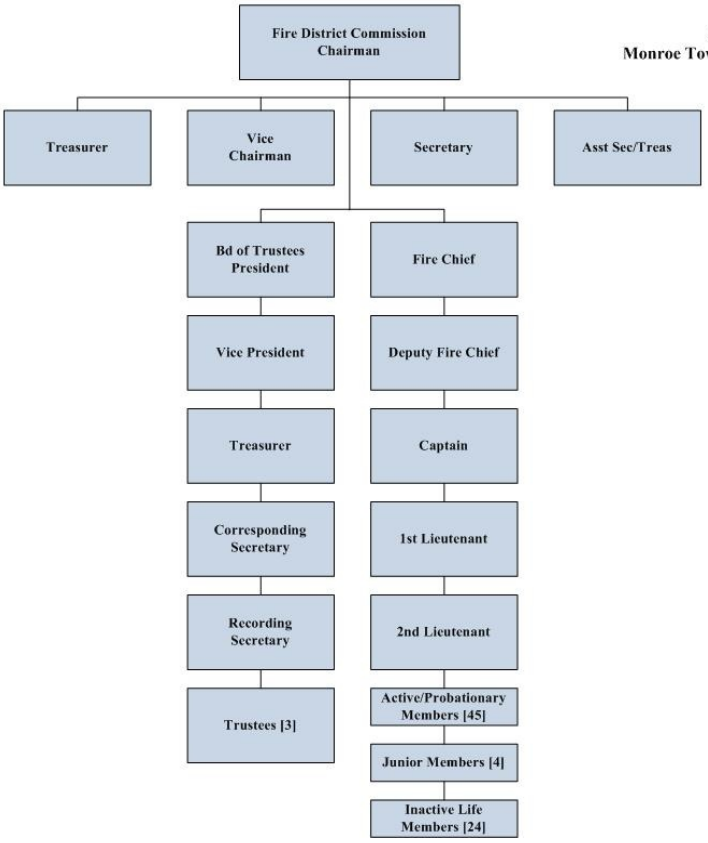


Figure 2.1
Organizational Structure
Monroe Township Fire District No. 1

Services Provided

Commensurate with the By-Laws of the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Co. #1, the purpose of the fire company is the " protection of life and property within the geographical boundaries of Fire District No. 1 in Monroe Township and within any other geographic area within which the Fire Company shall perform the services, by agreement or otherwise, of protecting life and property".

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Within this purpose the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Co. #1 provides the following services:

- Firefighting
- Rescue/Extrication
- EMS First Responder
- Public Safety Education
- Fire Prevention
- Code Enforcement
- Fire Investigation
- Pre-Incident Planning

Staffing

Fire District No. 1 is staffed with 55 volunteer members as outlined below (See Figure 2.2):

Figure 2-2
STAFFING
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

RANK	NUMBER
Chief	1
Deputy Chief	1
Captain	1
1st Lieutenant	2
2nd Lieutenant	1
Active Members	39
Probationary Members	6

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

RANK	NUMBER
Junior Members	4
Total	55

Source: Monroe Township Fire Company 1

The Study Team was advised that previous budgets included three career firefighters. Reportedly two of these positions were filled and assigned to day work. At this time Fire District No. 1 does not employ career firefighters.

Unit Staffing

The Fire Company does not schedule duty hours for their members. Volunteers are on call 24 hours per day, seven days per week and respond to incidents as they are available.

The Fire Company divides the 24 hour day into three eight hour periods; 7:00am – 3:00pm, 3:00pm – 11:00pm and 11:00pm – 7:00am. Volunteer members are "excused" from responding for one eight hour period per day for employment and are expected to respond during the remaining 16 hour period.

Upon dispatch members respond to the station, staff the appropriate apparatus, and respond to the incident. Command officers respond directly to the incident scene.

The following chart identifies the average number of members responding to incidents for a seven month period during CY2010 between the hours of 7:00am and 3:30pm.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Figure 2-3
AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

March 1, 2010 – September 30, 2010 7:00am – 3:30pm			
Month	Number of Incidents*	Monthly Sum of Members Responding	Average Number of Members Responding Per Incident**
March	14	149	10.6
April	12	142	11.8
May	3	27	9
June	4	39	9.8
July	17	156	9.2
August	12	116	9.7
September	16	115	7.2

* Type of Incident Not Provided
** Rank, Qualification and Time of Member Arriving Not Available

Source: Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Co 1

The average number of members per incident responding from Fire District No. 1 for the seven month period outlined above was 9.6. This response complement seems admirable considering this 7:00am – 3:30pm time frame is typically the most challenging time of day for volunteer fire companies to provide staffing. Employment, family responsibilities and the associated traffic congestion, etc, make it difficult for volunteer members to participate.

The data provided for this figure did not include incident type, the time frame of members arriving at incidents or their certification level (Interior firefighting, rank, etc). Additional staffing for incidents requiring an average response of more than 9.6 personnel is typically provided by Fire Districts No. 2 and No. 3 and by special call from neighboring fire companies.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

The Monroe Township Police computer aided dispatch system documented 459 incidents occurring in Fire District No. 1 during 2010.

Vehicular Apparatus Fleet

The vehicular fleet utilized by Fire District No. 1 includes a total of four units: one pumper, one ladder truck, one squad truck and a brush truck. A detailed response fleet inventory is listed in the figure below.

Figure 2-4
RESPONSE FLEET INVENTORY LIST
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

UNIT	TYPE	MAKE/MODEL	CONFIGURATION TANK/PUMP	YEAR
Engine 51	Pumper	E-1	2000/1000	1998
Squad 51	Rescue Pumper	E-1/Spartan	1500/500	2006
Ladder 51	Quint	HME/Smeal	75' 1500/500	1997
Brush 51	Brush Truck	Dodge/Reading	250/200	1987

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 1

Fire Stations

Fire District No. 1 responds from a single station as outlined in the figure below:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Figure 2-5
FIRE STATION
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

STATION	ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	APPARATUS HOUSED
51	24 Harrison Avenue Monroe Township, NJ 08831	1950	Engine Truck
Rescue/Brush Bay Addition		2010	Rescue Brush

Source: Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Co.1

Monroe Township recently funded the construction of a two bay addition adjacent to the original station to house the rescue and brush apparatus.

Training Program

The Fire Company Training Officer and Driver Training Officer are "non-line officers" appointed by the Chief.

The Training Officer, in accordance with the Chief, is responsible to schedule all training and drills for the Company. Fire Company By-Laws require that the Training Officer possess New Jersey Level I Instructor certification.

The Driver Training Officer trains all interested personnel in the operation of Fire Company apparatus and oversees their recertification on an annual basis. The Driver Training Officer is required to have five years experience as a qualified driver/pump operator and possess an Advanced Pump School certification.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Training for Existing Members

The minimum requirements for a firefighter in the State of New Jersey to ride any apparatus to an incident are as follows:

1. Firefighter I, from the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
2. Hazardous Materials Awareness with a yearly refresher
3. Incident Management System I100 (Basic IMS)
4. Bloodborne Pathogens Training with a yearly refresher
5. Right-to-Know Training with yearly refresher
6. Interior Firefighters must perform Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) (re)certification and be fit tested

Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Co. #1 training sessions are scheduled for the first, third and fourth Tuesdays of each month in conjunction with apparatus, tools and appliances inspections, tests and cleaning. The second Tuesday of the month is reserved for the Fire Company business meeting. Minimum certification, training and experience requirements for operational officers are prescribed in the Fire Company By-Laws.

Individual ongoing, in-service training statistics for members were not provided to the Study Team.

Minimum certification, training and experience requirements for Fire Chief are as follows:

1. Be an active member in good standing for five years
2. Be an active member in good standing at the time of nomination
3. Have served in the position of Captain for a minimum of two years and Deputy Chief for a minimum of one year within a five year period to nominate as Chief

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

4. Have certification in:
   - New Jersey State Firefighter II or equivalent
   - Instructional Techniques for Company Officers or equivalent
   - Instructor General Safety or equivalent
   - New Jersey State Level II
5. Be a Qualified Driver on all apparatus at the time of nomination

The Deputy Chief must meet the same requirements for Chief except having served as one year in the position of Deputy Chief.

The minimum certification, training and experience requirements for Captain are as follows:

1. Be an active member in good standing for three years
2. Be an active member in good standing at time of nomination
3. Have served in the position of Lieutenant for a minimum of two years or served as Captain in another fire department for a minimum of two years and received 2/3 approval of the membership to bypass Lieutenant.
4. Have certification in:
   - New Jersey State Firefighter II or equivalent
   - Tactical Considerations for the Initial Incident Commander or equivalent
   - New Jersey State Level Two
5. Be a Qualified Driver on all apparatus prior to nomination

The minimum certification, training and experience requirements for Lieutenant are as follows:

1. Be an active member in good standing for three years
2. Be an active member in good standing at the time of nomination

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

3. Have served in the position of Second Lieutenant for a minimum of one year. If any member would like to skip Second Lieutenant that member would have to receive 2/3 approval of the membership at the time of nomination to do so or served in a position of similar capacity within a fire department for a minimum of two years
4. Have certification in:
   - New Jersey State Firefighter II or equivalent
   - New Jersey State Level Two
5. Be a Qualified Driver on all apparatus at the time of nomination

The minimum certification, training and experience requirements for Second Lieutenant are as follows:

1. Be an active member in good standing for two years
2. Be an active member in good standing at the time of nomination
3. Have certification in:
   - New Jersey State Firefighter I or equivalent
   - New Jersey State Level Two

<u>Training of New Firefighters</u>

New member candidates for Fire District No. 1 must meet the following requirements:

1. Reside in Monroe Township or within a reasonable distance to the firehouse
2. Be at least 16 years of age for junior membership or 18 years of age for regular membership
3. Successfully pass the physical examination prescribed by the Fire Company
4. Complete a full background check
5. Complete a formal interview

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

6. Complete a six months probation period
7. Attend at least 50% of Fire Company Activities
8. Be available on Tuesday nights

Fire Prevention

Fire District No. 1, through its Fire Official [part time] and Fire Inspector [part time], enforces and complies with the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code and codes and regulations adopted under Article II in all buildings, structures and premises (other than one and two family dwellings) within the established boundaries of their Fire District.

Plan reviews are conducted by the Monroe Township Construction Office. Fire District input is provided on an "as needed" basis.

This authority enables the Fire District to carry out periodic inspections, conduct life and fire safety education programs and investigate the origin and cause of fires and related occurrences.

In the event that a Fire District No. 1 fire investigator is not available, a Fire Official or certified Fire Investigator from Fire District No. 2 or No. 3 may be called as delineated by policy. Should these officials not be available the Township Police or regional Arson Task Force shall be notified.

The following figure identifies the Fire District's inspection, fire investigation and public fire safety activity for 2010:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Figure 2-6
FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITY FOR 2010
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

EVENTS	NUMBER
Inspections	
Periodic	104
Re Inspection	64
Complaint	0
Follow-up	0
Other	1
Total	169
Fire Investigations	
Accidental	3
Intentional	1
Undetermined	0
Juvenile Fire Setter	1
Closure	4
Public Safety Events	
School Presentations	5
National Night Out	1
Oktoberfest	1

Source: Monroe Fire District No. 1

Standard Operating Guidelines

Fire District No. 2 utilizes Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) that have been in place for a number of years addressing the following topic and subjects:

Responding To the Station
Apparatus Response
Responding To an Alarm
Arrival at the Scene
Staging
Designation of Exposures
Incident Command System (blank)
Engine Company Operations

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 (Continued)

Rescue Truck Operations
Ladder Truck Operations
Rest and Recovery
Investigation and Reports
Medical and Emergency Care
Returning To the Station
Radio and Communications
Emergency Building Evacuation
Occupational Safety and Health Program
Infectious Disease Protection Program
Motor Vehicle Accidents
Hazardous Materials Incidents
Vehicle Fires
Ground Cover/Brush Fires
Rubbish Fires
Bomb Threats
High Rise Procedure
Operations at Protected Properties
Utility Emergencies
Building Collapse-Rescue Operations
Medivac Operations
Fire Fighting Operations near High Voltage Power Lines

The standard operating guidelines appear to be minimally adequate with limited safety and training - related SOGs. Further, there apparently is no Incident Command System SOG since the section of the SOG document stated "This page intentionally left blank for future Standard Operating Guidelines. Many of the SOGs require the adherence of Fire District No. 2 and Fire District No. 3 but are established independent of and dissimilar to Fire Districts No. 2 and No. 3 SOGs.

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2

The Monroe Township Fire District No. 2 operates from two stations located at 10 Halsey Reed Road, Monroe Township, NJ (Station 57), and 130 Applegarth Road, Monroe Township, NJ. The Halsey Reed Road station is staffed on a 24 hour basis with a career Lieutenant and three career Firefighters on four rotating shifts making a total complement of four career Lieutenants and 12 career Firefighters. Per Diem personnel are utilized to minimum staffing requirements.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

The Applegarth Road station is leased by Fire District No. 2 from the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Co. #1 and staffed with approximately ten volunteer members.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Class rating for Fire District No. 2 is Class 4/9.

Organization Structure

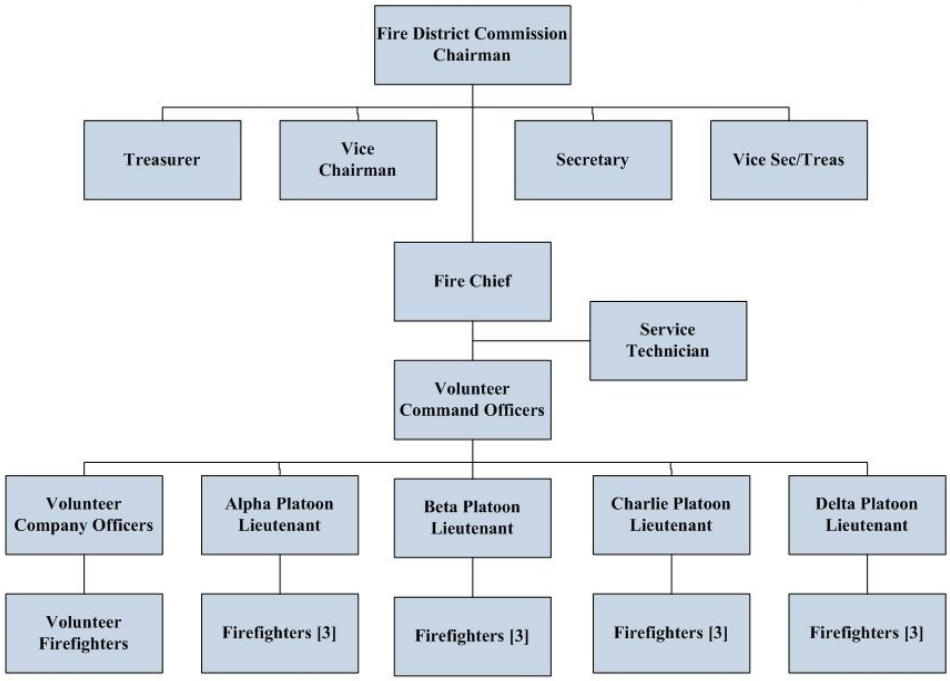
Governance of the Monroe Township Fire District #2 is provided through a Fire Commission established commensurate with the laws of the State of New Jersey. Operationally, the Fire District No. 2 is headed by the Fire Chief who reportedly responds regularly to provide command on emergency incidents. The Mechanic is responsible for apparatus maintenance and performs related duties at the Halsey Reed Road station.

The figure below outlines the organizational structure of Fire District No. 2:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

Figure 2.7
Organizational Structure
Monroe Township Fire District No. 2



Services Provided

Fire District No. 2 provides the following services:

- Firefighting
- Rescue/Extrication
- EMS First Responder
- Public Safety Education
- Fire Prevention
- Code Enforcement

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

- Fire Investigation
- Pre-Incident Planning

Total Staffing

Fire District No. 2 is staffed with 28 members/personnel as outlined in the figure below:

Figure 2-8
STAFFING
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2

RANK	NUMBER
Chief	1
Deputy Chief (Volunteer)	1
Assistant Chief (Volunteer)	1
Captain (Volunteer)	1
Lieutenant (Paid)	4
Firefighter	19 Paid / 10Volunteer
Service Technician	1
Total	38

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 2

Paid Staffing

The following sections outline the number and assignment of paid staffing.

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

Unit and Shift Staffing

Each of the four 24-hour rotating shifts is staffed with four personnel: a Lieutenant and three Firefighters. Unit staffing is dependent upon the nature of the incident. The Chief responds as command officer on weekdays and is on call nights, weekends and holidays. The Service Technician is part time during weekdays and on call.

During 2010, Fire District No. 2 responded to 674 of the 692 incidents that occurred in their Fire District with an average attendance of 6.13 personnel attending each response. Of the 674 responses, 154 [23%] were cancelled while en route, 179 [27%] were system/detector actuations with no fire and 34 [5%] were structure fires.

Responses to fire protection and detection system actuations with no fire (27%) appear to be excessive. These responses represent a significant expenditure of resources.

Shift Work Schedule

Fire District No. 2 career personnel are assigned to four rotating, 24 hours on, 72 hours off, shifts. This work schedule is considered in the industry to be the "Cadillac" of firefighter work schedules that is typically more justified in urban areas with high workload demands.

Volunteer Staffing

The Study Team was advised that volunteer members of the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company#1 provide emergency staffing from the Applegarth Road station. Reportedly, there are approximately ten active volunteer members.

The Study Team noted that the Fire District provides no efforts toward volunteer recruitment and retention. The Fire District website is incomplete in this area as well.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

Vehicular Apparatus Fleet

The vehicular response fleet utilized by Fire District No. 2 includes four units: a rescue pumper, a supply pumper, a tanker pumper and an aerial scope. A new aerial truck is scheduled for delivery.

A detailed response fleet inventory is provided in the figure below:

Figure 2-9
RESPONSE FLEET INVENTORY
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2

UNIT	TYPE	MAKE/MODEL	CONFIGURATION MAKE/MODEL	YEAR
57-1	Rescue Pumper	Saulsbury	1250 GPM	1995
57-2	Supply Pumper	American La France	2000 GPM	1985
57-3	Aerial Scope	Baker/FWD	95'	1995
57-4	Tanker Pumper	Volvo GM/4 Guys	1500/3500	1991

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 2

Fire Stations

The figure below provides a summary of the Fire District's stations, their locations and year constructed:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

Figure 2-10
FIRE STATIONS
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2

STATION	ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	APPARATUS HOUSED
57	10 Halsey Reed Road	2010	Rescue Pumper Tanker Pumper Aerial Scope
	130 Applegarth Road	1967	Supply Pumper

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 2

Fire District No. 2 leases the Applegarth Road station from Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company #1.

Training Program

Paid Firefighters and Officers

In service training is conducted by the shift Lieutenants on a Monday through Thursday basis with the first and third Thursdays being provided in conjunction with the volunteer members. The training program is coordinated by a shift Lieutenant and lesson plans are usually provided.

Individual, ongoing, in-service training statistics were not provided to the Study Team.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

Minimum Recruit Training

The minimum training, certification and re-certification requirements for a firefighter in the State of New Jersey to ride any apparatus to an incident are as follows:

1. Firefighter I, from the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
2. Hazardous Materials Awareness with a yearly refresher
3. Incident Management System I100 (Basic IMS)
4. Bloodborne Pathogens Training with a yearly refresher
5. Right-to-Know Training with yearly refresher
6. Interior Firefighters must perform SCBA (re)certification and be fit tested

Fire District No. 2 full-time and per-diem/substitute Firefighter/Fire Inspector candidate, entry level examination process is comprised of a written examination combined with physical agility testing, firefighter skill testing, resume review and individual interviews. Prior to appointment selected candidates are subjected to a comprehensive medical examination, drug/alcohol screening, psychological evaluation and a criminal background investigation.

The following minimum qualifications have been established:

1. Must be a citizen of the United States.
2. Must be no younger than twenty-one and no older than thirty-five years of age
3. Must possess High School Diploma or equivalent.
4. Must not have been convicted of a criminal offense other than minor traffic
5. violations.
6. Must be able to read, write and speak the English language well and
7. intelligently
8. Possess a valid New Jersey Drivers License and good driving record.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

9. Must have NJ State Fire Fighter I certification and have three (3) years current firefighting experience. (letter from current Fire Chief)
10. Must have one (1) year current experience as a fire apparatus driver/operator and have successfully completed a Pump Operators Course at an approved fire training academy.
11. Must have NJ State Fire Inspector certification (At time of appointment)
12. Must have NJ State Incident Management System Level 1 certification (At time of appointment)
13. Must pass a comprehensive medical examination including respiratory clearance and drug/alcohol screening.
14. Must be physically able to perform the demanding tasks involved with firefighting and other emergency scene duties.
15. Emergency medical training to a level as may be deemed necessary at a later date
16. Must not be claustrophobic or afraid of heights.
17. All required certifications and licenses must be maintained/updated as required as a condition of continued employment.

Volunteer Firefighters and Officers

The Study Team was not provided any information regarding the training program for volunteer members.

Fire Prevention

Fire District No. 2, through its Fire Official and Bureau of Fire Prevention, enforces and complies with the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code and codes and regulations adopted under Article II in all buildings, structures and premises (other than one and two family dwellings) within the established boundaries of their Fire District.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

This authority enables the Fire District to carry out periodic inspections, conduct life and fire safety education programs and investigate the origin and cause of fires and related occurrences.

Shift Personnel are scheduled to conduct fire inspections on a Monday through Friday basis with Monday through Thursday being their "Road Days" when they are in the field. All inspections required of the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code are completed each year.

Fire District No. 2 has five certified fire investigators including the Chief [Fire Official]. In the event that a Fire District No. 2 fire investigator is not available, a Fire Official or certified Fire Investigator from Fire District No. 1 or No. 3 may be called as delineated by policy. Should these officials not be available the Township Police or regional Arson Task Force shall be notified.

The following figure identifies the Fire District's inspection, fire investigation and public fire safety activity for 2010:

Figure 2-11
FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITY FOR 2010
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2

EVENTS	NUMBER
Inspections	
Periodic	161
Re Inspection	102
Complaint	7
Follow-up	7
Other	2
Total	277
Fire Investigations	
Accidental	8
Intentional	0

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

EVENTS	NUMBER
Undetermined	4
Juvenile Fire Setter	1
Closure	12
Public Safety Events	
Resident Presentations	9
National Night Out	1
Other	2

Source: Monroe Fire District No. 2

Policies and Procedures

Fire District No. 2 utilizes Standard Operating Guidelines that have been in place for a number of years addressing the following topic and subjects:

Chain of Command
Incident Management System
Career Department Operations
Weekly Work Outline
Apparatus Response Guidelines
Initial Engine Company Operations
Structure Fire Operations
Vehicle Fire Operations
Tanker Refill Operations
General Apparatus Operations
Engine 57-1 General Operations
Brush 57-6 Operations
Pump Back Flushing Procedures
Vehicle Extrication
Air Bag Operations
Self Contained Breathing Apparatus
Gas Meter Operations
Natural Gas Incidents
Response to Carbon Monoxide Incidents
Thermal Imaging Camera Use
Hi-Visibility vests
Infection Control Plan
Hepatitis B Declination
Personnel Accountability Safety System
Communications
Incident Dispatch
Hearing and Eye Protection
Confined Space Rescue
Line Of Duty Death (LODD)
Emergency/Non Emergency Response

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2 (Continued)

The Fire District No. 2 standard operating guidelines appear to be minimally adequate with limited safety and training - related SOGs. There apparently is no Incident Command System SOG. The Fire District No. 2 SOGs do not seem to reference adherence by Fire District No. 1 and Fire District No. 3 personnel and were apparently established independent of and are dissimilar to Fire Districts No. 1 and No. 3 SOGs.

Labor Union

The Board of Fire Commissioners, Monroe Township Fire District No. 2 has entered into an Agreement with Local 3170, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). The Township of Monroe Fire District No. 2, its Commissioners and their duly authorized agents and representatives recognize the Monroe Township Uniformed Fire Fighters Union, I.A.F.F. Local 3170 A.F.L.-C.L.C. as the sole and exclusive bargaining agent, representing all full time uniformed firefighters regarding terms and conditions of employment.

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

Governance of the Monroe Township Fire District No. 3 is provided through a fire commission established commensurate with the laws of the State of New Jersey.

Fire District No. 3 responds from two fire stations (23A at 359 Schoolhouse Road and 23B at 16 Centre Drive). The Chief of the Department and Captain (Fire Official) work from their offices at the Centre Drive Fire Station. The Study Team was advised that the Chief does not have operational command authority and does not respond on emergency incidents to provide commend.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

Further, the Captain reportedly generally does not respond on emergency incidents to provide incident command. The result is that the lieutenants whose primary role is unit command must also assume command of incidents occurring in District No. 3's area leaving unit command to available firefighters. This is a very unusual and unsafe situation, in the experience of the Study Team, who have never seen this approach to the assignment and utilization of senior operational command personnel.

The operational staff is comprised of eight Lieutenants and 32 firefighters assigned to four rotating 24 hour shifts. Each shift is comprised of two Lieutenants and six Firefighters. Each of the two stations is staffed with One Lieutenant and three firefighters on a daily basis. Per Diem personnel are utilized to meet minimum staffing requirements.

The Insurance Services Officer (ISO) Public Protection Class rating for Fire District No. 3 is Class 4/9.

Organization Structure

The figure below outlines the organizational structure of Fire District No. 3:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

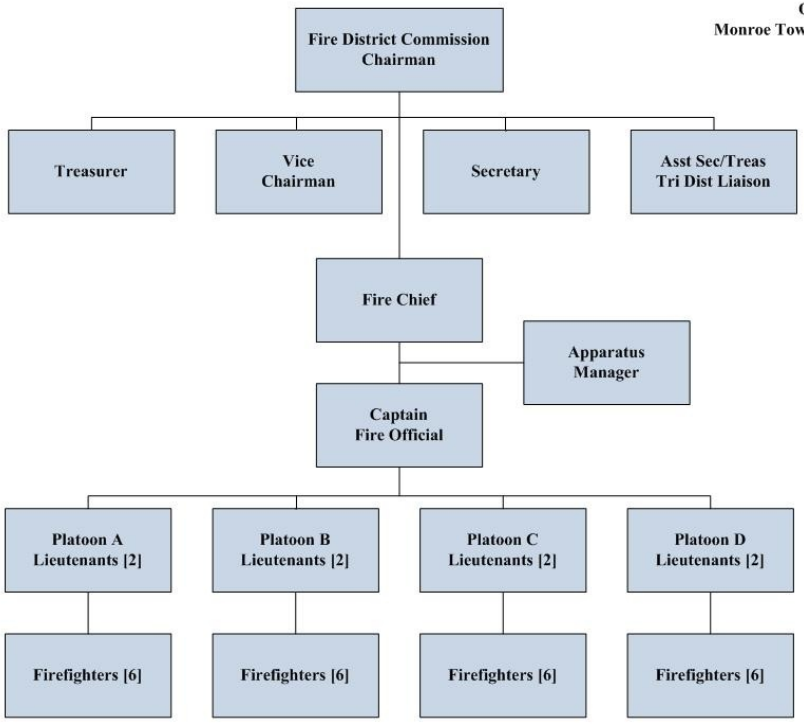


Figure 2.12
Organizational Structure
Monroe Township Fire District No. 3

Services Provided

Fire District No. 3 provides the following services:

- Fire Prevention/Fire Suppression
- Fire Investigation/Cause and Origin Determinations
- Vehicle Extrication
- Confined Space Rescue
- Water Rescue
- Ice Rescue
- Hazardous Materials Response

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

- Public Education
- Pre-Fire Planning
- Tanker Task Force Participation
- Emergency Medical First Responder / Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

Staffing

Fire District No. 3 is staffed with 36 personnel as outlined in Figure 2-12 below:

Figure 2-12
STAFFING
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

RANK	NUMBER
Chief	1
Captain	1
Lieutenant	8
Firefighter	24
Apparatus Manager	1
Inspector - Part Time	1
Total	36

Source: Monroe Township Fire Company 3

Unit and Shift Staffing

Each of the four 24-hour rotating shifts is staffed with eight personnel; two Lieutenants (One at each of the two stations) and six Firefighters (Three at each of the two stations). Unit staffing is dependent upon the nature of the incident. The Lieutenants routinely serve as

command officers. The Captain (Fire Official) may respond for command on weekdays and when on call nights, weekends and holidays. The Apparatus Manager and the Inspector are part time during weekdays and on call.

According to Township computer aided dispatch records Fire District No. 3 units responded to 797 incidents occurring within the District. Fire District No. 3 advised the Study Team that during 2010, Fire District No. 3 responded to a total of 1,277 incidents with an average of 5.86 personnel attending each response. Of the 1,277 responses, 67 [5%] were cancelled while en route, 320 [25%] were system/detector actuations with no fire and 18 [1.4%] were structure fires. Based on the dispatch protocol for the three Monroe Township Fire Districts incident response statistics may duplicate Township-wide due to concurrent response of units, depending on the nature of the incident.

Shift Work Schedule

Fire District No. 3 personnel are assigned to four rotating 24 hours on, 72 hours off shifts. This work schedule is considered in the industry to be the "Cadillac" of firefighter work schedules that is typically more justified in urban areas with high workload demands.

Vehicular Apparatus

The vehicular response fleet utilized by Fire District No. 3 includes two pumpers, one pumper/tanker, one 75' quint, a rescue truck, a brush utility truck and a special operations trailer.

The figure below identifies a detailed listing of Fire District No. 3's response fleet:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

Figure 2-13
RESPONSE FLEET INVENTORY
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

UNIT	TYPE	MAKE/MODEL	CONFIGURATION TANK/PUMP	YEAR
23-5	Pumper	Pierce/Lance	1500/	1991
23-6	Pumper/Tanker	Seagrave	/3000	2008
23-7	Pumper	E-1 Hurricane	1500/	1986
23-8	Quint	E-1 CAFS	75'	2005
23-11	Rescue Truck	E-1		1997
23-14	Brush/Utility	Ford F350		2007
SO-23	Special Ops	Trailer	HazMat/Rescue	2009

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 3

Fire Stations

The figure below provides a summary of the Fire District's fire stations and their locations:

Figure 2-14
FIRE STATIONS
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

STATION	ADDRESS / LOCATION	APPARATUS HOUSED
23A	16 Centre Drive	Pumper Pumper Tanker Quint Special Operations Trailer
23B	359 Schoolhouse Road	Pumper Rescue Truck

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 3

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

Training Program

Fire District No. 3 training program is coordinated by two shift Lieutenants and overseen by the Chief of Department. Certifications and re-certifications are monitored and a monthly in-service training schedule is provided with lesson plans. All personnel are EMS First Responder certified.

Individual on-going, in-service training statistics were not provided to the Study Team.

Minimum Recruit Training

The minimum training, certification and re-certification requirements for a firefighter in the State of New Jersey to ride any apparatus to an incident are as follows:

- Firefighter I, from the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
- Hazardous Materials Awareness with a yearly refresher
- Incident Management System I100 (Basic IMS)
- Bloodborne Pathogens Training with a yearly refresher
- Right-to-Know Training with yearly refresher
- Interior Firefighters must perform SCBA (re)certification and be fit tested

Fire Prevention

Fire District No. 3, through its Fire Official and Bureau of Fire Prevention, enforces and complies with the State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code and codes and regulations adopted under Article II in all buildings, structures and premises (other than one and two family dwellings) within the established boundaries of their Fire District.

This authority enables the Fire District to carry out periodic inspections, conduct life and fire

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

safety education programs and investigate the origin and cause of fires and related occurrences. In the event that a Fire District No. 3 fire investigator is not available, a Fire Official or certified Fire Investigator from Fire District No. 1 or No. 2 may be called as delineated by policy. Should these officials not be available the Township Police or regional Arson Task Force shall be notified.

Figure 2-15
FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITY FOR 2010
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

EVENTS	NUMBER
Inspections	
Periodic	153
Re Inspection	89
Complaint	6
Follow-up	6
Other	2
Total	256
Fire Investigations	
Accidental	7
Suspicious	2
Undetermined	0
Closure	90%

Source: Monroe Township Fire District No. 3

Fire District No. 3 utilizes the Fire Safety Trailer shared by the three Fire Districts in Monroe Township during Fire Prevention Week at all local schools in Fire District No. 3, during National Night Out and as requested. Sparky the Fire Dog is present at all Fire Safety Trailer events. The Fire Extinguisher Simulator Program is provided during nursing home, assisted living facility employee and Board of Education and Township employee training.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

Policies and Procedures

Fire District No. 3 utilizes Standard Operating Guidelines that have been in place for a number of years addressing the following topic and subjects:

Response to the Station
Investigations By Off Duty Personnel
Radio and Communications
Apparatus/Vehicle Response
Mutual Aid
Returning Apparatus to Service
Rapid Intervention Crew
General Operational Guidelines
Interior Operations
Emergency Medical Treatment and Equip
Rehabilitation
Bomb Scare/Threat
Bay Area Ventilation System
Petty Cash Account
Water/Ice Rescue and Recovery
Infection Control/Blood Borne pathogens
Respiratory Protection Program
Line of Duty Death and Serious Injury
Injury/Accident Reporting
Calling in Off Duty Personnel
Use of Encoder
Management of Change
Facility Right to Know
Station Daily Log Book
Off Duty Response & Scene Interference
Joint Firefighter Health & Safety Committee
Hazardous Materials Response
Personnel Accountability System
Thermal Imaging Camera
Absentee Management/Part Time Personnel
Vehicle Safety and Equipment Checks
Mutual Exchange Tours
Standard Award System
Substance Abuse Policy
Notification of Other Agencies
Requesting Fire Scene Investigation
Uniforms
Incident Safety Officer
Incident Command
Confined Space
Funeral Policy/Protocol
Honor Guard
Motor Vehicle Incidents & Fires
Company Training
Placing an Apparatus Out of Service
Management & Training Substitute F'S

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3 (Continued)

The standard operating guidelines appear to be adequate. Many of the guidelines require the adherence of Fire District No. 1 and Fire District No. 2 but established independent of them.

Labor Union

The Board of Fire Commissioners, Monroe Township Fire District No. 3 has entered into an Agreement with Local 3170A, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

This agreement is entered into between the Board and the Association to promote and ensure harmonious relations, cooperation and understanding between the Board and its Association represented employees; to provide for the resolution of legitimate grievances; all in order that the public service shall be expedited and effectuated in the best interest of the residents of Fire District No. 3, the Township of Monroe, the Board and its employees.

The Board recognizes the Association as the exclusive collective negotiations agent for all paid, full time employees engaged in fire suppression duties. This Agreement excludes the Fire Chief, Fire Captain, Fire Lieutenants, managerial executives, part-time employees engaged in fire suppression, "craft" employees, confidential employees, professional employees, police employees, and employees not engaged in fire fighting duties.

Additionally, the Board of Fire Commissioners, Monroe Township No. 3 has entered into an Agreement with the Monroe Township Fire Officer's Association, Local 3107B.

This agreement establishes the general terms and conditions for the position of Lieutenant and delineates the exclusive collective negotiations for all Lieutenants engaged in fire suppression duties.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

SUMMARY DATA: TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICTS

The following sections provide relevant summary and comparative information regarding the Monroe Township Fire Districts.

Staffing Summary

The following figure reflects a comparison and summary of the Monroe Township Fire District staffing.

Figure 2-16
STAFFING
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICTS

RANK	DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3	TOTAL
Chief	1	1	1*	3
Deputy Chief	1	1[Volunteer]	-	2
Assistant Chief	-	1[Volunteer]	-	1
Captain	1	1	1	3
Lieutenant	2	4	8	14
2nd Lieutenant	1	-	-	1
Firefighter	45[6 Probation]	19[7 Volunteer]	24	88
Junior Member	4	-	-	4
Service Technician	-	1		1
Apparatus Manager	-	-	1	1
Part Time Inspector	-	-	1	1
Total	55	28	36	119
*Administrative				

Source: Monroe Township Fire Districts

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

SUMMARY OF FIRE DISTRICTS DATA (Continued)

Apparatus Summary

The following figure reflects a comparison and summary of Monroe Township Fire Districts Response Fleet:

Figure 2-17
VEHICULAR RESPONSE FLEET
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICTS

TYPE				
Pumper	1	1	2	4
Tanker/Pumper	-	1	1	2
Rescue Pumper	1	1	-	2
Quint	1	-	1	2
Aerial Scope	-	1	-	1
Rescue Truck	-	-	1	1
Brush Truck	1	-	1	2
Spec Ops Trlr	-	-	1	1
Total	**4**	**4**	**7**	**15**

Source: Monroe Township Fire Districts

Fire Station Summary

The Monroe Township Fire Districts respond from five station facilities as outlined in the figure below:

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

SUMMARY OF FIRE DISTRICTS DATA (Continued)

Figure 2-18

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT STATIONS

Fire District No. 1

STATION	ADDRESS	YEAR BUILT	APPARATUS HOUSED
51	24 Harrison Avenue Monroe Township, NJ 08831	1950	Engine Truck
Rescue/Brush Bay Addition		2010	Rescue Brush

Fire District No. 2

57	10 Halsey Reed Road	2010	Rescue Pumper Tanker Pumper Aerial Scope
	130 Applegarth Road	1967	Supply Pumper

Fire District No. 3

23A	16 Centre Drive	Pumper Pumper Tanker Quint Special Operations Trailer
23B	359 Schoolhouse Road	Pumper Rescue Truck

Source: Monroe Township Fire District Data

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

SUMMARY OF FIRE DISTRICTS DATA (Continued)

Response Workload Analysis

The numbers of incidents occurring in the Monroe Township Fire Districts for calendar year 2010 are outlined in the figure below:

Figure 2-19
NUMBER OF INCIDENTS FOR 2010
MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICTS

DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3
459	692	797

Source: Monroe Township Police CAD Data

The above response data is maintained by the Monroe Township Police Department computer aided dispatch system. The data includes all types of emergency and non emergency incidents and events.

SUMMARY

The Monroe Township Fire Districts have a rich history of providing fire protection and related services to their respective municipal service areas, initially as all volunteer organizations and currently as volunteer and combination paid and volunteer staffed fire companies. These Fire Districts are generally organized and operated similarly, although their specific programs, rank structure, number and type of apparatus, and fire stations may differ due to governance, changing service demands and tradition. The total staffing and major capital resources of the Fire Districts include approximately 119 career and volunteer personnel, 15 pieces of apparatus and five fire station facilities.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

SUMMARY (Continued)

The Fire Districts have been participating in the mutual provision of services since their inception. The Monroe Township Police Department facilitates a central municipal dispatch system for Township public safety.

The Fire Districts provide similar types of services that include but are not limited to:

- Firefighting
- Rescue/Extrication
- EMS First Responder
- Public Safety Education
- Fire Prevention
- Code Enforcement
- Fire Investigation
- Pre-Incident Planning

Emergency Medical Services and transport are provided by Monroe Township Ambulance Service and the Monroe Township Volunteer First Aid Squad.

The Study Team was impressed with the dedication and commitment of the officials, officers and firefighters of the Fire Districts and their interest and apparent commitment to providing the best services possible to the Monroe Township.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Monroe Township and Fire Districts should take the necessary steps to plan and implement a comprehensive, standardized, computer-based records management system to facilitate training, National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), staffing, life and fire safety education, code application/enforcement and fire investigation data collection, reporting and analysis town-wide.

2.2 Fire District No. 1 should collect incident staffing data to reflect the number of members on each response unit, the number of members responding to the incident scene and the number of members at the station during the incident. The data should include the number of members in each of these categories that are qualified for interior fire fighting. The time the members responded to the scene and/or arrived at the station during the incident should be documented.

2.3 The Fire District boundaries should be realigned based on the closest station.

2.4 The Fire Districts should dispatch the closest emergency resources to each incident, based on hazard, by unit (engine, ladder, rescue, etc) rather than by Fire District. In addition to promoting the shortest response times practical, it would facilitate the use of the computer aided dispatch (CAD) capability. Use of the Township Police CAD capability would reduce response times.

2.5 The Fire Districts should explore work schedules for career personnel that more effectively consider current fiscal constraints and Fire District workload while continuing to comply with FLSA requirements.

2.6 Consider consolidating the training and fire prevention/code enforcement functions of the three Fire Districts to facilitate consistent, more efficient programs Town-wide.

CURRENT MONROE FIRE DISTRICTS

RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

2.7 Consider establishing a process whereby the standard operating guidelines for the three Fire Districts are formulated, implemented and updated consistently Town-wide.

2.8 More than 25% of emergency responses for Monroe Township involved the actuation of automatic fire protection/detection systems with no fire during 2010. The Fire Districts should immediately cause an analysis of this phenomenon to identify the problem and determine resolution options to reduce these occurrences. These responses represent significant financial expenditures and safety risks to the Fire Districts.

2.9 The Fire District No. 3 Board of Commissioners are encouraged to immediately take action to insure the provision of incident command supervision at emergency incidents emergency incidents while maintaining the unity of command of fire apparatus on emergency incidents with the lieutenants.

2.10 The Fire District No. 3 Board of Commissioners is encouraged to assign employees to the positions of Chief and Captain who respond and provide incident command supervision on Fire District emergency incidents.

CHAPTER THREE
THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

This Chapter explores and provides information on the various concepts of consolidation and applies those concepts to possible consolidation opportunities for Monroe Township fire services.

This Chapter includes discussion regarding typical opportunities for fire services consolidation; including functional. It also explores the full consolidation alternative; associated fiscal impact; efficiency and effectiveness opportunities and the impact of consolidation on personnel. The questions of what consolidation holds for personnel within the participating fire agencies and the municipality is addressed.

In addition, this Chapter addresses the impact of consolidation on those served: the taxpayers, residents and business people within the planning area. These consolidation options are presented irrespective of the various potential fire services delivery models that may be utilized or considered; fire district, fire company and or fire department. Due to differing terminology, this Chapter utilizes "fire services delivery agency" to describe the name of these various models.

The reader will note that this Report contains a separate chapter related to volunteer recruitment and retention due to the impact of volunteer staffing on the relative cost of the provision of fire services from community-based volunteer fire companies.

POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION BENEFITS

The focus of this review is to evaluate and assess opportunities for fire cooperation and consolidation in an effort to determine the potential for the following types of benefits:

1. Increased efficiency;
2. Improved effectiveness;
3. Seamless delivery of services;
4. Elimination of overlaps in positions;

THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

POTENTIAL CONSOLIDATION BENEFITS (Continued)

5. Elimination of duplicate equipment;
6. Reduced response time for units dispatched;
7. Increased opportunity for staff specialization;
8. Upgrading recruit training programs;
9. Opportunity for increased promotional selectivity;
10. Increased promotional opportunity for personnel;
11. Potential revised perspective/outlook of personnel;
12. Enhanced or expanded services;
13. Improved safety of customers and services providers;
14. Reduced costs;
15. Improved incident command coverage;
16. Improved allocation and utilization of staffing;
17. Cost avoidance;
18. Coordination of planning;
19. Standardization of services and programs;
20. Improved and more effective training;
21. Potential improve ISO rating; and,
22. Impact on future state and federal grant funding.

Broadly speaking, the primary focus of this planning effort will be to assist in identifying **what is in the best interest of the customers being served by the fire services...the taxpayers, residents, property owners and business owners/operators of Monroe Township**.

FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION

Functional consolidation involves two or more fire services delivery agencies working together to either jointly or separately perform one or more functions in a fashion that shares resources and benefits. In other words, each fire services delivery agency still remains "whole" as a separate and independent entity, while allowing for the interchangeable use of

equipment, facilities, and/or personnel throughout the organizations involved in the functional consolidation.

Functional consolidation can occur by one entity paying the other entity services. Another approach in functional consolidation occurs when one fire services delivery agency agrees to perform a specific function if the other agency performs a function in exchange.

The purpose of functional consolidation is very similar to that of full consolidation:

1. Reduce duplication and redundancy;
2. Reduce the cost of providing services; and,
3. Improve levels of service without associated increased expenditures of tax funds.

Another reason why fire services delivery agencies and/or municipalities pursue functional consolidation is to take advantage of another fire services delivery agency's strengths, especially when one agency can provide certain services or perform certain functions that another may not, for fiscal or other reasons.

The remainder of this section reviews the various types of functional consolidation that has been implemented in one form or another in a number of other fire services delivery agencies throughout the United States.

Common Dispatching

The communications and dispatch function offers obvious opportunities for consolidation on the part of two or more fire services delivery agencies and/or police departments. The dispatch function offers tremendous consolidation opportunities.

There is much work to be performed in creating consolidated communications and dispatch functions, as well as barriers to be eliminated. However, a large number of multiple fire

services delivery agencies and/or police departments function daily across the country at a significantly reduced cost through consolidated dispatching.

For a number of years, public safety agencies (police, fire and emergency medical) have been served by a consolidated communications and dispatch center and thereby gained significant benefits and lead the way in this type of consolidation in the New Jersey. The Study Team has assessed a number of municipal emergency dispatch centers in the State with separate police and fire dispatch operations that incur increased cost of operations due to the separate approach. Consolidated or regional emergency dispatch centers have proven to be more cost effective when properly staffed and equipped.

Hazardous Materials Service Provision

The functional consolidation of specialty services can provide mutual benefits for fire services delivery agencies working together. Several of the special services which could be involved are:

- Hazmat team coverage;
- Underwater rescue team coverage;
- Building collapse/underground rescue team coverage;
- Personnel/manpower squads; and,
- Technical/heavy duty rescue.

The participating fire services delivery agencies involved with the planning Study receive hazmat services from the Middlesex County Hazmat Unit under County and State-wide program. This is an excellent example of the type of functional consolidation that is mutually beneficial.

Many such services can be performed by various fire services delivery agencies and coalitions on a region-wide basis for the mutual benefit of all of the consolidated fire services delivery agencies involved. It would be cost-prohibitive and impractical for every fire services delivery agency to be self-sufficient in all these types of specialty services areas.

THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION (Continued)

Fire Prevention Functions

For all jurisdictions, the building inspection and code enforcement responsibilities consume a great deal of time and are very technical, functional areas. Although operating under the same State of New Jersey codes, the various fire services delivery agencies perform these functions in different ways. In addition, where code interpretation is necessary, codes can easily be interpreted differently from one area of the municipality to the other.

Combining the fire prevention function resource commitments improves the level of service through consistent levels of service. Similar approaches are taken to the inspection of buildings as interpretation of State codes is applied.

Provision of Incident Command

It is essential that command-level coverage provided for the fire services delivery agencies on a 24-hour per day basis. A major function that is essential to the success of every emergency incident is command supervision. This presence assures that all apparatus and personnel perform their functions and carry out the necessary tactics and strategy. Without command supervision to assure coordination and communication, potential safety issues develop. Command coverage does not have to stop at jurisdictional boundaries.

The concepts of command should be similar from one agency to another; therefore, functional consolidation in terms of development of shared, scheduled command duty is mutually beneficial to fire services delivery agencies. It can reduce the number of command officers necessary to perform the function. It can reduce the stress on current command officers and the number of hours that they are required to work because of an inadequate number of command officers in the fire services delivery agency. Moreover, gaps in command coverage (day, night, weekend) can be covered by command officer/s from an adjacent agency who may be on-duty or on-call.

THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION (Continued)

Standard Incident Operating Procedures

A large number of emergency incident operating procedures are essential to the efficiency and effectiveness of fire crews particularly during emergencies. It is important to maintain a standard approach adopted for the various types of procedures to assure cohesive performance. These types of procedures exist in many fire services delivery agencies. If firefighters from different fire services delivery agencies are expected to work together successfully, they need to be following the same operating procedures in order to assure optimum success.

Mutually adopting the same incident operating procedures is as simple as working together toward their development and implementation. Subsequent to adoption, the procedures should be included in the departments' in-service training programs to assure that all personnel are fully aware of, and follow, the adopted procedures.

Apparatus Dispatch Assignments

Apparatus assignment refers to the number and type of apparatus dispatched on various types of incidents. Adopting the same apparatus assignments among multiple fire services delivery agencies goes hand-in-hand with the adoption of incident operating procedures and being dispatched by the same communications center.

Incident operating procedures are often based on a certain expectation regarding the number and type of apparatus to respond on specific types of incidents. With the consolidation of incident operating procedures the apparatus assignments should also be consistent.

Availability of Reserve Apparatus

Every fire services delivery agency needs available apparatus to back up its primary units. However, the tendency is for fire services delivery agencies to view their reserve apparatus within the confines of their jurisdictional boundaries. The end result is, when viewed

collectively, more apparatus is being maintained in reserve than would otherwise be necessary if the fire services delivery agencies planned and used reserve apparatus in a joint fashion.

Fire apparatus is very expensive in terms of maintenance, upkeep and replacement. The deletion of one unit can present significant short-and long-term savings. In addition, there is less apparatus to clean and maintain in a workable condition by on-duty firefighters.

Apparatus Type

The primary types of apparatus suggested for functional consolidation in this section are pumpers and trucks. The Study Team noted during its review of the available apparatus, both in the departments involved in the Study as well as surrounding fire services delivery agencies, that each department attempts to have a full complement of apparatus types. In other words, fire services delivery agencies have both one or more pumpers and one or more trucks in their effort to provide a total cross-section of services within their own geographic boundaries.

Each of these units provides a specific type of service. That service can be provided equally well from a neighboring agency. Therefore, functional consolidation of types of apparatus would require fire services delivery agencies to review the types of apparatus needed and determine which units are required at every station and which ones can be provided from selected stations based on the agreed joint planning effort.

Major savings can be attained, both in terms of apparatus maintenance, upkeep and replacement as well as staffing with this type of joint planning effort. It should be noted that functional consolidation in the type of apparatus operated from different stations is supported by implementing dual response-type mutual aid, adopting standard apparatus assignment and incident operating procedures.

THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

FUNCTIONAL CONSOLIDATION (Continued)

Cooperative Provision of Training

Many fire services delivery agencies have one or more personnel assigned, either on a collateral duty basis or a full-time basis, to the training function. Training activities are generally not dissimilar; however, if not coordinated in terms of the performance of joint training activities on a regular basis, the implementation of inconsistent training programs are more likely to occur.

The development and delivery of a training program is very expensive. A significant amount of time, effort and funding are required to deliver quality training. Developing and delivering training to a large number of personnel provides opportunities for cost efficiency.

With collective consolidation training functions the same or a better level of service can be provided to each jurisdiction on a more cooperative basis. It is through concentration of training staff resources that a higher level of training of officers becomes possible.

Pre-Fire Plan Development and Use

Progressive fire services delivery agencies develop detailed information regarding the design, construction and contents of target fire hazards within their area of responsibility. These pre-fire plans become the basis for resource allocation and fire attack decisions on major incidents. The consolidation of this function amongst several fire services delivery agencies insures that this information is readily available to all responding fire unit. The end result is improved operations and safety.

Fire Safety Education

As with the training function, fire safety education is more effective when it is performed consistently on a larger geographic basis. In other words, multiple fire services delivery agencies would not be competing for the same media coverage or for public attention. Fire safety education programs are more successful if they are conducted in a planned large

geographic area with the same message delivered in a concentrated manner over a certain period of time.

Consolidation of this function among adjoining fire services delivery agencies, with a focus on what messages will be delivered during specific times of the year, would have a stronger impact on the public. In addition, funds expended on public education media (such as slide/tape programs, movies, etc.) could have wider use, alleviating the need for two or more of the fire services delivery agencies to purchase the same fire safety education materials. Duplication and repetition are expensive practices in local governments.

Joint Purchasing in Quantity

It is a proven fact that items purchased in quantity offer potential savings. All fire services delivery agencies purchase similar items such as station maintenance materials, clothing and uniforms, protective clothing, office supplies, and other essential items. Fire services delivery agencies may attain significant savings through cooperative purchasing in quantity.

FULL FIRE SERVICES DELIVERY AGENCY CONSOLIDATION

The difference between functional consolidation and full consolidation is that full consolidation results in the formation of a single fire services delivery agency organization. Creating one fully consolidated fire services delivery agency would bring about the following:

- One fire services delivery agency;
- One employer;
- One set of rules and regulations and/or standard operating procedures;
- One personnel management system;
- One union contract;
- One integrated chain-of-command; and,
- One work schedule.

THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

FULL FIRE SERVICES DELIVERY AGENCY CONSOLIDATION (Continued)

Fiscal Impact - Savings

In general, the potential for fiscal savings from consolidation is very high. The primary areas for savings involve the allocation of stations, personnel and apparatus. Other chapters of this Report address the possible results of consolidation in these areas. A summary of areas for potential savings is as follows:

- Reduction in annual operation and maintenance costs of duplicate fire stations;
- Reduction in duplicate apparatus replacement costs;
- Reduction in annual apparatus operating and maintenance expense;
- Increase in revenue from sale of excess apparatus; and,
- Reduction in annual salaries and wages for duplicate personnel.

Another aspect of fiscal impact is the ability to utilize personnel on a broader basis. The cross-use of personnel by having the ability to detail firefighters and officers from one station to another on a day-to-day basis provides for more consistent apparatus staffing levels and potential for reduced overtime costs.

At the present time, the participating fire services delivery agencies must negotiate a total of three labor contracts on a periodic basis. Negotiating labor contracts is expensive, particularly if any aspects of those negotiations become litigated. The Study Team is not in a position to estimate the cost savings by reducing the number of contracts to be negotiated. However, based on informal discussions, measurable cost savings are likely be attained in this area.

FIRE SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BENEFITS

The national experience regarding fire services delivery agency consolidation indicates that major improvements in service to the public, or internal efficiencies that indirectly have a positive impact on the public, may be attained. Several key improvements typically include:

THE CONCEPT OF CONSOLIDATION

FIRE SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BENEFITS (continued)

1. Improved fireground command and control communication;
2. Improved fireground operations by following the same standard operating procedures and working together as a team;
3. Reduced apparatus maintenance and upkeep required on the part of on-duty firefighters;
4. Reduced response times of apparatus, thus providing improved emergency service to incident scenes by dispatching the closest unit via mutual aid;
5. Improved customer and firefighter safety; and,
6. Improved dispatch function through improved incident command and control.

SUMMARY

In reviewing the concept of consolidation, as applied to the participating Monroe Township, it is clear that many important steps have already been taken by the participating fire services delivery agencies involving functional consolidation in the areas of mutual aid, dispatch, standard operating procedures and apparatus assignments. A number of significant benefits have been attained. These have been advantages available both to the firefighting personnel, as well as management.

The Township and participating Fire Districts have been considering various forms of fire and rescue services consolidation. Based on the national experience and that of the Study Team, it is clear that there are significant service improvement benefits, cost reduction and avoidance opportunities that would benefit the taxpayers of Monroe Township.

CHAPTER FOUR
MONROE FIRE SERVICES
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

This Chapter discusses volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention program information, associated options and recommendations for consideration by Monroe Township and its fire companies and Fire Districts.

The reader should note that, in terms of fire services delivery staffing, the three Monroe Township fire services delivery agencies currently operate as three separate and distinct models; all- volunteer (Fire District No. 1), combination paid/volunteer (Fire District No. 2) and all-paid (Fire District No. 3). The PSSi Study Team understands that at one time in the past all fire services in Monroe Township were provided by all-volunteer fire personnel.

It is also understood that in recent years the staffing is becoming increasingly paid. This change in fire staffing has been having a clear impact on the relative cost of delivery of fire services. The result is a substantial variance in the relative cost of fire services provision in each Monroe Fire District with the all-volunteer Fire District No. 1 cost to taxpayers being the least costly and the all-paid staffing model utilized by District No. 3 being the most costly.

The PSSi Study Team is aware of the impact of this cost variance and understands the need to consider the volunteer aspect of fire services consolidation. This Chapter is included in this Monroe Township Fire District Consolidation Study in an effort to encourage and enhance the volunteer fire personnel staffing component due to the recognition that volunteer staffing is essential to providing cost-effective fire services.

OVERVIEW

The Study Team's experiences in volunteer fire service reflect various approaches, reasons for volunteer participation, and explains some opinions of volunteer service constraints and benefits.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

OVERVIEW (Continued)

Nationally, some volunteer fire companies seem to have a continual supply of individuals who want to volunteer their services. Others, however, have problems trying to recruit enough volunteers to maintain minimal staffing of units and subsequently may have difficulty retaining those members and developing qualified volunteer leaders. The key seems to be meeting the needs or expectations of the volunteers, which differ in many respects from paid personnel.

When an individual becomes a paid firefighter, his/her initial concerns appear to be material needs such as salaries, benefits and financial security, in addition to their desire to serve the public. The issue of why people volunteer their services has been raised to the Study Team. Therefore, a review of accepted principles of motivation may prove helpful. As Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" states, five levels of need motivate individuals. In order of highest to lowest, these needs are:

1. Physiological needs such as food, water and shelter.
2. Safety needs such as security, order and stability.
3. A sense of belonging, involving friendship, identification and love.
4. Esteem involving prestige, success and self respect.
5. Self actualization needs which involve psychological needs from within.

Maslow said that people must meet their first need before proceeding to meet the second need. Regular employment (in some cases, through a second job) usually satisfies the first need.

As employment and salary also provide for the safety and security needs, individuals move to the third level, which involves the need for a sense of belonging. Volunteering to provide some level of community services may satisfy this need. This pool of people usually provides the volunteers available for fire fighting services.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

STAFFING OPTIONS

The Study Team has been asked about career staffing, volunteer staffing and combined staffing. To provide the reader with information on which to base opinions, the following information may be useful. Conceptually, there appears to be three basic alternatives for staffing fire units in Monroe Township by the Fire Districts. These are:

A. All paid staffing;
B. Combination of career and volunteer personnel; and,
C. All volunteer staffing.

Option A - Provide all paid staffing of fire and rescue units.

If all of the Fire Districts were to become fully paid, it would conservatively entail fully staffing four pumpers, two ladder trucks and at least one command officers. This staffing level would need to be maintained 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To staff one position on a 24-hour basis and allow time off for training, vacations and sick leave and on-the-job injuries requires more than five employees per constant staffed position on each unit.

The significant advantage of an all-paid system is that there would be adequate personnel available at all times to immediately respond to an emergency. In addition, because they are available in the station, training could be conducted on a continuing basis. Pre-planning could also be completed. Officers would be available at all times to supervise the on-duty personnel.

There are two disadvantages to this paid system: First, and the most obvious, is the cost of providing fire services. Secondly, it would most likely eliminate volunteer involvement in the system. Since Monroe Township volunteers have reportedly provided excellent service, the disadvantages are even more compelling.

This all-paid staffing model is utilized by Monroe Fire District No. 3.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Option B - Combination of paid and volunteer staffing of units.

Under this alternative, some paid firefighting personnel would be placed in the fire stations to ensure that there is a rapid initial response to calls, with the volunteers supplying the additional personnel to handle the incident. To ensure continuity of supervision, career officers could be assigned; they would ensure that all station work is performed, the career personnel training, complete pre-planning is completed, discipline is enforced, and career personnel conduct the required building inspections.

The advantages of this alternative are:

1. Some savings - allows for maintaining part of the major cost savings since volunteers are utilized;
2. Ensures a rapid response for some of the emergency fire apparatus;
3. Allows the career personnel to handle small incidents without having to call out the volunteers; and,
4. Allows the career personnel to do the pre-planning and then train the volunteers.

The disadvantages of this alternative are:

1. More costly than an all volunteer approach;
2. No assurance that volunteers would be available at any given time to provide minimum staffing;
3. Potential conflict between paid and volunteer personnel in the station; and,
4. A possible reduction in volunteers responding because they feel the career personnel will handle it.

Based on the experience of other similar jurisdictions, including a number in New Jersey, this alternative can realistically work in Monroe Township.

This combination paid/volunteer staffing model is currently utilized by Monroe Fire District No. 2.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

STAFFING OPTIONS (Continued)

Option C - Provide fire protection with an all-volunteer approach

This alternative provides fire protection using only volunteers. Sometimes there will be volunteers in the stations when a call is received and the initial apparatus will respond quickly. At other times, firefighters would respond from home or work to staff the apparatus and take the apparatus to the scene of the emergency. And other times, particularly during weekday daytime hours, the apparatus may not immediately respond, may respond without adequate staff or, in extreme cases, not respond.

The advantage of this alternative is that the costs are maintained at a very low level and the volunteers maintain their interest in continuing to provide service. Further, there is community involvement in the provision of fire service delivery in Monroe Township.

Under this alternative, however, there can be a major disadvantage: the potential inability to rapidly respond to a call. The citizens of the community have no assurance that there will always be a rapid response to a call for help or that sufficient equipment to handle the incident will actually respond.

Monroe Township fire company volunteer personnel at Fire District No. 1 seemed to be unanimous in their statements to the Study Team during interviews that there is no need for paid staffing at this time, and that the all-volunteer staffing approach is the best and most realistic staffing approach in the foreseeable future. It is important to recognize that a late response or no response to an emergency situation could result in an action of liability (negligence) against the Fire District and/or Monroe Township.

In summary, **the citizens of Monroe Township are reaping major substantial benefits from the all volunteer fire services system in Fire District No. 1. To provide the same level of service with full-time paid personnel in the fire station providing the response of three fully paid-staffed units (engine, ladder and command officer) would require at least $2.7 million each fiscal year for personnel wages at an average annual salary of**

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

$60,000 (not including benefits) per employee on the 24X72 hour schedule as is currently used in Fire District No. 2 and No. 3.

Monroe Township taxpayers and Township and Fire District officials should consider these staffing model options and determine which is most appropriate. The following sections of this Chapter are provided as a potential basis for efforts to maintain and strengthen the volunteer component of the fire services delivery in Monroe Township.

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Each volunteer for the fire service serves as an ambassador who can encourage individuals to apply for membership. While the incentives listed in this section play a very important role, personal recruitment by the current members remains vital to the continued success of the volunteer program.

A number of the ways many towns and cities with volunteer fire companies recruit new volunteers include:

1. Word of mouth;
2. Family tradition;
3. Interest after having been a customer of the fire service;
4. Distribution of brochures;
5. Area-wide poster placement in businesses, etc.;
6. Door to door neighborhood recruitment;
7. Public education classes open to the public;
8. Television public service announcements;
9. Public service announcements by radio; and,
10. Speakers sent to community group meetings and high schools.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

Current Recruitment Efforts

The Study Team observed that Monroe Township fire companies and Fire Districts do not coordinate their volunteer recruitment process. It appears that "word of mouth" serves as the primary means by which the fire company and Fire District recruit prospective volunteer members.

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Clearly, the management of fire services personnel resources is a critical task, since human resources generally determine the quality of fire services delivered to the public. Volunteers, a primary fire staffing resource, at times may not respond to fire calls for a variety of reasons, including: working and being away from the area; vacation; sickness; injury; other priorities and time commitments; and time away for training. Much time and effort is committed to providing training and experience to volunteer personnel. Retaining trained and experienced personnel is more cost effective than constantly training new volunteers. Trained and experienced personnel provide better service. Thus, retention of volunteers assumes critical significance.

The first four years of membership stand as a critical time period for efforts to retain volunteers: "if a new member completes the first four years, he/she will most probably remain for many years." Volunteer programs aimed at retaining members during their first four years of membership should become a priority.

Based upon interviews with volunteer personnel and Fire District leadership in Monroe, it seems that a significant consistency has grown in the volunteer membership. Volunteers grow up or move into Monroe, like the community and remain. In the Study Team's experience, this is a highly unusual situation. **Monroe and its Fire Districts are fortunate in having this occur, since the result seems to be a very low turnover rate among**

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

volunteer members. Asked their reasons for remaining volunteers, volunteers responded accordingly:

1. Pride in the organization;
2. Once you get a taste of it, you want to continue;
3. Continuing need to help the public;
4. Friendships;
5. Great personal satisfaction;
6. Physical activity; and,
7. To continue involvement is an enjoyable activity for those who may also be career firefighters or law enforcement officers in other jurisdictions.

Fire District leaders also advised the Study Team that a limited effort has been made in the past to develop programs directly aimed at the retention of volunteer fire personnel. The overall philosophy of the leadership of the Fire Districts and the fire companies has not always been consistent with a recognition of the importance volunteer retention approach. Camaraderie and participation in serving the community, particularly at the company level, appear to be important.

No official program focused on the retention of volunteer fire members presently exists. The retention programs for volunteer fire personnel should be broad-based as the Fire Districts may end up competing against other outside interests for a very limited and valuable human resource.

Although the leadership of the Township applaud the outstanding services of the volunteer fire personnel, few incentives exist to retain volunteers. Other than for the Length Of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) and clothing replacement, funds are not currently earmarked to assist in the recruitment or retention process.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

There are many very successful volunteer fire services throughout the U.S. The basis for their success varies significantly. However, the Study Team has noted that the more successful systems expend a considerable effort to retain their volunteer personnel. The more successful volunteer systems expend significant efforts in recognizing their volunteers and their efforts.

Although a number of incentives in other communities do not apply to Monroe, the various benefits reflect a community's commitment to recruiting and maintaining volunteers. Several of the programs successful in helping to retain volunteers in other municipalities include:

1. Comprehensive awards program;
2. Social events, such as banquets and dinners;
3. Education tuition assistance programs;
4. Workers Compensation coverage;
5. Length of Service Awards Programs (LOSAP);
6. Free training and experience for career preparation in fire related areas;
7. Free passes or tickets to community activities;
8. Physical fitness facilities and equipment;
9. Insurance coverage, including medical, dental and life insurance;
10. Various compensation programs, including:
    a. Out of pocket expenses:
       Fuel
       Clothing
       Education and training materials
       Meals
    b. Hourly rate of pay - "paid on call" volunteers
11. Uniforms, clothing with the department's logo and individual tools, such as flash lights.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

Recruitment and retention of volunteers is of prime importance to the continuation of the volunteer fire service in Monroe. Therefore, the Township, the volunteer fire companies and their respective Fire Districts should work together to develop and implement programs that maintain a high degree of volunteerism in the Fire Districts.

Current Retention Efforts

The Fire Districts, fire companies and the Township have initiated various efforts that impact the retention of volunteer members. These efforts have included:

1. Annual recognition meals;
2. Provision of clothing replacement funds;
3. Length of Service Awards Program; and,
4. Providing training.

Most of these initiatives have been accomplished on an ad hoc basis and not as part of a comprehensive Township funded and implemented volunteer firefighter retention program.

Fire District No. 3

As previously stated, although Fire District No. 3 originally was reportedly, all-volunteer staffed, today, the original Central Monroe Volunteer Fire Company no longer exists and fire services are provided by all-paid crews from Fire District No. 3. It should be noted, that the PSSi Study team encourages Fire District No. 3 to take aggressive action to regenerate volunteer staffing in order to be a combination paid/volunteer -staffed Fire District, as is Fire District No. 2.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

New Jersey Volunteer Programs

Municipalities and the firefighters, volunteer and paid, in the State of New Jersey benefit from a number of State programs implemented ultimately to support volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention.

Relief Funds

State Law requires that a two (2) percent levy on all fire insurance premiums written by insurance companies chartered outside New Jersey be paid annually by these insurance companies and distributed to provide relief, support and burial benefits to the firefighting members and their families. These funds are paid to the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) which in turn distributes the funds as required by law.

The New Jersey State Firemen's Association controls and supervises the expenditure and/or distribution of these funds which provide a number of primary firefighter benefits, including:

1. New Jersey State Firemen's Home: A convalescent/retirement home for eligible firefighters.

2. Survivor benefits: reportedly no one-time State death benefit is currently available.

3. Accidental death benefits: payable as outlined in State Law 43:16A-10.

4. Local firefighter relief/aid: Funds paid to needy/destitute firefighters through the local relief association.

Volunteer and paid firefighters must meet certain initial membership and ongoing activity requirements in order to qualify for these benefits.

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

Tuition-Free Education

During the 1998 legislative session, the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey enacted a program of tuition assistance for active members and their spouses and children. Active members of a volunteer fire company or first aid squad, and their spouse and children, may now enroll in a post-secondary program on a tuition-free basis in a county college, vocational school or technical institute and receive tuition credit in an amount not to exceed a maximum of $2,400 for the member, children and spouse.

To be eligible to receive this tuition credit the active member must agree to serve as a member of his/her fire department or first aid squad for a minimum of four years. The member must sign an agreement to that effect with the municipality in exchange for the tuition credit. **This State-funded tuition assistance program appears to be a significant volunteer firefighter retention program that could be of significant benefit to the retention of volunteers in Monroe.** Every effort should be made to encourage volunteers in Monroe to take advantage of this valuable program.

Length of Service Benefit Program

Many jurisdictions in the U.S. with volunteer fire systems have established a Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) for the volunteer fire service personnel. This program has a proven track record of improving volunteer recruitment and retention. The program provides certain benefits to volunteers who have met minimum calendar year service requirements for a set number of years. In other words, it is a type of volunteer retirement type benefit program.

A number of programs established in other jurisdictions involve differing levels of program requirements. One type of LOSAP program maintains a defined level of service activity per month or year. **The State should be commended for its implementation of a volunteer**

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

firefighter length of service awards program. This program likely contributes to the low turnover rate in the volunteer ranks at Monroe Fire District No. 1.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

During interviews with the Study Team, a number of the volunteer leaders and members expressed the concern that the general public in Monroe may not have a full awareness of the volunteer nature and organization of the volunteer fire company. Many of the residents of the Township may have moved from other counties/municipalities to this area and still believe that a paid fire department primarily serves them.

Most citizens know they have a local fire station but some may believe career personnel fully staff it. The Study Team has noted that this lack of understanding increases in a bedroom community, where a number of people commute to New York City and the City of Philadelphia and neighboring cities.

The Study Team was advised that local newspapers have provided some coverage of volunteer fire service activities, but sporadically and primarily related to specific incidents or negative issues.

There appears to be a need to educate further the Monroe citizens and business people regarding the programs and volunteer composition of the Fire Districts.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN

The fire companies and Fire Districts are encouraged to develop recommendations for a comprehensive volunteer recruitment and retention program for consideration by the Township. In developing such a program, the fire companies and Fire Districts should consider the program ideas presented in this Chapter, as well as its previous Monroe

experience to ensure that the program recommendations are both meaningful to the volunteers and focused on the comprehensive needs in Monroe Township.

Any volunteer recruitment and retention program recommendations made to the Township should include a delineation of appropriate funding requirements. The Fire Districts and Township are encouraged to approve the funding necessary to plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive volunteer recruitment and retention program.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

A national trend in the more successful volunteer fire organizations lies in the appointment of a volunteer coordinator to serve as a focal point of an aggressive volunteer recruitment and retention program. The investment in such a position provides significant long-term benefits in the recruitment and retention of volunteer personnel.

The Township and the fire companies and Fire Districts should consider assigning this critical function to a senior officer in the VFD who could focus on the development and implementation of Monroe volunteer fire personnel recruitment and retention programs.

TOWNSHIP AND FIRE DISTRICT SUPPORT

The Study Team believes the Township of Monroe clearly supports the continuation of fire service through appropriate level of volunteer and paid staffing. During the interview process, some volunteer members of the fire companies expressed reservations regarding the extent to which Fire District and Township leadership supported the volunteers and their efforts.

The Study Team suggests, therefore, that the Township and Fire Districts "go on record" explicitly supporting the current strong reliance on volunteer staffing. This would also serve to highlight the volunteer component of the fire service to the public.

RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS (Continued)

The Fire Districts and Township are encouraged to consider a formalized policy of support for the continuation of volunteer participation in the fire service. A suggested wording is as follows:

> "The Township/Fire District affirms their intent to continue maximum utilization of volunteers to deliver fire service to the citizens of Monroe. In recognizing these critical services, the Township supports and encourages the activities of volunteer firefighters."

In terms of the future of the provision of fire service to the Township, such a statement of policy would solidify the future role of volunteers in the provision of these critical public safety services and assist the fire companies and Fire Districts in the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Township Employee Participation

The Study Team noted that a number of Township employees participate as volunteer firefighters with the fire companies. Active involvement by municipal employees in volunteer fire companies can strengthen service provision and volunteer recruitment and retention of the fire department. The Township is encouraged to continue this policy and enhance municipal employee involvement by encouraging participation, particularly during daytime hours.

SUMMARY

Currently, the fire and rescue service provided by the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company for Fire District No. 1 seems to be provided by a strong component of volunteer staff. Further, the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company for Fire District No. 2 is working hard to enhance their level of operational activity. **This staffing approach appears to have provided a very cost effective service in the past.** The viability of this volunteer staffing

approach in the future will, to a large extent, depend on the level of effort placed on volunteer recruitment and retention by the Township, the volunteer fire companies and the Fire Districts.

Fire District No. 3 is encouraged to re-establish the Central Volunteer Fire Company and conduct aggressive volunteer recruitment and retention to reduce the significantly increasing cost of fire services provision.

Recruitment of volunteers for the fire service has been accomplished primarily by 'word of mouth' with periodic advertising in the newspaper. Additionally, the fire companies and Fire Districts have implemented a limited number of ad hoc retention efforts, including annual meals, clothing replacement for personnel and training.

Nationally, a number of very successful volunteer recruitment and retention programs in local governments continue to assist in providing the essential volunteer personnel for the provision of their fire service. This Chapter outlines a number of recruitment and retention options for consideration by the Township, the volunteer fire companies and the Fire Districts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Fire Districts and Township is encouraged to place, regularly articles in local newspapers regarding activities of the Monroe volunteer fire services.

4.2 The volunteer fire companies are encouraged to:

A. Develop a standard exit interview form to be completed by volunteer personnel dropping out of their program; and,

B. Collate exit interview information and analyze for trends and work to establish a program to reduce attrition.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

4.3 The Fire Districts and Township is encouraged to consider a formalized policy of support for the continuation of volunteer participation in the Monroe fire services.

A suggested wording is as follows:

"The Township affirms their intent to continue maximum utilization of volunteers to deliver fire service to the citizens of Monroe. In recognizing these critical services, the Township supports and encourages all of the activities of volunteers."

4.4 Every effort should be made to encourage fire volunteers in Monroe to take advantage of the State-funded tuition assistance program.

4.5 A comprehensive volunteer recruitment and retention program should be developed in Monroe. Appropriately funded, the program should include:

A. Initiate recommendations for volunteer retention programs based on input received from the exit interview or forms;

B. Develop a budget recommendation for the recruitment and retention programs;

C. Initiate recommendations for volunteer recruitment programs, such as possible medical and dental care;

D. Develop a volunteer handbook to be given to prospective members of the fire companies, explaining the benefits and requirements of becoming a volunteer; and,

E. Focus volunteer programs toward retention of members during their first four years of membership.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

4.6 The Township and Fire Districts are encouraged to financially support the volunteer recruitment and retention efforts in Monroe through annual budgetary funding.

47 The chiefs of the volunteer fire companies and Fire Districts should consider establishing official mentor programs for new operational members of their fire services delivery agencies.

4.8 The Township and the fire companies and Fire Districts are encouraged to assign the important function of organization-wide volunteer recruitment and retention to a senior chief officer.

4.9 The Township is encouraged to continue the Township employee volunteer participation policy and enhance municipal employee involvement by encouraging participation, particularly during daytime hours.

4.10 Fire District No. 1 is encouraged to continue to fully support the efforts of the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Company in its effort to maintain and increase the number and training levels of the volunteer members.

4.11 Fire District No. 2 is encouraged to fully support the efforts of the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company in its effort to maintain and increase the number and training levels of the volunteer members to work in a full team effort with the Fire District No. 2 paid staff.

4.12 Fire District No. 3 is encouraged to plan and implement an aggressive program to implement volunteer staffing to work in a full team effort with the Fire District No. 3 paid staff.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

4.13 For the most cost effective delivery of fire services, the Township, current Fire Districts and taxpayers/voters are encouraged to make every effort to maintain a strong volunteer component in the staffing of fire services delivery in Monroe Township.

CHAPTER FIVE
MONROE FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

This Chapter reviews general concepts for fire services station location planning and provides a risk analysis specific to Monroe Township, a review of response times, an overview of the Study Team's approach to developing fire station location recommendations. This approach includes Insurance Services Office (ISO) criteria, NFPA criteria, current fire station facilities, and options and recommendations for current and future fire stations in Monroe Township.

Further, a "clean slate" analysis is presented that describes potential fire station locations This analysis is an "if no fire stations currently existed" where there is the need for the placement of fire stations, given current development.

FIRE STATION LOCATION STANDARDS & CRITERIA

There are a number of criteria utilized in considering the location of fire stations.

CFAI Fixed Facilities Criteria

As part of this Monroe Township planning effort the Study Team considered criteria from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) as the fire facilities were assessed.

The CFAI accreditation criteria related to fire department fixed facilities are as follows:

> Fixed facility resources are designed, maintained, managed and adequate to meet the agency's goals and objectives.

1. Space allocations are adequate for agency functions such as operations, fire prevention, training, support services and administration.
2. Buildings and grounds are clean and in good repair. Maintenance is conducted in a systematic and planned fashion.

FIRE STATION LOCATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA (Continued)

3. Physical facilities are adequate and properly distributed in accordance with stated service level objectives and standards of cover.
4. Facilities are in compliance with federal, state and local regulations.

NFPA 1710 Standard

There are a number of applicable NFPA standards and related practices important to fire officials nationwide that include response time considerations.

NFPA 1710 is an industry standard that serves as a benchmark for the fire department organization and deployment of services offered by firefighters. It is the standard for paid fire protection services. NFPA 1720 is the standard for combination volunteer/paid and volunteer fire departments that describes the requirements for delivery of services, response capabilities, incident management, and strategy.

NFPA 1710 includes the following benchmarks related to call receipt and processing time, turnout time, and response (travel) time:

1. Turnout time of one minute on fire suppression and EMS calls; and,
2. The fire department's fire suppression resources deployed to provide for the arrival of an engine company within a four-minute response time and/or the initial full alarm assignment within an eight-minute response time for 90 percent of the incidents.

It should be noted that the various standards and criteria discussed in previous sections place a high priority on both the effective delivery of fire and EMS service and the protection of life and property. Moreover, the safety of the firefighters and officers delivering the services and the safety of the customer and stakeholder were important considerations to the development of these standards and criteria and to their application for Monroe Township by the Study Team.

FIRE STATION LOCATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA (Continued)

Fire-based Response Time Goal

The time from ignition until water is applied to a fire should be no longer than the six to nine minutes it takes for flashover to occur with a free-burning fire. Flashover is defined as essentially the instant burning of an explosive mixture of heated air, smoke and gases which flashes back through openings around the fire area, such as doors and windows. This does not consider a smoldering fire, which can burn for hours before breaking out into the free-burning stage.

Flashover is a critical stage of fire growth for two reasons. First, no living thing in the room of origin will survive, so the chances of saving lives drops dramatically. Second, flashover creates a quantum jump in the rate of combustion, and a significantly greater amount of water is needed to reduce the burning material below its ignition temperature.

A fire that has reached flashover means it is generally too late to save anyone in the room of origin, and substantially more staffing is required to handle the larger hose streams needed to extinguish the fire. A post-flashover fire burns hotter and moves faster, compounding the search and rescue problems to the remainder of the structure. At the same time more firefighters are needed for fire attack and the chance of injury to firefighters increases.

For these reasons, it is critical that fire suppression forces reach a fire structure and initiate effective suppression efforts prior to flashover.

FIRE STATION LOCATION DETERMINATION

The following sections relate to methodologies for the determination of fire station locations.

Overview

The location of the fire stations from which fire service is provided is a key element in the level of fire protection and rescue service provided by local governments. The decision to

locate a new fire or rescue station or relocate an existing station has many components other than just its siting. These include:

A. Cost of the facility and equipment;
B. Apparatus;
C. Staffing;
D. Impact on levels of service/s;
E. Annual operating costs; and,
F. Public reaction and support.

There is no magic formula for determining the location of fire stations in a community. While computerized programs can assist officials in these important decisions, the final determinations of many combined factors require human-based consideration.

Computerized Fire Station Locator System

In the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) NFPA Fire Protection Handbook, one chapter entitled "Fire Department Facilities and Fire Training Facilities" notes a general trend in fire station planning. The authors, Emmanuel Mesagna and John Baroni relate:

> "Over the past decade, fire station planning for location and design has become increasingly sophisticated and complex. With the use of computer programs and computer model studies, travel time analysis and fire station site evaluation has allowed the fire service to become more precise in its decision-making procedures."

The Study Team utilizes a computer model for purposes of conducting fire station location analysis. This Section describes the methods typically used for this analysis.

The Study Team's computerized fire station locator system is a geo-based planning tool that calculates and displays street network data. The street data to include all the information necessary to perform fire station location studies resides in tables . This street data is similar

to the database typically used in Geographic Information System (GIS) for analysis and computer aided dispatch systems used for the dispatch of police, fire, and EMS units. The latitude/longitude coordinate system used is accurate to one millionth of a degree.

Fire stations and other points of interest are added to the database by entering an address or pointing to a location on a map. The travel possibilities are calculated from each fire station and every street block in the study area. The number and type of apparatus in each fire station are noted and the travel time for the first, second and third arriving fire apparatus is calculated.

Using this computer program, a travel time analysis typically involves every street in the service area being studied. Average travel time, total miles of roadway, average travel speed and "first in" response areas are generally developed for each fire station with color maps illustrating those areas. In addition, fire station location alternatives are modeled where appropriate. Data and maps developed as part of this modeling analysis are typically included by the Study Team to support the conclusions and recommendations of fire station location studies conducted.

It should be noted that all response area maps and charts generated by this program are based on travel time as projected by the Study Team's computer program. The travel times calculated by the program are based on the following:

1. An estimated 45 seconds for turnout time for each of the fire stations;
2. A 15-second intersection turn delay for each intersection in the response route;
3. Street segment speeds are set from 25 to 55 miles per hour, in 5 mile per hour increments. For example, interstate highways are set at 55 miles per hour, while a street segment 300 feet long would be set at 25 miles per hour.

Based on these criteria, the computer program calculates response paths from the fire station sites entered in the computer to every street location. The program then projects each fire

station's response area and calculates average apparatus travel time, average travel speed and total miles of streets in each fire station travel time-projected response area.

MAXIMUM TOTAL RESPONSE TIME

A key consideration in determining a fire station location for fire-related services is the maximum acceptable total response time. This section discusses fire response time concepts and components.

Fire-Related Response Time

One of the primary criteria used in determining adequate response time (and thus the location of a fire station) is the time from ignition to flashover (simultaneous ignition of all combustibles), at which time the spread of the fire will increase dramatically. The Study Team's experience, supported by various studies and research, has shown that the time from ignition to flashover in a structural fire will vary from six to nine minutes. To arrive on the scene within this time frame, the following time factors need to be taken into consideration:

1. Ignition to detection to communication notification;
2. Communications notification to fire department dispatch;
3. Fire department dispatch until apparatus is enroute;
4. Travel time to the scene; and,
5. Initiation of service, e.g., placing hose lines in service.

A description of these five factors may be useful for the reader.

1. Ignition to Detection to Communication Notification

Great strides have been made in reducing the time from ignition to detection of fires. For example, inexpensive smoke detectors, heat detectors, monitored alarm systems and sprinkler systems have become standard in most residential, commercial and industrial buildings.

MAXIMUM TOTAL RESPONSE TIME (Continued)

This time factor can be reduced if the automatic suppression and detection systems simultaneously notify the occupants and the communications center. This time factor can be significantly controlled by changing the local codes to require detection devices in all residential, commercial and industrial buildings, with automatic notifications in those facilities with large life or property loss potential.

2. Communications Notification to Fire Department Dispatch

The internal dispatch center processing time of a call for assistance is dependent upon the call load, the level of expertise of the communications operators and the type of communications equipment. Processing time of less than 60 seconds is the ideal and should be the goal of fire department communication and dispatch centers.

3. Fire Department Dispatch Until Apparatus is Enroute (Turnout Time)

Once a notification is received in a fire station, personnel must stop their activity, note the location and nature of the call, in some cases involving volunteers who respond to the station, don any protective clothing, open the doors, board the apparatus, start the apparatus, and exit the station. These factors are fairly stable and only small amounts of time can be saved by automating the door opening process with the station alert, and placing information about the nature and location of the call on computer terminals in the vehicle.

4. Travel Time to the Scene

Travel to the scene generally requires the most time. It is dependent upon:

A. Fire station location;
B. Weather factors;
C. Road conditions;
D. Traffic conditions;
E. Street layout and special access impediments;

MAXIMUM TOTAL RESPONSE TIME (Continued)

F. Size of service area;
G. Training of personnel; and,
H. Apparatus staffing approach.

Response time may be lessened as a result of installation of traffic control preemption devices.

5. Initiation of Service, e.g., Placing Hose Lines in Service (Set-up Time)

Upon arrival on the scene, water supply must be established, self-contained breathing apparatus donned, and attack hose lines stretched to the location of the fire. The effectiveness of the department's operation on the fire ground is dependent upon, among other things, the level of training and the physical condition of the personnel and the number of personnel arriving at the scene. Firefighting personnel then enter the structure (assuming it is safe to do so), approach the fire, and initiate fire suppression activities while, at the same time, performing search and rescue activities, as necessary. The amount of time required for setup can vary significantly from one incident to another. For purposes of this analysis, a two-minute set-up time after arrival on the scene is the goal.

Approaches Used by Other Communities

The establishment of response times for a specific community depends upon the geography, demographics, and distribution of commercial, industrial and residential properties.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has established criteria which state that in urban/suburban developed areas a pumper should be located within:

1. 2 miles of residential property;
2. 1-1/2 miles of commercial areas; and,
3. 1 mile of major industrial development which would require a flow of water of 5,000 gallons per minute or more.

MAXIMUM TOTAL RESPONSE TIME (Continued)

While these are very conservative estimates, the problem with using mileage alone is that weather and road conditions are not taken into account.

Another way of approaching this issue is to define five levels of risk and then assign a response time requirement to each risk, rather than use just straight mileage response. These risks can be defined as follows:

1. Highest - Refineries, large industry, hospitals, school dormitories, lumber yards, and propane storage facilities without built-in suppression or detection systems.

2. High - High-rise hotels and residential, large shopping centers, and industrial facilities.

3. Medium - Commercial and industrial facilities with sprinkler systems, small shopping centers, and high density low-rise residential buildings.

4. Low - Single family dwellings with a separation of at least 100 feet between buildings.

5. Minimum - Wide separation of single family dwellings and farm land.

In the International City Management Association's (ICMA) study on Fire Station Location Analysis: A Comprehensive Approach, the following data on the response time requirements of some municipalities were provided in an article by Susan B. Benton and Neal B. Carpenter entitled, "A Computerized Approach to Fire Station Location." While these are large municipalities, the data can be useful indicators.

MAXIMUM TOTAL RESPONSE TIME (Continued)

City	Risk Category 1	2	3	4	5
	Minutes				
San Antonio, TX	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	6.0
Salt Lake City, UT	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	6.0
Lynchburg, VA	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0	7.0
Memphis, TN	2.3	2.7	3.3	4.3	5.8
Davenport, IA	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0

AVAILABILITY OF RESPONSE TIME DATA

The availability of detailed response time data is an essential part of the process of analyzing the adequacy of fire protection service. A reduction in actual response times to emergency incidents is a measurable improvement in the service being delivered. For that reason, assessment of response time is not only an essential component of fire station location determination, it is an important ongoing function of fire department management and operations.

Response Time Components

Complete verified comparative response time data is not available at the national level. In addition, terms used to define the various time segments of response time vary among fire departments. One of the key elements of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) National Fire Service Accreditation Project is response time analysis. In fact, one of the anticipated goals of this IAFC project is to establish valid national response time data for use by all fire departments.

AVAILABILITY OF RESPONSE TIME DATA (Continued)

For response time data to be available for comparison and service level evaluation purposes, consistent terminology must be used and detailed accurate response time data must be maintained and summarized.

This section provides definitions for the various components of response time. These definitions are those used by the IAFC Accreditation Project. For ease and accuracy of comparison of data from other fire departments, the Study Team considered it beneficial to outline nationally-accepted definitions in this Study.

Notification of Event - Notification of event is the point in time when the first electrical impulse or indicator that can be identified and recorded by the public safety agency occurs.

Alarm Processing and Dispatch - The period of time required for the communications center to identify that an emergency is in progress, collect pertinent information to dispatch and to assess the methodology used by the agency to deploy resources.

Turnout Time - The period of time for on-duty emergency system personnel to discontinue their present activity, properly attire themselves and board the vehicle. This includes the elapsed time between being notified that an emergency is in progress and the vehicle beginning to respond to the identified location.

Travel Time - The period of time between the apparatus wheels beginning their uninterrupted response to the incident and the actual time that the emergency vehicle arrives at the address or location to which it was dispatched. Travel time includes driving distance, delays caused by misinformation in the dispatch, traffic obstruction, and geographic obstacles. This time can also be extended if the driver of the apparatus is unfamiliar with the address location being dispatched. Travel time ends when the vehicle is declared on-scene by the first arriving unit.

AVAILABILITY OF RESPONSE TIME DATA (Continued)

On-Scene Time - The point in time that the first arriving responding emergency vehicle or responsible command officer arrives at the scene of an emergency and can begin to take immediate action or take command of the response.

Initiation of Action - The period of time of actual involvement by the individual crew members or companies in the reduction of the state of emergency at the scene. This period of time does not end until such time as the fire officer or other individual with jurisdiction, determines that the organized fire unit can be placed back in service and/or respond to an additional emergency.

Termination of Incident - The point in time when an emergency incident is declared terminated, and all deployed agency resources are available for another assignment.

Time Segment Responsibility

The responsibility for the various components of response time in Monroe Township is shared between the emergency dispatch function (Monroe Township 9-1-1) and the fire service providers. The components shared by each of these agencies are as follows:

Communications Center Responsibility

1. Event occurs and continues until detected by human, electronic or mechanical means.
2. Emergency communications center receives notification of event.
3. Call taker qualifies the call; must determine type of incident, extent of event, location of event, and other pertinent information.
4. Call taker enters data and reviews, and transfers incident to dispatcher.
5. Information reviewed, response sequence reviewed and dispatch made.
6. Dispatch information received in fire station or on the fire apparatus.

AVAILABILITY OF RESPONSE TIME DATA (Continued)

Fire/Rescue/EMS Departments Responsibility

1. Turnout time: Personnel move to apparatus, don protective clothing, get on board apparatus and advise the communications center that the unit is responding;
2. Travel time;
3. On scene time; and,
4. Setup time.

This listing of responsibilities is outlined to emphasize that the Township dispatch staff and the fire service providers should participate in the review and analysis of their response time responsibilities so as to reduce processing time and errors.

Fire District Response Times

The Monroe Township fire and rescue units are dispatched by the Monroe Township Police Department dispatch center and staff.

The Monroe Township Police Dispatch Center is up-to-date with automated technology, including a computer-aided dispatch system. Computer-aided dispatch systems typically maintain extensive time-related information, including comprehensive response time data. Although the Township's current computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system must track valuable response time data, that data may not be directly and adequately provided to fire service providers dispatched by the Center.

Significant benefits may typically be obtained when the dispatch center and fire service providers review and assess comprehensive response time data to analyze and determine challenges and opportunities for reduced response times.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

FIRE RISKS

This section outlines the fire risks associated with the provision of fire services by the Monroe Township fire and EMS services.

Fire Risk Assessment

Many factors influence service delivery in the area served by the Monroe Township Fire Districts, including geography, demographics and hazards. According to the 2010 Census, the approximately 43 square-mile service area includes a population estimated at 39,132.

The potential for fires and hazardous materials incidents, serious accidents, and natural disasters is significant in the area served by the Monroe Township Fire Districts. The Districts protect a full range of risk areas, including:

A. Places of assembly;
B. Educational institutions;
C. Medical facilities;
D. Mid-rise residential buildings;
E. Houses for senior citizens;
F. Congested Interstate and state highways;
G. Large commercial and manufacturing facilities;
H. Large and small light/medium industrial processing facilities;
I. Large and small heavy industrial processing and storage facilities;
J. Truck transportation system;
K. Commercial properties;
L. Hazardous materials in transit, use and/or storage;
M. Large box-type commercial and mall complexes;
N. Shopping areas;
O. Older housing stock;
P. Multi-family neighborhoods;
Q. Single-family neighborhoods; and,
R. Areas of brush and grass

FIRE RISKS (Continued)

S. Medical treatment facilities.

Monroe Township is a residential community with approximately half the population living in the township's senior gated communities or traditional and single family condominium homes. There are a number of strip malls, warehouse distribution centers and some commercial and light industrial development. Monroe Township has substantial development potential in the future.

The following sections review selected risks, as reported by to the Study Team.

Planned Retirement Communities

The planned retirement communities include the following:

- Rossmoor, 2,458 units
- The Ponds, 577 units
- Clearbrook, 2,026 units
- Concordia, 1,753 units
- Greenbriar @ Whittingham, 1,613 units
- The Regency @ Monroe, Rt 522, 867 units and Spotswood- Englishtown Road 644 units
- The Encore at Monroe, 397 units
- Renaissance @ Monroe, 348 units, Rt 33
- Renaissance @ Cranbury Crossing, 191 units, Cranbury Station Road
- Greenbriar @ Stonebridge, 1,046 units, Applegarth & Union Valley Roads

Assisted Living Facilities

- Senior Quarters, Forsgate Drive
- Independent Living Senior Apartment Complex
- Forsgate Villas, The Chelsea and Forsgate Drive

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

FIRE RISKS (Continued)

- Cranbury Care Center, Applegarth Road
- Gardens at Monroe, Applegarth Road
- Monroe Village, Half Acre Road

Developments Built or Near Completion - Partial Listing

- Mill Lake Manor, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Inwood 1, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Inwood 2, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Outcalt Manor. Northern Section of Monroe
- Heritage Chase, Rt 522, Buckelew Avenue
- Camelot, Schoolhouse Road
- Monroe Woods, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Estates at Monroe, Forsgate Dr.
- Meadows at Monroe, Helmetta Road
- Park Place, Texas Road
- Hampton Estates, Matchaponix Road
- Woodridge Estates, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Polonia Estates, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Pine Run, Forsgate Dr.
- Greens & Fairway Edge, Possum Hollow Road
- Colonial Square, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Presidential Estates, Jurgelsky Road
- The Highlands @ Monroe, Rt 522
- Bentley Brook, No. Disbrow Hill Road
- Rolling Acres (The Reserve), Texas Road
- Hobart Hills, So. Of Old Texas Road
- M&M, Kensington Woods, Spotswood-Englishtown Road
- Golf View Estates, James Barton Blvd.
- Kara Homes, Chestnut Woods, Hoffman Station Rd, Cardinale
- Manalapan Woods, Pineview, Old Forge Road

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

FIRE RISKS (Continued)

- Whispering Woods, Matchaponix Road
- Brookman Estates, Girth, Applegarth Road
- Toll Brothers, Rt 522, Monroe Hunt
- Monroe Knolls I, Gravelhill Spotswood Road
- Deer Valley, Woodfield Estates, Union Valley Road
- Castle Hill Estates, Matchaponix Road
- Eastview on the Banks, Possum Hollow Road
- Ridgewood, Deer Path Road
- Monroe Springs, Cho, Matchaponix Ave.
- Manors @ Old Forge, Old Forge Rd, Pine St.
- Monroe Pines, Matchaponix Ave.
- Oak Meadows, Starbare, No. Disbrow Road
- Lindsey Estates, Bordentown-So. Amboy Trnpk.
- Seasons @ Monroe, Outcalt Section
- Ave "G" Estates, Outcalt Section
- Spruce Meadows, Grace Hill Rd, State St.
- Overlook Estates, Half Acre Road
- Andre Estates, Gravelhill Spotswood Road
- Iron Mountain, Possum Hollow Road
- Spruce Run, Grace Hill Estates, Grace Hill Road
- Tree Tops @ Monroe, Lower Matchaponix Road

<u>Developments Being Built or To Be Built - Partial Listing</u>

- Forest Manor, Bordentown South Amboy Tnpk.
- Toll Brothers, Ochsner, Windhaven, Old Church Road
- Valley View, Matrix, Union Valley Road
- Southfield Estates, Old Church Road
- Cranbury Station Estates, Melcer, Cranbury Station Road
- Cranbury Heights @ Monroe, Applegarth Road
- Legends @ Monroe, Spotswood-Englishtown Road

FIRE RISKS (Continued)

- Millstone River Preserve, Old Church Road
- Primrose Acres I, Grace Hill Road
- Diamonds in the Rough, Hoffman Station Mounts Mills Road
- Laurel Estates, Jamesburg Half Acre Road
- Millwoods Estates, Texas Road
- Hidden Ponds, Block 17 Assoc., England Road

Rail Lines

- Camden and Amboy Railroad
- Freehold and Jamesburg Railroad
- Pennsylvania Railroad Amboy Division (formerly the Camden and Amboy Railroad)
- Jamesburg Railroad Amboy Division (formerly the Freehold and Jamesburg Railroad)

Major Highways

- New Jersey Turnpike, I-95
- Route 33
- County Routes 535, 522, 527, 619, 615, 614, 613, 612 and 520.

Summary of Risk Assessment

This list description of selected major aspects of the fire risks is intended to provide an example of the extent and types of properties reportedly located or to be located in the service area. Monroe Township clearly includes a broad range of moderate to significant fire risks that must be protected and served by Monroe Township paid and volunteer fire services providers.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

CURRENT STATION LOCATIONS

The following section describe Monroe Township fire stations.

Monroe Township Fire Stations

The following table (Figure 5-1) is a listing of the currently active fire stations, their location and Fire District in Monroe Township.

Figure 5-1
CURRENT MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE STATIONS

STATION	LOCATION	FIRE DISTRICT
1. Station 51	24 Harrison Avenue	Fire District No. 1
2. Station 57	10 Halsey Reed Road	Fire District No. 2
3. Station 23 A	16 Centre Drive	Fire District No. 3
4. Station 23 B	359 School House Road	Fire District No. 3

FUTURE FIRE STATION LOCATION OPTIONS

The following sections provide information, analysis, conclusions and options for potential future fire station facilities.

Fire Station Location Factors

To determine future fire station facility needs in the City where consideration may need to be given to adding, relocating or eliminating a fire or rescue station, the Study Team considered a number of factors, including:

A. Current and projected development;

B. Estimated typical turn-out time from dispatch to first unit responding;

C. Potential limited number of volunteer drivers during certain hours;

FUTURE FIRE STATION LOCATION OPTIONS (Continued)

D. Historical nature of involvement of fire stations in communities;

E. Current and projected service provider workload data;

F. Response time projections using geographic information system (GIS) tools;

G. Service provision by mutual aid companies; and,

H. Input from service providers.

Current Fire Station Locations

The following sections provide background and information on future fire station location options for Monroe Township. The reader will note that these potential options that could be considered are presented in relation to their impact on a number of related standards and guidelines utilized in the fire protection industry, including NFPA 1710/20 and Insurance Services Office guidelines for response time and engine and ladder truck response areas.

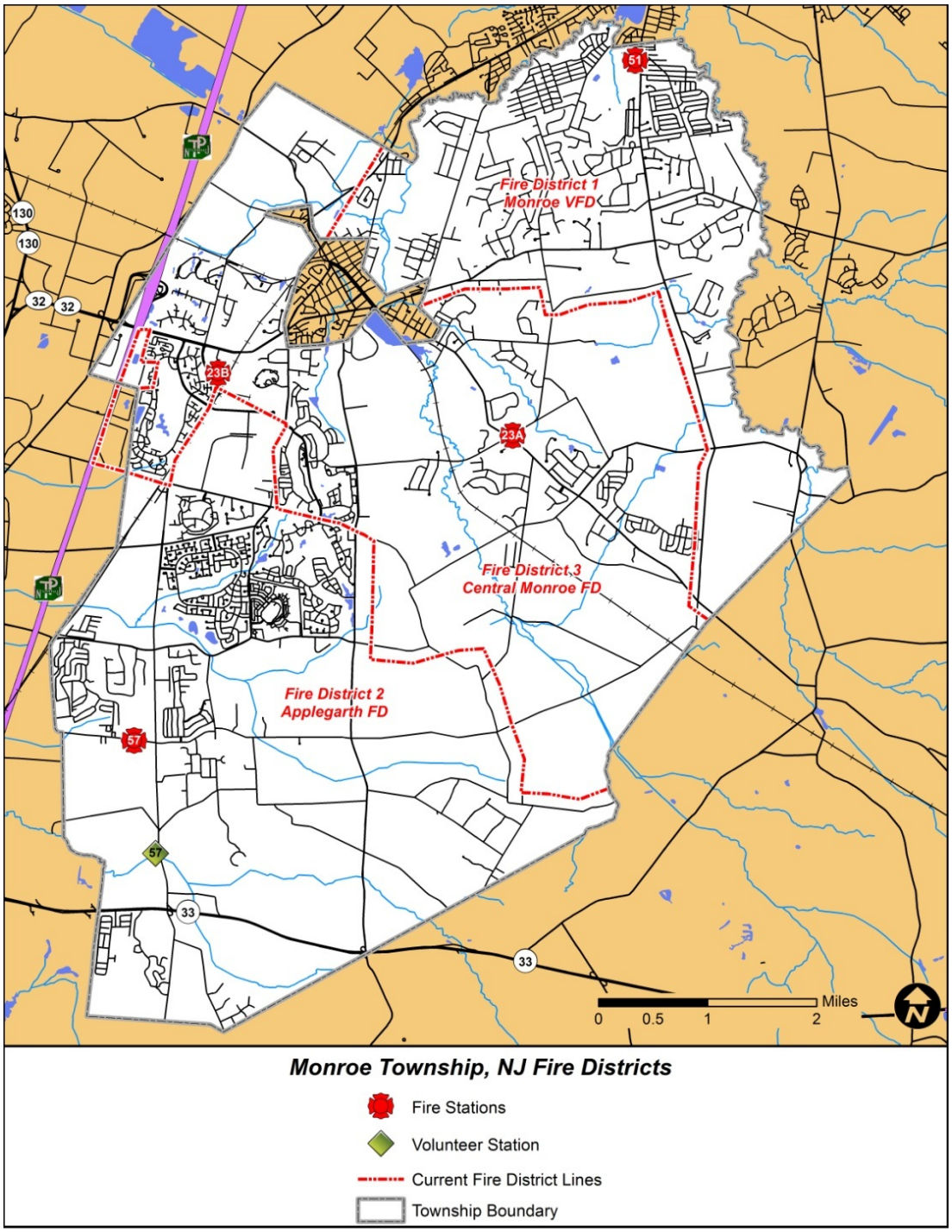
Current Fire Station Distribution Analysis

Three fire districts within Monroe Township currently operate out of five fire station facilities. However, for purposes of this Study, a volunteer facility, shown as a green diamond in the figure following, is not traditionally utilized and will not be included in the analysis. The service coverage area for the fire districts includes the 43 quare miles of the Township of Monroe, New Jersey for fire protection. In the northwest center is the Town of Jamesburg that has its own fire department. The map that follows depicts the locations of the fire stations within each fire district. See Figure 5-2

The following section illustrates the fire district's capability from the currently operated stations.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Figure 5-2: Fire Districts and Station Deployment



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

The ultimate goal of the fire districts is to provide sufficient resources (personnel, apparatus, and equipment) to the scene of an emergency in time to take effective action to minimize the impacts of the emergency. While some fire districts establish a response time standard in order to measure their performance relative to it, two national recommendations exist. For career, or mostly career departments, The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends a response time performance standard that the first company arrives at the scene of a structure fire within five minutes of dispatch, 90% of the time. Known as NFPA 1710, it describes the following performance as meeting the structure fire response criteria:

- Turnout time (time between dispatch and apparatus leaving the station) to be within ninety seconds, 90% of the time
- Arrival of the first "company" within five minutes of dispatch, 90% of the time, **or**
- Arrival of the entire initial response assignment (all units assigned to the call) within nine minutes of dispatch, 90% of the time

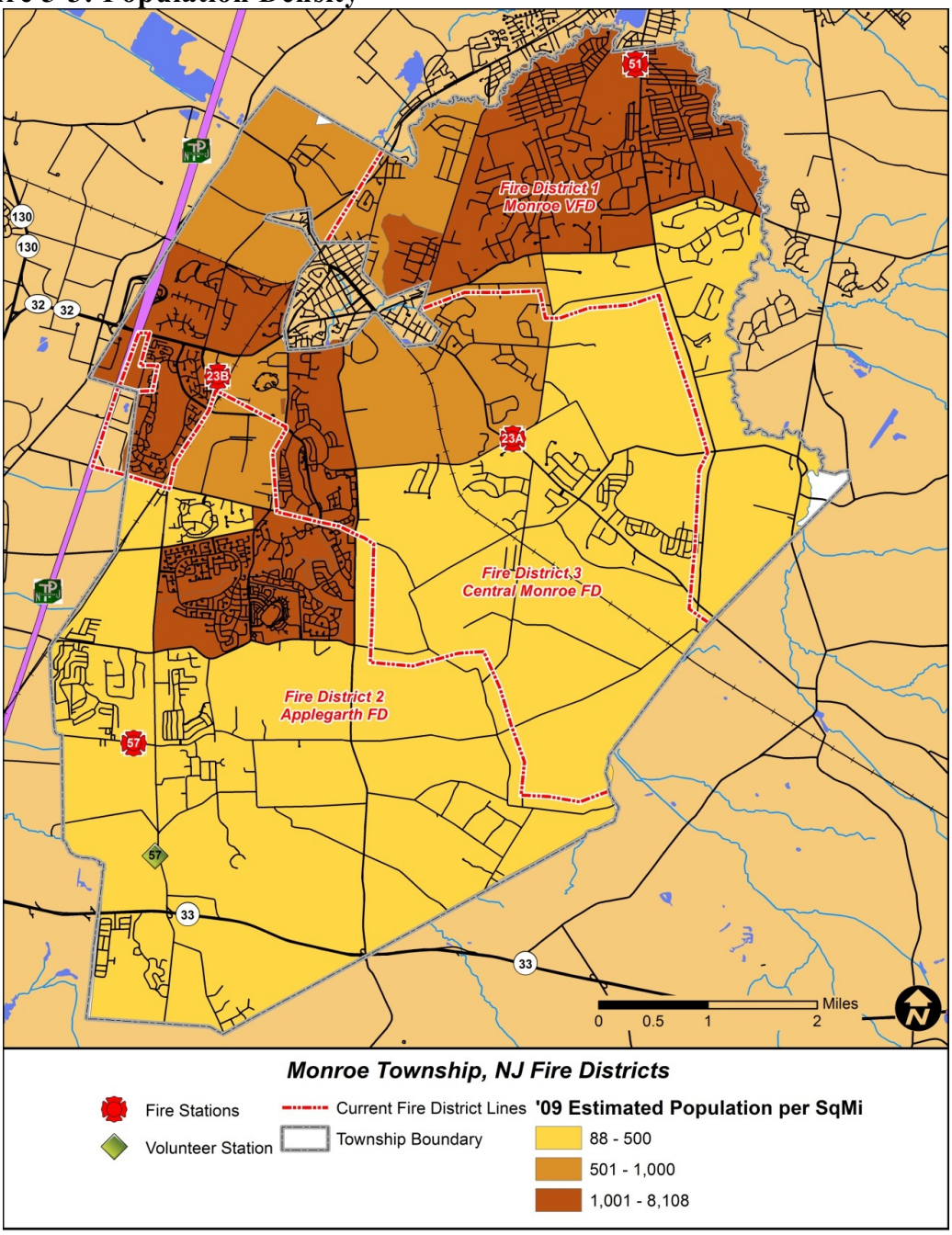
However, recognizing that volunteer or mostly volunteer departments across the United States provide service to a majority of communities, the response recommendations for these types of fire districts are classified according to population densities. Known as NFPA 1720, it describes the following performance as meeting the structure fire response criteria:

- Areas of populations greater than 1,000 persons per square mile are recommended that the first company arrive at the scene of a structure fire within nine minutes of dispatch, 90% of the time.
- Areas with 500-1000 persons per square mile in population, it is recommended that a response time objective of 10 minutes from time of dispatch, 80% of the time be achieved.
- A 14 minute response time, 80% of the time is permissible for more rural communities with less than 500 persons per square mile.
- Minimally populated areas in excess of 8 miles from a fire station are considered remote and not subject to a response time guideline.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Given these parameters within this NFPA 1720 recommendation, the following map illustrates the population concentration within the township at these levels.

Figure 5-3: Population Density



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

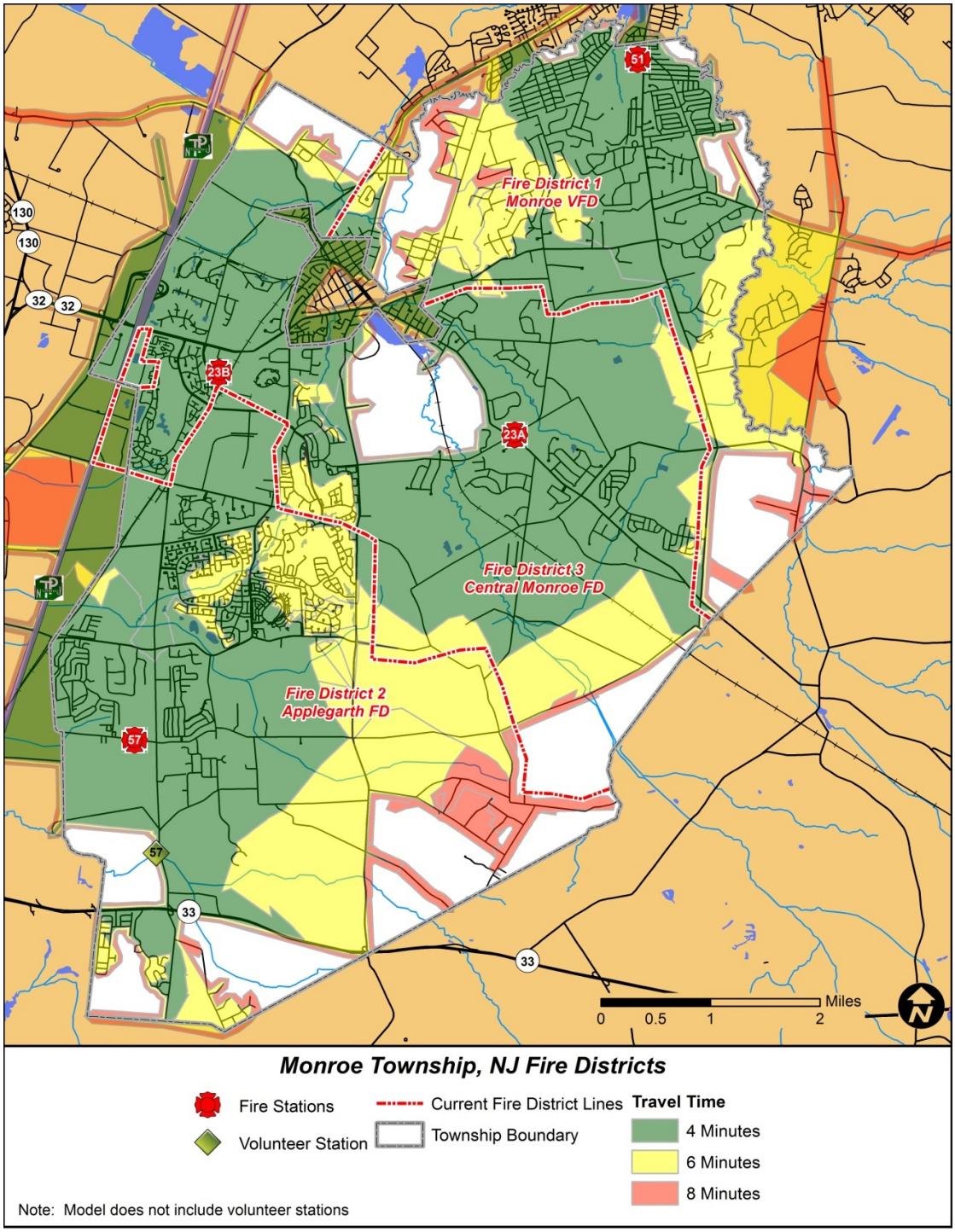
The NFPA state that a response "company" consists of four firefighters, but does not require they all be on the same vehicle. Given volunteer staffing of engines, the time it takes for the second unit to arrive becomes very important to achievement of the NFPA 1720 standard. If additional help is a considerable amount of time away, the fire will continue to grow.

At present none of the fire districts in Monroe Township have adopted a response time objective.

With these nationally recommended standards in mind, the geographic extent of the travel time from fire stations is measured along the roadway network. Reduction of speed has been factored into account for apparatus negotiating turns, rail crossings, and intersections. Recall, as it was stated prior in the Report, this travel time does not include the turnout time, or the time from dispatch until the apparatus leave the station.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Figure 5-4: Current Travel Time Capability



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

It can be seen that virtually all areas of the township can be reached within eight minutes from the nearest fire station. The developed areas, signified by the concentration of roadways, are within the four minute travel time area. Additionally, when compared to the population density map in Figure 5-3, a large portion of the concentrated population areas are in close proximity to the fire stations. Specifically, the following table details the percentage of roadways and population covered by each travel time area.

Figure 5-5: Current Road Mile and Population Coverage

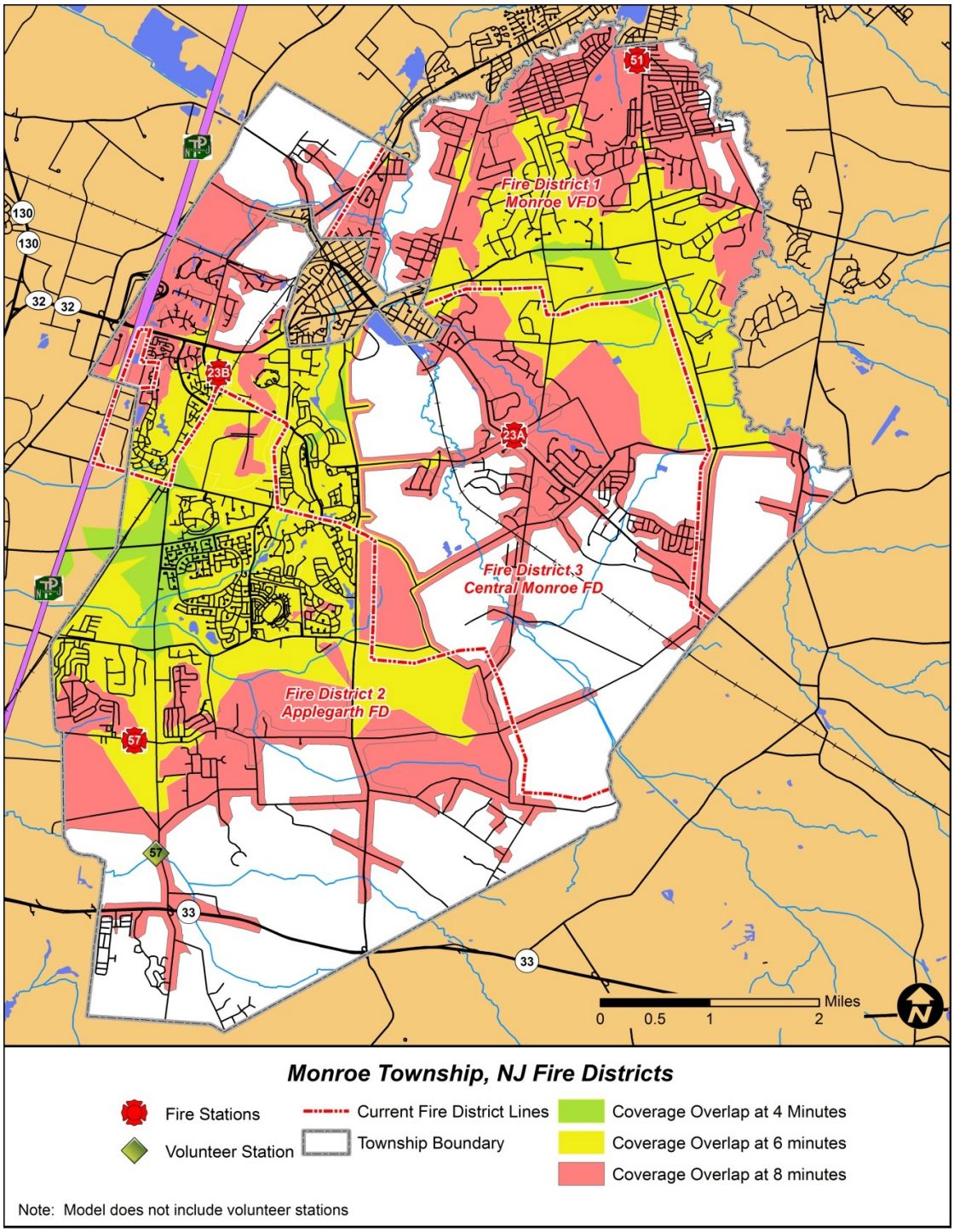
Travel Time Interval	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage	Closest Station Area	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage	Current District Coverage	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage
4 minutes	54%	61%	23A	26%	32%	Central Monroe	75%	100%
			23B	22%	34%			
			51	24%	22%	Monroe VFD	61%	41%
			57	28%	12%	Applegarth	37%	36%
6 minutes	91%	89%	23A	28%	21%	Central Monroe	96%	100%
			23B	22%	28%			
			51	21%	34%	Monroe VFD	81%	89%
			57	29%	17%	Applegarth	86%	82%
8 minutes	99%	100%	23A	28%	21%	Central Monroe	99%	100%
			23B	22%	28%			
			51	21%	34%	Monroe VFD	99%	100%
			57	29%	17%	Applegarth	99%	100%

In both cases, nearly 90% of the roadways and current residential population can be reached within six minutes of travel time. This leaves a three minute turnout time window for NFPA 1720 "urban" areas, four minutes for "suburban" zones, and nine minutes for more "rural" areas.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Another aspect of a facility distribution analysis is to identify areas where two or more apparatus can reach in the same time frame assuming they left their respective stations simultaneously. These overlapping or redundant coverage areas are not necessarily inefficiencies that require elimination unless they are of significant size. Rather, these areas could be considered areas of best coverage when incidents (such as structure fires) require multiple apparatus from multiple stations to respond. The following figure (Figure 5-6) illustrates the areas that two or more apparatus can reach within eight minutes of travel.

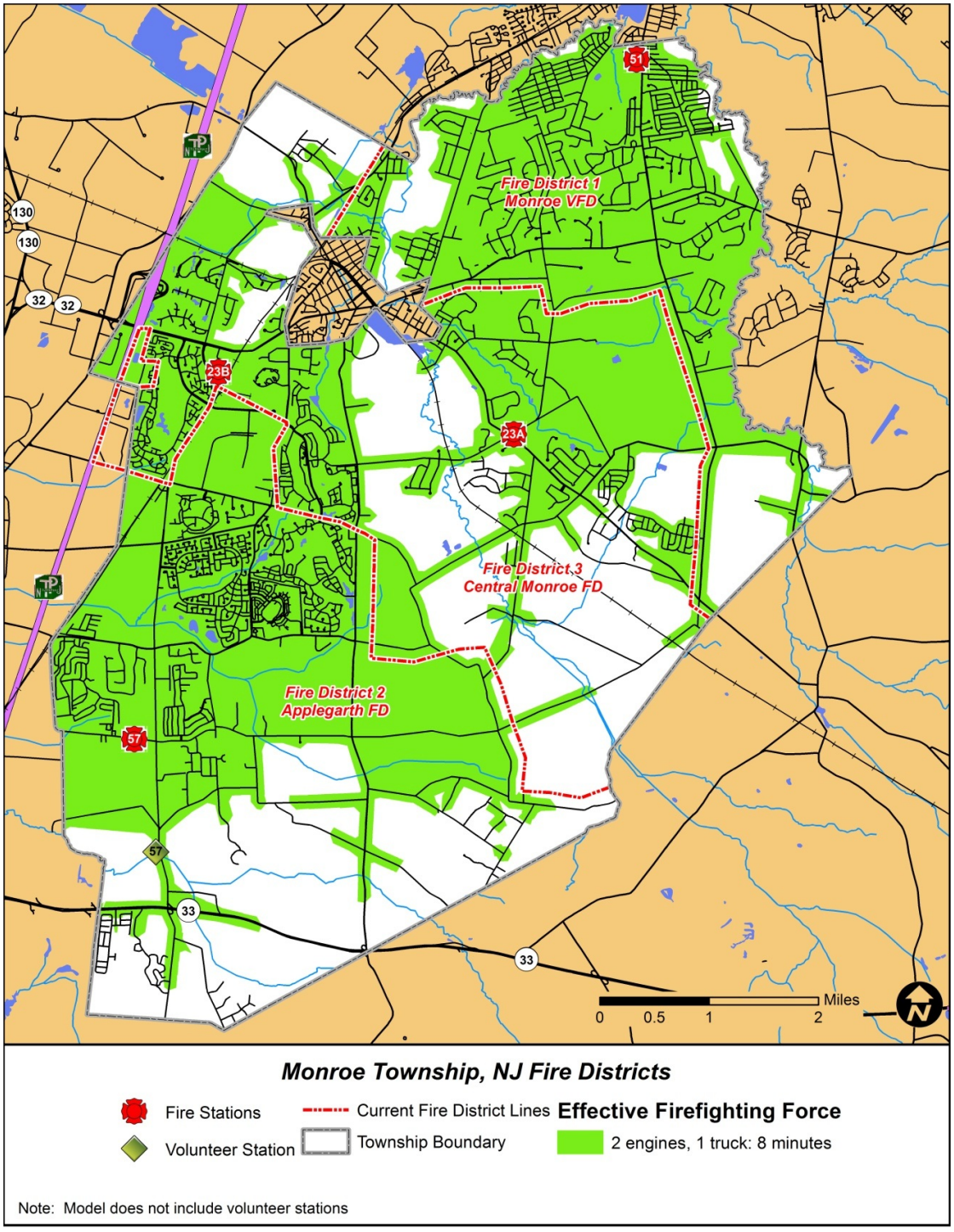
Figure 5-6 -
Areas That Two or More Apparatus Can Reach in Eight Minutes of Travel



It can be seen that much of the north and west areas are provided with coverage overlap. Standard firefighting procedures call for the arrival of the entire initial assignment (sufficient apparatus and personnel to effectively combat a fire) within a certain amount of time before substantial damage occurs. Based upon a minimum assembly of necessary apparatus, at least a response of two engines, and one truck would likely respond to a structure fire. The area shaded in green in the following figure would be the geographic extent of an effective firefighting force within the township at eight minutes. Each fire station has at least one engine. the only station without a ladder truck is Station 23A, located in the center of the township.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Figure 5-7: Effective Firefighting Force



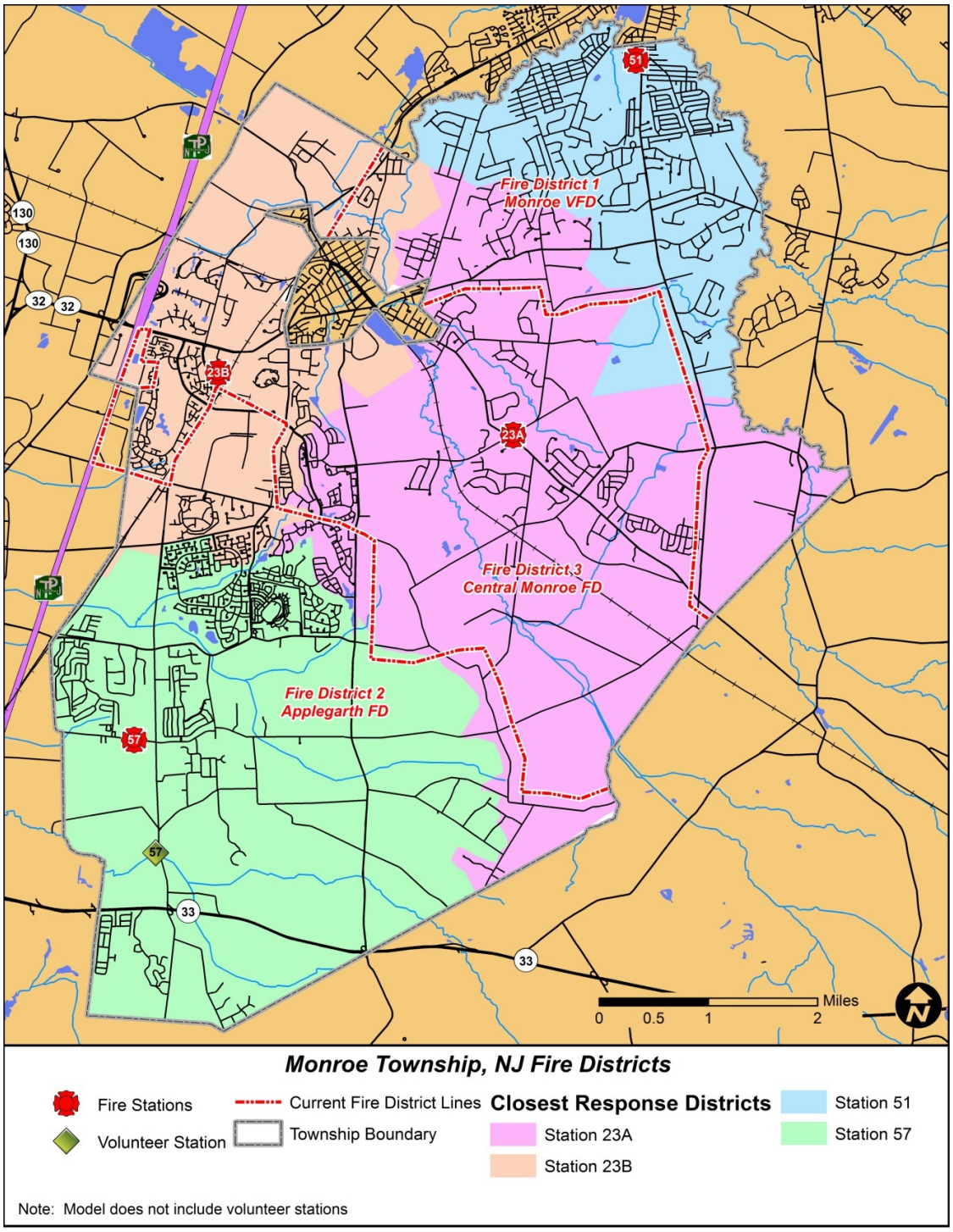
Once again, most of the townships roadways and population can be reached within an eight minute travel time frame of an effective firefighting force.

Fire District Area Distribution

The previous map figures illustrated the currently adopted fire district areas. The determination of these areas had occurred before the Station 23B on Centre Drive and Station 57 on Halsey Reed Road were built. These new locations should require a realignment of areas of fire district responsibilities. Given that, a travel time analysis was conducted that simulates apparatus leaving their respective stations racing toward each other, where they meet becomes the new fire district border. This ensures the fastest apparatus based upon road way speed, rather than simply closest, arrive at the scene of an emergency. The following figure (Figure 5-8) illustrates the result of the fire district areas based upon this exercise.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Figure 5-8: Closest Response Station Areas

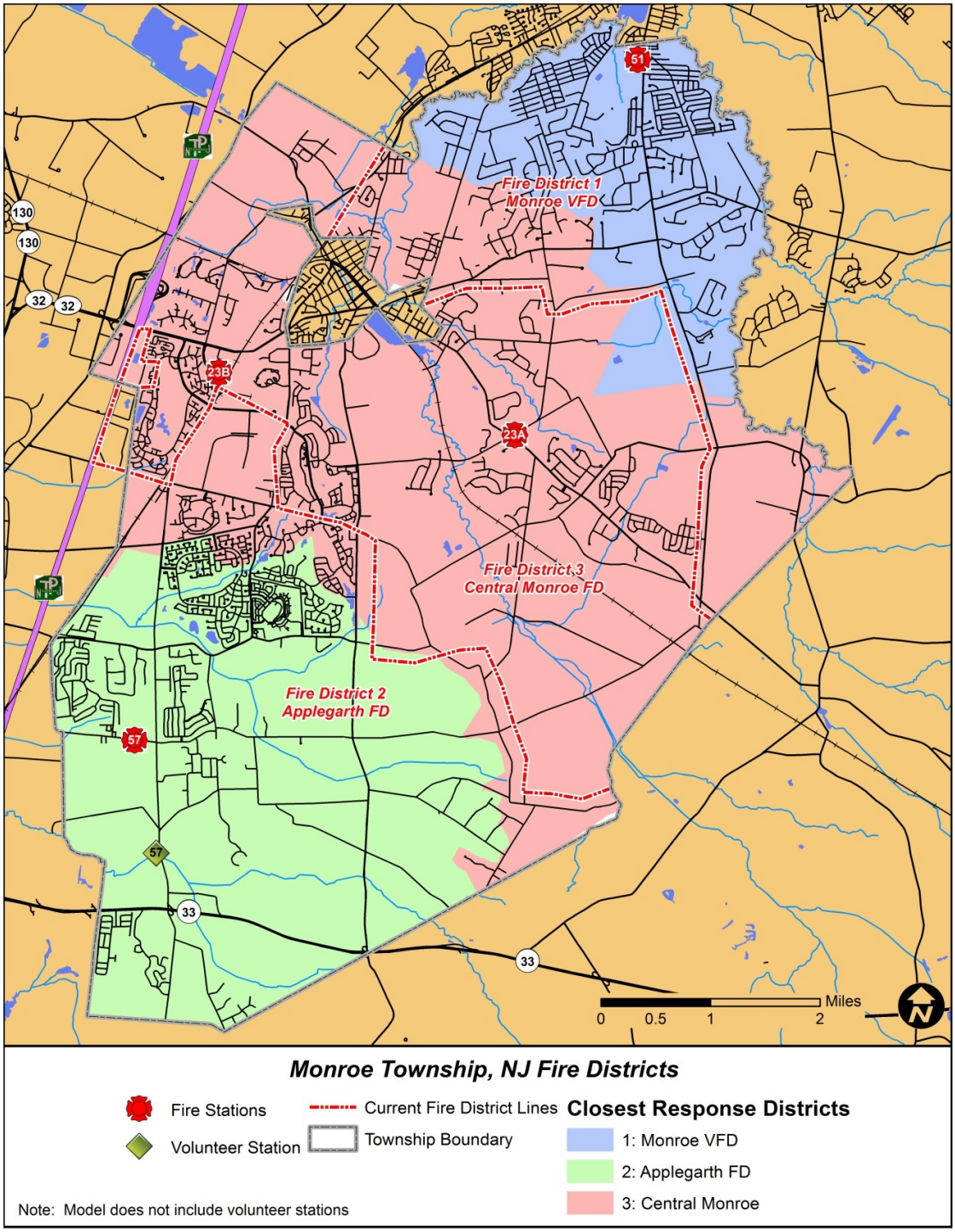


MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Each current fire district gains and loses some district area of responsibility, but based upon the primary mission to arrive at an emergency scene as quick as possible, this realignment of fire districts should be considered for adoption.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Figure 5-9Closest Response District Areas



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

Current Fire Station Location Analysis

The recently reported 2010 U.S. Census indicates the population of Monroe Township to be 39,132. According to the US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2009 five-year estimates by block group the median age was 58.9 years compared to the national median of 36.5. In the event of a fire, elderly populations may have limited mobility, increasing the risk of serious injury or death.

It is not just residential population that poses risk within Monroe Township. The New Jersey Turnpike runs just on the west side of town that includes an interchange. This allows for the accessibility to this major thoroughfare for industrial companies, their employees, and commuters to other areas, such as New York City to reside here. There are also several railways that cross the township, one being a major passenger rail service line between New York and Philadelphia. The New Jersey Training School for male juveniles is located off Grace Hill Road in the township. On the southern end of the township, Route 33 bisects west and east on its way to the shore and the Englishtown Racetrack causing summer traffic to be heavy.

According to the 2003 Proposed Land Use Plan for the Township, a large portion of land on the southeast and the south between Route 33 and Station 57 will be preserved for farm land with limited development to rural residential. This growth inhibitor is deliberate and does not indicate that a fire station would be needed in that area in the future. Most of the growth within the Township is planned for the north side of town with residential and industrial concerns, east of Station 23A for planned affordable housing and retirement community---the Route 33 corridor and south thereof.

Station 23A is well located centrally within its current district but could be located further south to assist cover the high density residential area within the Applegarth Fire District that is outside the four minute travel time reach of all the stations. In addition, the speed capability of area roads allows it to provide broad area coverage.

Station 23B is well located between higher density residential developments and nearby to major industrial and transportation corridors on the western side of the township.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

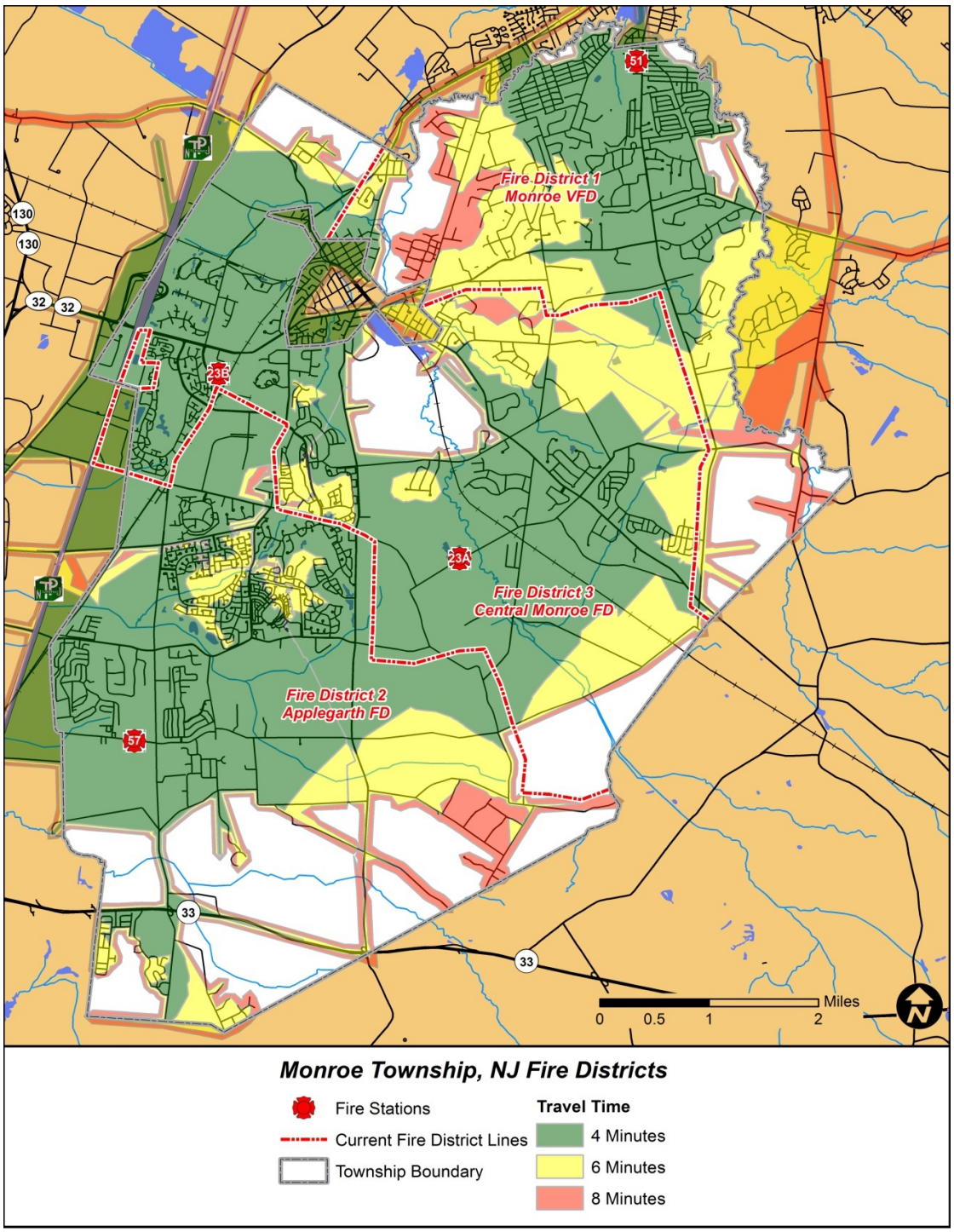
Station 51 is located just south of the township line in a higher density residential area. Its location limits its response capability to benefit the township to the south. Its northward capability primarily benefits the adjoining Spotswood Borough. However, limited street connectivity and speed capacity in the area lessen the further south of the fire district. In addition, while staffed fire stations are better positioned within proximity to the center of a district and along primary roadways, unstaffed stations derive a benefit from being closer to its volunteer staffing alternative locations such as residences, businesses, or schools.

Station 57 is well positioned to respond to the developed areas nearby the station as well as the Route 33 corridor and points south of the highway. The volunteer station will not be included in the following discussion sections

Scenario 1: Station 23A Relocation

This scenario is constructed to evaluate the benefit or detriment to township fire service coverage if Station 23A is moved further south with the intent to improve coverage into the Concordia, Greenbriar, and the Ponds developments. A site on Hoffman Station Road near the stream has been designated for future open space outside of the floodplain. If Station 23A were to be relocated to this area, the following travel time capability map shows the extent to which apparatus can assist within these residential developments. These developments are limited access communities designed to lessen cut-through traffic. Within these developments, access by emergency vehicles is also curtailed.

Figure 5-10 - Scenario 1 Travel Time Capability



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

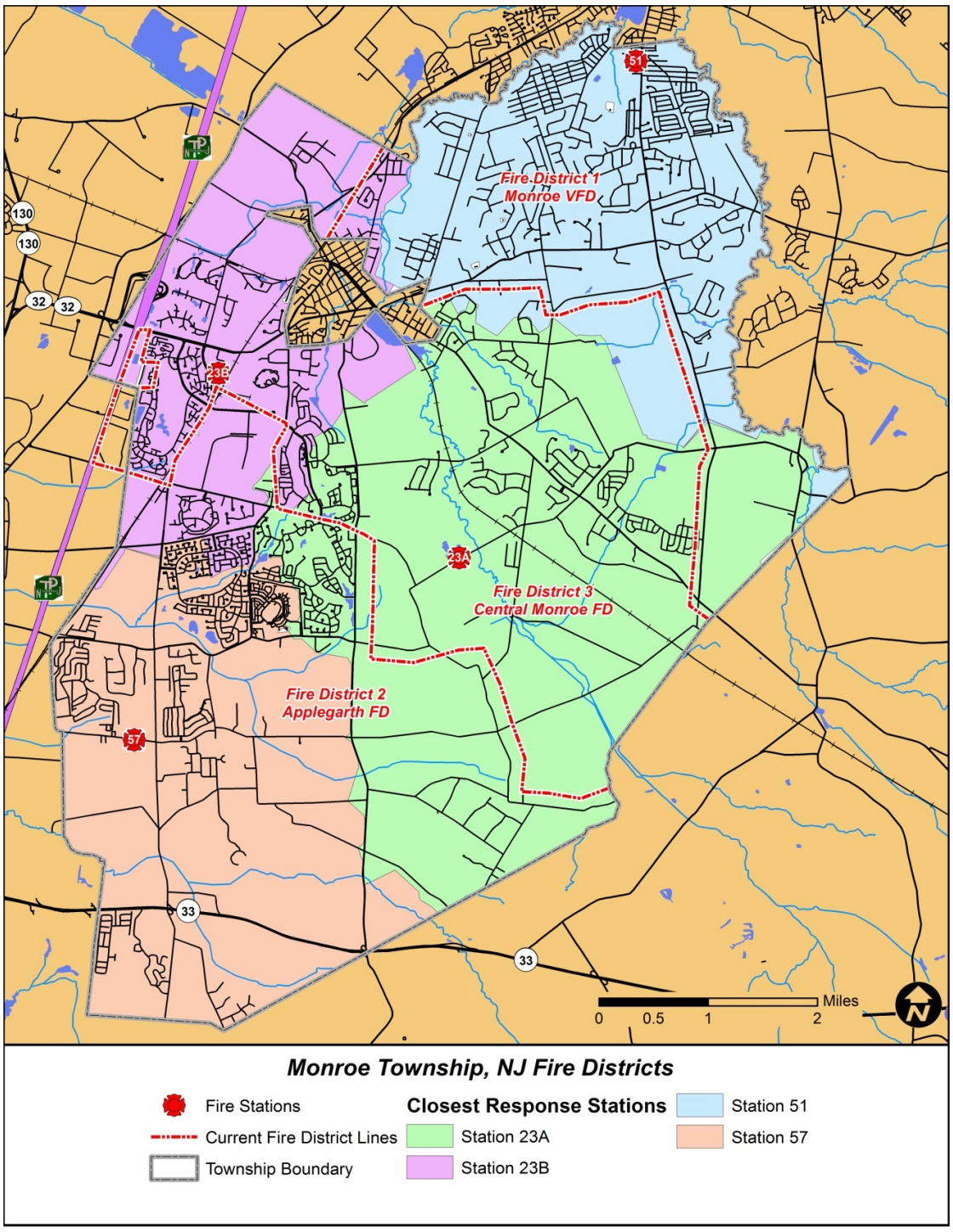
While the area within the residential developments have improved coverage, a coverage gap has developed between Station 23A and Station 51, most notably near the New Jersey State Home for Boys. Both of these stations have increased responsibilities with regards to population and road mile coverage.

Figure 5-11: Current Road Mile and Population Coverage

Travel Time Interval	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage	Closest Station Area	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage
4 minutes	62%	50%	23A	24%	29%
			23B	23%	30%
			51	30%	27%
			57	23%	14%
6 minutes	94%	94%	23A	30%	26%
			23B	21%	28%
			51	26%	31%
			57	23%	15%
8 minutes	99%	100%	23A	31%	24%
			23B	20%	29%
			51	27%	33%
			57	22%	14%

While the miles covered overall have improved, the population coverage at four minutes has decreased primarily due to the widening service gap between Station 23 A and Station 51. The following figure designated the closest station response after relocating Station 23A.

Figure 5-12 - Scenario 1 Closest Station Response w/ Station 23A Relocated



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

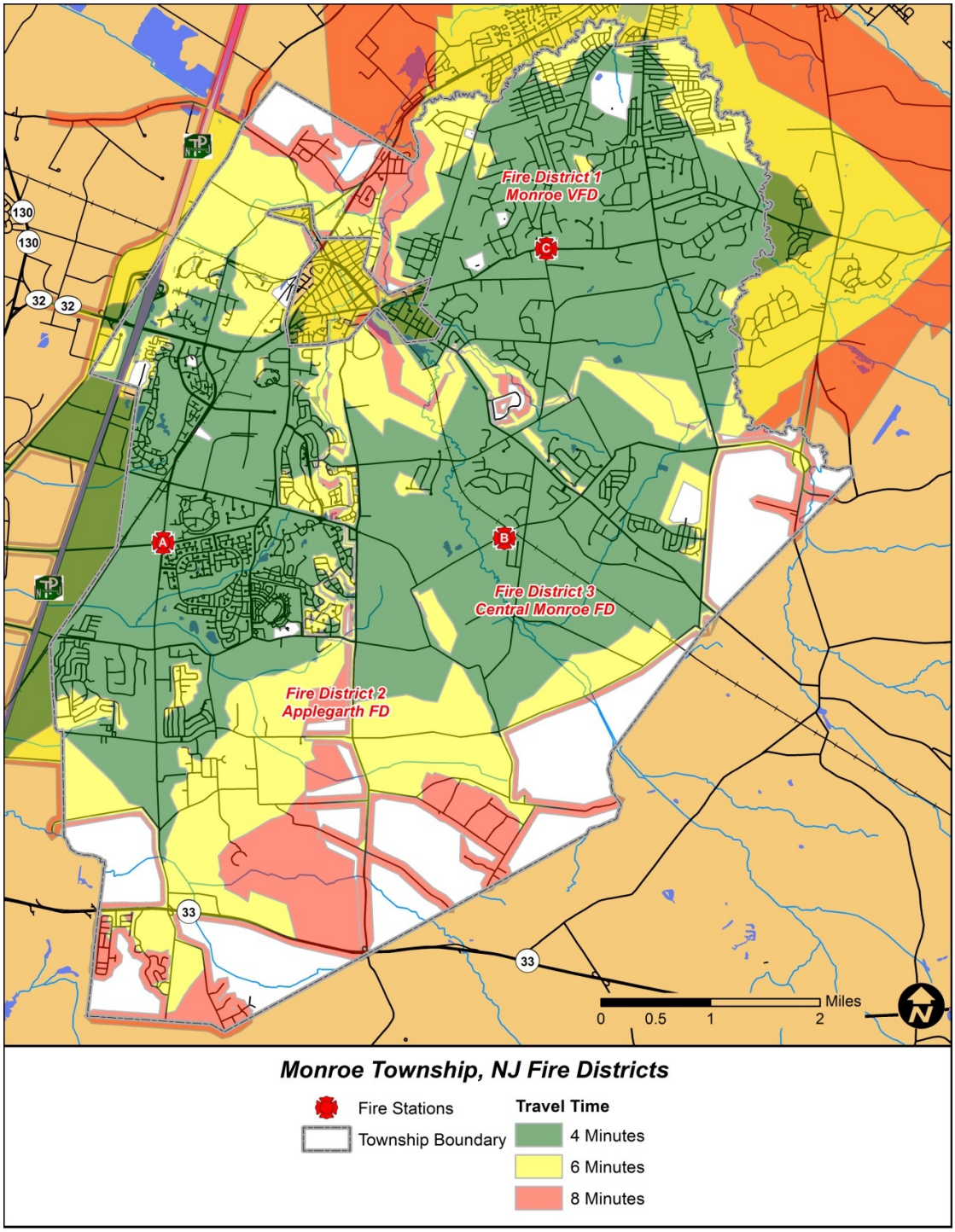
Scenario 2: "Clean Slate" Fire Stations

This scenario asks "what if we could put stations anywhere within the township" to derive superior coverage and optimize efficiency without regards to cost. The first station, ***Station A***, could be located centrally within the area of high residential density at the corner of **Applegarth Road and Cranbury-Half Acre** Road Applegarth Road allows for north-south extensibility of travel that provides the apparatus to serve the industrial north area and to reach Route 33 in the south. Better coverage within the residential areas is also afforded by this location as well.

Station B could also be located on **Hoffman Station Rd** as in the previous scenario where Station 23A was relocated. However, because of Station A's location, Station B can be located farther east along the road to **within 1000 feet of the railway**. This station provides broad coverage in the central area of the township on either sides of Jamesburg-Englishtown Road.

Station C would provide coverage to the north side of the township located at the corner of **Spotswood-Gravel Hill Road and Matchaponix Avenue.** This major crossroad would provide for broader coverage within the north end and still be able to reach much of the higher density residential areas near the creek along the northern township border within four minutes of travel time. The following figure (Figure 5-13) illustrates the geographic extent of travel time within the township at varying time intervals.

Figure 5-13 - Scenario 2 Travel Time Capability



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

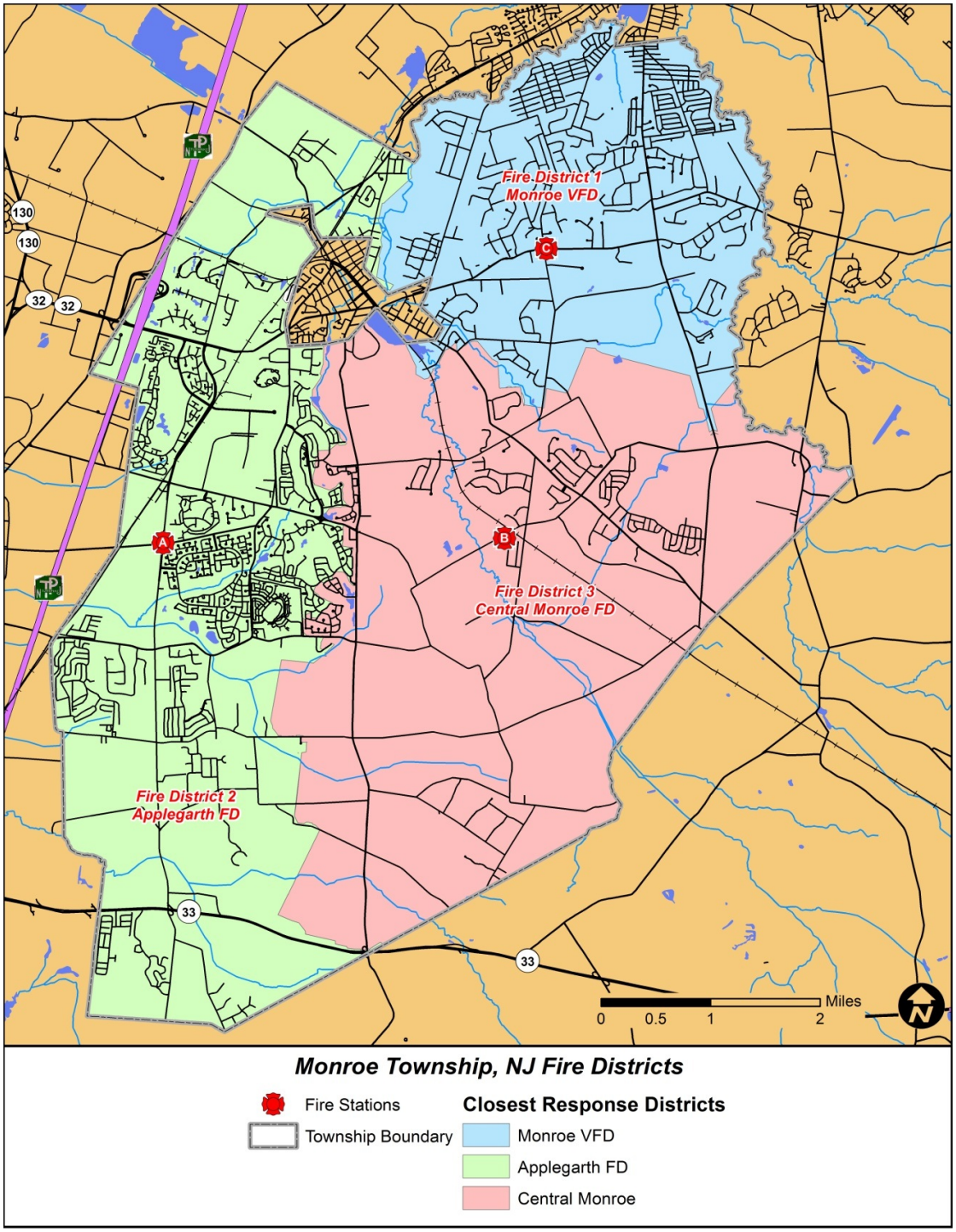
The result of this scenario yields superior results compared to the current deployment and utilizes one less station. However, it can be seen in the detailed coverage table following, that Station A would likely have the heaviest workload prompting an additional fire company to provide service.

Figure 5-14: Scenario 2 Road Mile and Population Coverage

Travel Time Interval	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage	Closest Station Area	Mile Coverage	Population Coverage
4 minutes	57%	69%	A	50%	57%
			B	18%	11%
			C	32%	32%
6 minutes	91%	90%	A	51%	50%
			B	17%	9%
			C	32%	41%
8 minutes	99%	100%	A	52%	51%
			B	19%	11%
			C	29%	38%

This three station scenario would also require redistricting to provide the fastest apparatus to the scene of an emergency. The following map illustrates new station area responsibilities based upon simultaneous departure from stations traveling along the road network at speed.

Figure 5-15 - Scenario 2 Closest Station Areas



MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

MUTUAL AID

This Section conceptually reviews fire department mutual aid and its use by the Monroe Township Fire Districts and adjacent fire agencies.

Mutual aid, as discussed in this Section, refers to the response of fire and rescue apparatus across jurisdictional or municipal boundaries. The effective use of mutual aid apparatus response has become a successful means of improving the level of fire protection service in participating jurisdictions without increased financial commitments. During a time when many municipalities are continuing to deal with severe fiscal constraints, the implementation of mutual aid, particularly automatic mutual aid, has become an accepted national trend.

The NFPA Fire Protection Handbook states the following regarding the implementation of mutual aid:

> "Every fire department today should have mutual-aid or automatic-aid contracts with adjoining departments. These reciprocal agreements provide communities with the ability to share their personnel and equipment to provide sufficient resources to handle major emergencies in a timely and cost-effective manner."

The Concept

Mutual aid is the means by which one fire department or group of fire departments assists another either upon request on an incident by incident basis, or on an automatic basis from the point of initial dispatch. It is virtually impossible for any local government to staff and equip its fire services to handle every potential major incident. This is especially true for smaller municipalities. The cost would be prohibitive, and is entirely unrealistic, especially considering fiscal constraints facing local jurisdictions today. As a result, it is very common for fire departments to implement mutual aid agreements with the surrounding jurisdictions and, as a result, for personnel and equipment to be jointly dispatched on certain types of major incidents.

There are essentially two types of mutual aid response approaches. One type of mutual aid is referred to as "special request" mutual aid and involves a request being made either by the incident commander or the dispatch center. The second type of mutual aid is "automatic" mutual aid that involves the automatic dispatch of the closest unit/s under established protocols for incidents and/or fill-in at a fire station.

Benefits of Automatic Mutual Aid

Improved fire protection service to the public can be attained in the following ways through the use of automatic mutual aid on incidents where mutual aid companies are closer:

A. More timely arrival of apparatus on the scene of incidents;
B. Improved firefighter safety as a result of the reduced time necessary for mutual aid units to arrive on the scene to provided needed assistance; and,
C. Decreased response times.

Current Use of Mutual Aid

Currently, the Study Team understands that automatic mutual aid is used quite extensively; however, in some instances and locations, it is used on a selective basis. Reportedly, the dispatch policy is not that the closest appropriate type of unit will be dispatched. There are apparently many instances when closer units may be available, but not automatically dispatched.

To improve fire protection service in the future through reduced response times, the Fire Districts should consider taking steps to facilitate full automatic mutual aid response with the fire departments in neighboring jurisdictions and municipalities.

Ultimately the full benefit, in terms of reduced response times, cannot be attained unless "automatic" closest unit available mutual aid is implemented. Therefore, consideration should be given to implementing full "automatic" mutual aid with all adjacent fire departments on a region-wide basis.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

MONROE TOWNSHIP-WIDE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

As outlined above, the delivery of quality consistent fire services is facilitated via the use of automatic closest unit dispatched mutual aid. The implementation of common operating procedures goes hand-in-hand to provide further enhancement to the delivery of services by multiple fire agencies.

To a limited extent, the Study Team is aware that a number of common operating procedures have been adopted. It is suggested that an aggressive effort be undertaken to include as many fire/EMS delivery agencies in the Monroe Township region as possible and to develop a comprehensive Monroe Township Regional Manual of Common Standard Operating Procedure.

It is suggested that common state-of-the-art operating procedures be developed and adopted for the following areas:

1. Incident command procedures;
2. Chain of command;
3. Accountability;
4. Rapid intervention team;
5. Rescue-lost firefighter;
6. Incident safety procedures;
7. Incident evacuation;
8. Post incident review;
9. Standard company responsibilities;
10. Tactical priorities;
11. Fireground strategy;
12. "May-Day" communications;
13. Roof operations;
14. Rehabilitation;
15. Positive pressure ventilation operations;
16. Water supply;

17. Fire cause investigation;
18. EMS responsibilities;
19. Vehicle extrication;
20. Medical safety officer;
21. Hazardous materials;
22. Flammable liquid incidents;
23. Natural gas emergencies;
24. Confined space rescue;
25. Trench rescue operations;
26. Water rescue;
27. Structural collapse operations;
28. Overhaul and standby;
29. Protective clothing;
30. Pre-fire planning; and,
31. Heat stress management.

SUMMARY

The location of station facilities is a key element in the level of fire protection service. The decision to build a new station or relocate an existing one has many components other than its location. While computerized programs can assist officials in making decisions relative to station location, there is no magic formula for determining the location of fire/rescue stations. The final determinations require human-based consideration of many factors.

One key consideration in determining a fire station location for fire-related services is the maximum acceptable total response time (travel and turnout time). In fires, response time should be kept short enough to ensure that the total average time does not exceed the six- to nine-minute flashover time.

The availability and assessment of detailed response time data is an essential part of the process of analyzing the adequacy of the service. A reduction in actual response times to emergency incidents is a measurable improvement in service being delivered. For that

reason, assessment of response time is not only an essential component of fire station location determination, it is an important ongoing function of fire and EMS management and operations. For the future, Monroe Township fire service providers should participate in the review and analysis of their response time. The goal should be to reduce response times, to the extent possible.

Fire services in Monroe Township have been provided from four fire stations. A review of the location of these facilities indicates a need to implement a fire station location improvement in the future involving current Fire District No. 3 Station 23 B..

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Monroe Township Police Dispatch Center and Monroe Township fire chief officers are encouraged to monitor and assess response time data to determine opportunities for reducing response times.

5.2 The Township and Fire Districts are encouraged to consider maintaining a four fire station model.

5.3 The Township and Fire Districts are encouraged to consider relocating the central Fire Station 23 A currently operated by Fire District No. 3 to better serve the south-western part of the Township.

5.4 The Fire Districts are encouraged to continue to pursue implementation of full automatic closest available unit dispatch type mutual aid with all surrounding fire agencies or municipalities.

5.5 The Fire Districts are encouraged to continue to work with all surrounding fire agencies in the development and implementation of common state-of-the-art operational policies and procedures and standard operating procedures.

MONROE TOWNSHIP FIRE SERVICES FACILITIES

5.6 The Township and Fire District No. 1 are encouraged to pursue the replacement of the antiquated facilities currently utilized by the Monroe Township Fire Company with the new facility being located within one-quarter mile of the current location.

5.7 As part of an aggressive volunteer recruitment and retention effort, Fire Districts No. 2 and No. 3 should reassess the suitability of current facilities for housing volunteer members.

5.8 The Township, Fire District No. 2 and the Applegarth Volunteer Fire Company should assess the future use of the old volunteer fire station for potential training or other beneficial uses.

5.9 The Township and future fire services delivery authority having jurisdiction should consider the need for a fifth fire station in the Route 33 corridor, based on future development that may occur.

CHAPTER SIX
IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

This Chapter includes a number of aspects of the implementation of the consolidated fire services approach: discussion of the basis for decision-making, transition, planning and potential savings from consolidation. Additionally, an Implementation Plan with a suggested timeline schedule is included for consideration.

This Monroe Township Fire District Consolidation Study includes a number of consolidated models for consideration with a number of implementation options. The recommendations in this plan represent the Study Team's best judgment at this time based on available information. Of course, municipal officials should make the final decision on options and recommendations in this planning Study.

EMPLOYEE AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

In developing this Study, paid and volunteer firefighters and officers of the Monroe Township Fire Districts and fire companies were interviewed to gain input concerning the Monroe fire services and their suggestions for the future with consolidated fire and rescue services delivery. In addition, a number of taxpayers, property owners, business officials, fire officials, state officials, residents and other stakeholders were interviewed to gain their input on the current fire and rescue service provision and possible consolidation. A substantial number of the recommendations in this Study were suggested based on customer and service provider input.

As the Township charts an appropriate course of action, the Study Team strongly recommends that an advisory committee should play a major role during the review process. Therefore, the Study Team recommends that a Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee be formed by the Mayor to provide input and coordination.

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

ACTION PLAN

In the view of the Study Team, a Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee should be appointed with a membership representative of various Township and Fire District officials, public safety service providers and stakeholders, possibly including:

1. The Board Chairman of each of the three Fire Districts;
2. A Representative of the League of Women Voters;
3. A current Councilman;
4. The Township Business Administrator;
5. A former Fire District fire chief;
6. A volunteer chief officer each from Fire Districts 1 and 2;
7. The IAFF Local 3170 union President;
8. The Township Police Chief.

The review process steps suggested to be followed by an appointed Monroe Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee leading to the development of fire services consolidation recommendations include the following:

1. Mayor appoints members of the Committee members and chair person;
2. Committee organizes and determines review process;
3. Fire District Consolidation Study Report reviewed;
4. Gain relevant input from interested parties;
5. Clarify any observations, conclusions and recommendations based on input;
6. Evaluate significance of input cited by stakeholders, staff and volunteers;
7. Fire District Consolidation Advisory Committee provides report to Mayor and Council stating observations, conclusions and recommendations on fire and rescue services consolidation.

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

REVIEW OF THE STUDY

As a first step, the Township, Fire Districts, Fire Companies and stakeholders are encouraged to take an appropriate time to review the Study. This Fire District Consolidation Study plan is very detailed and requires consideration of a substantial amount of information, including the recommendations. During the review process, the Township and the Advisory Committee are encouraged to gain relevant input and clarification on practices, procedures, policies and programs; incorporate any clarification/s in the report; reorder recommendations based on the review and relevant input; and, move forward.

In making decisions regrading the implementation, the governing body/s and Township-wide Fire Fire Chief, once appointed, should consider two key concepts: the human element, and customer and stakeholders considerations.

HUMAN ELEMENT

An organization's most important resource is its people. Consideration of any form of change tends to generate anxiety and strong emotional feelings among those affected. Many of the perceived anxieties are unfounded, however, that does not make the feelings any less real. This fact should be recognized and addressed as part of an implementation program.

Any fears, misgivings, or concerns about the implementation of the Consolidated fire services approach should be confronted frankly and openly by the Township and leadership of the Consolidation approach. Furthermore, the posture should be positive. Most of the barriers to a more efficient and cost-effective fire services delivery in any jurisdiction can be avoided or circumvented if more personnel were involved in the decision-making.

In short, maintaining a high consideration of the human element during any change is a key component to success.

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

CUSTOMER-ORIENTED DECISIONS

While developing and/or considering options and recommendations for a Monroe area Consolidated fire services approach, safety was clearly an important cornerstone. However, any decisions to be made should consider what is best for the "customer:" the resident, the business owner, the shoppers and the visitors.

Although day-to-day issues consume a great deal of energy, public safety personnel everywhere need to guard against "losing track" of organizational purpose: to provide timely and quality service to the customer. In that regard, the Study Team was impressed with the strong commitment and attitudes of the fire personnel in the Monroe Fire Districts and Fire Companies.

SELECTION OF THE FIRE CHIEF

Regardless of the governing option/s selected, possibly the most important staffing decision to be made by the authority having jurisdiction will be the selection of a Township-wide Fire Chief. The individual selected for this crucial position will not only administer and command the day-to-day functioning of the chosen fire service consolidation approach, but will "set the tone" for this new fire agency. The Fire Chief should have a comprehensive vision for the future of the chosen consolidated approach, and should be seen as a progressive fire services leader and innovator. This individual will be expected to lay the groundwork for a state-of-the-art fire and rescue service delivery approach that is respected in the Monroe Township region and in the State of New Jersey.

This individual should be selected from a pool of extremely qualified candidates with, among other things, experience in medium to large fire department/s, successful combination fire department/s, regional fire service delivery, a strong applicable educational background and Executive Fire Officer and/or Chief Fire Officer designation. An ordinance would likely be needed to establish qualifications and authority. Qualified, interested candidates for this critical position should be recruited and selected from both inside and outside the Monroe

fire services. The Study Team suggests that the Township consider filling this position through a national search.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

The Township has made it clear as to the desire and intention that fire services delivery be a combination paid and volunteer -staffed fire service delivery agency. The leadership of the volunteer fire companies have indicated their concern that they may not be allowed to be a part of the fire services delivery approach and not involved in emergency fire and rescue service delivery in the future. This planning document includes a number of recommendations for the Township, the consolidated fire services delivery approach, the volunteer fire companies and the volunteer members that are intended to retain and regenerate the involvement of volunteer members of the communities in the delivery of fire and rescue services.

The maintenance and enhancement of volunteer involvement in fire protection of the Township will not be an easy task. In the opinion of the Study Team, who have provided planning services for more than 100 volunteer fire agencies, it is possible to maintain a team effort on the part of all involved: Township, paid firefighters, volunteer fire companies and volunteer members. Each must make a commitment and consider following through with essential tasks and actions, including the first action by the volunteer fire companies and members: to determine to be involved as a member of the services delivery team.

As an indiction of the cost effective nature of utilization of volunteer fire staffing **the citizens of Monroe Township are reaping major substantial benefits from the all volunteer fire services system in Fire District No. 1. To provide the same level of service with full-time paid personnel in the fire station providing the response of three fully paid-staffed units (engine, ladder and command officer) would require at least $2.7 million each fiscal year for personnel wages at an average annual salary of $60,000 (not including benefits) per employee on the 24X72 hour schedule as is currently used in Fire District No. 2 and No. 3.**

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

TRAINING PLAN

In order to be capable of providing quality fire and rescue services, firefighters and officers must continue to be well trained throughout their career (paid and volunteer). The ability of firefighters and officers to provide effective service is enhanced through training, certifications, and experience gained over time.

A number of recommendations in this Plan relate to the components of a high quality firefighter training program, including the need to develop and implement a comprehensive fire and rescue training program that would include recruit training, probationary training, in-service training, officer training and chief executive level training and certification. A high priority should be placed on development and implementation of a training plan.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

The implementation of the chosen consolidation approach will result in a major effort to develop and implement a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and SOGs for operations, administration and personnel. Critical to this effort will be the development of a complete set of safety-related policies, procedures and SOGs.

It is suggested that a committee made up of a broad cross section of paid and volunteer staff, including a union representative, be selected to work on this important effort and make recommendations, in the form of drafts, to the Fire Chief.

TRANSITION STAFFING PLAN

Depending on the option/s selected, the implementation of a consolidated fire services approach will require the development and implementation of a transition staffing plan. By necessity, the specific components to be included in such a plan would depend upon the rank structure and staffing plan ultimately approved for implementation. The Study Team suggests that implementation will be work intensive and require substantial effort on the part of paid and volunteer personnel. Any staffing adjustments made possible should be

accomplished through attrition and/or re-assignment with the staffing of a number of key functions in the agency being considered, including:

1. Fire prevention;
2. Operational command;
3. Training;
4. Administration;
5. Apparatus purchasing and maintenance;
6. Pre-hospital first responder emergency medical services; as needed, and,
7. Volunteer recruitment and retention programs.

Post-transition, as the operations and administration become more focused and developed the Fire Chief and authority having jurisdiction will need to monitor civilian staffing needs and make adjustments as appropriate. The broad cross-section of possible civilian staffing functions include:

1. Finance and budgeting;
2. Purchasing;
3. Administrative and secretarial;
4. Planning;
5. Grant development and administration; and,
6. Apparatus repair.

FIRE STATIONS UTILIZED

All current fire station facilities utilized by the current Fire Districts are owned either by the Fire District or the volunteer fire companies who have been receiving compensation from the Districts for use of their facilities. With implementation of a consolidation approach, the compensation to the volunteer fire companies for facility use should continue.

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

FISCAL IMPACTS

There are potential savings from consolidation. The primary areas for savings involve the allocation of apparatus and the paid staffing approach. A summary of estimated savings could involve the following, depending on implementation decisions.

Potential Apparatus Savings

With the possible implementation of consolidation an apparatus fleet reduction may be possible. This fleet reduction could provide the following type of decrease in future apparatus costs and a potential revenue from the disposition of current surplus units as follows:

- Twenty-year life cycle replacement cost savings.
- 20-year annual operating and maintenance expense savings.
- Revenue (or trade-in value) from sale of excess apparatus.

In summary regarding apparatus, the Township, fire districts and volunteer fire companies could incur a 20-year life-cycle savings in the cost of purchasing and maintaining apparatus and a potential one-time revenue could result from the sale or trade-in of surplus apparatus. These savings would only be realized if the suggested changes are made as outlined in this Plan. Moreover, the savings would accrue to the owner of the apparatus: volunteer fire companies, Township and/or fire district/s.

Alternate Sources of Funding

The Study Team is aware of a number of potential alternate past and future sources of funding that should be considered by the Township and the Fire Chief and authority having jurisdiction. They include:

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

A. United States Fire Administration (USFA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program for grants and funding;
B. U.S. Department of Homeland Security Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program for equipment for first responders;
C. USFA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program;
D. Federal Office of Hazardous Materials, Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant program;
E. Fire inspection and plans review fees;
F. False alarm charges; and,
G. National Fire Academy Training Assistance funding.

There are a number of potential alternate sources of funding for various aspects of the provision of fire and rescue services. The authority having jurisdiction and the Township are encouraged to aggressively research and seek out these and other opportunities for funding. Some of these sources have the potential for substantial ongoing sources of revenue while others may be one-time project specific grants or other funding. Fire departments that pursue alternate sources of funding find the revenue beneficial to service delivery and to many times supplement the normal primary source/s of funding.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

If officials should consider and develop a consolidated approach, Figure 6.1 (follows Page 154) is a Suggested Implementation Timeline for consideration. Of course, a final timeline should be determined by officials.

ANNUAL UPDATES

The Township and officials of the authority having jurisdiction of the selected consolidation option are encouraged to assign staff to update this plan on an annual basis.

IMPLEMENTATION - FIRE SERVICES CONSOLIDATION

QUALITY OF PERSONNEL

In the conduct of comprehensive studies and plans such as this one, it is not unusual for fire personnel to resent a study and/or fail to participate in the study. In the Township, Fire Districts and Fire Companies, the Study Team was most impressed with the attitudes and quality of personnel. This positive impression includes the paid staff, members of International Association of Fire Fighters, volunteers, Township officials and staff. They expressed pride in a number of the very progressive programs and initiatives by the participating organizations. This pride and accomplishment are well deserved.

In the judgment of the Study Team, the stakeholders in Monroe Township (residents, business officials, elected and appointed officials, and visitors) can be very proud of the employees and volunteers of the respective fire organizations. It was a pleasure for the Study Team to work with members on the current model merger programs and those that should be considered for the future.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The following is a summary of the vision for the future of a consolidated fire services delivery approach :

A. Uniform policy direction provided by the appropriate authority/s having jurisdiction;
B. Operational command and administration by a progressive Fire Chief;
C. Organization structure including the divisions of Operations, Fire Prevention, Training and Safety, and Planning and Research;
D. Rank structure including Fire Chief, deputy chiefs, assistant chiefs, captains, lieutenants and firefighters;
E. Implementation of a state-of-the-art fire and rescue training program;
F. Delivery of pre-hospital EMS first responder service delivery, as needed;
G. Operation of an aggressive fire prevention program, including firefighter/officer building inspections on a planned periodic basis;

H. Operation of four fire stations, or five, if justified in the future based on development;

I. Operation of four engines and two trucks;

J. Apparatus fleet to include two engines and one ladder truck for reserve service;

K. Substantial volunteer participation in the operations Township-wide;

L. Apparatus maintenance provided by a shop with an apparatus maintenance staff;

M. Assignment of at least an officer and two firefighters (total of 3 staff) to each engine company;

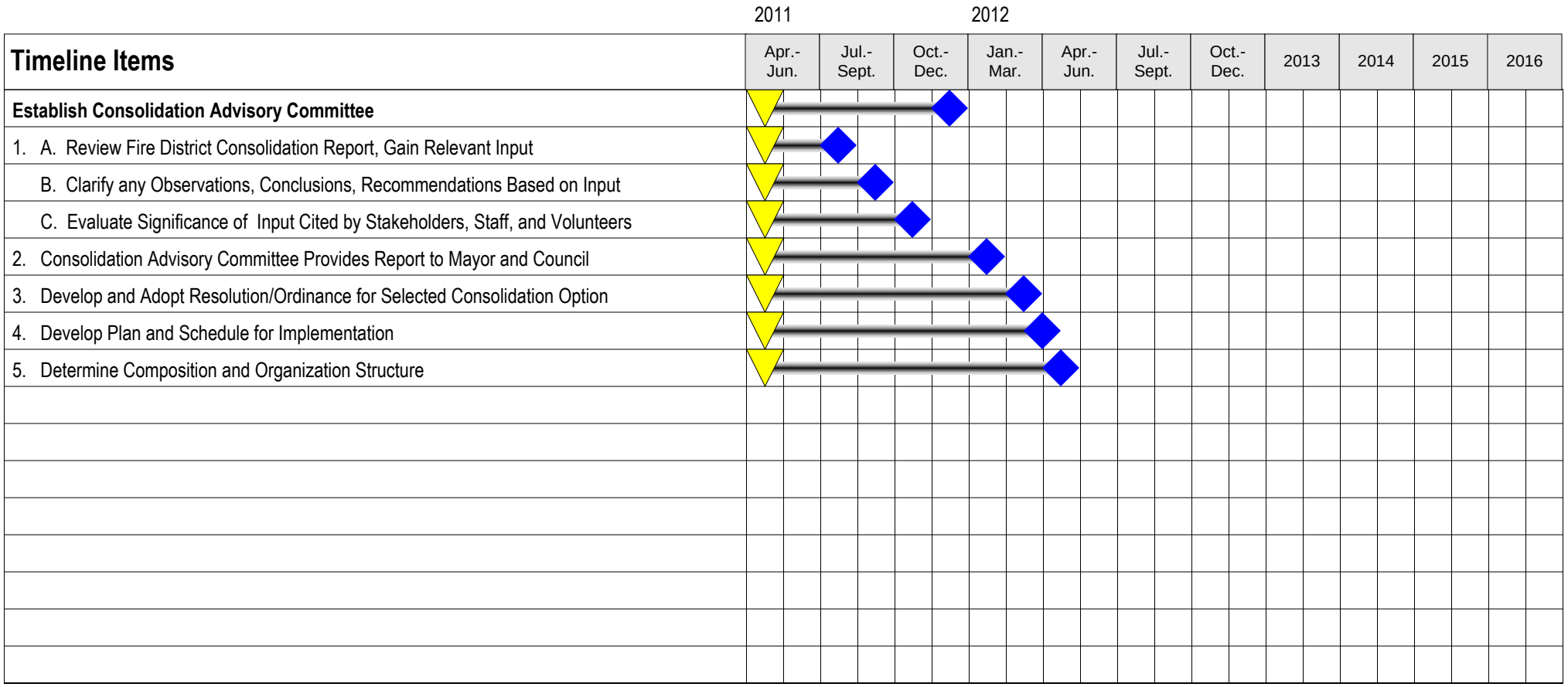
N. Assignment of at least an officer and two firefighters (total staff of 3) to each ladder truck;

O. Assignment of civilian personnel to appropriate staff positions, including budget, personnel, planning; and,

P. One union contract.

Figure 6-1

Monroe United Fire Rescue
Monroe Township, New Jersey
Suggested Timeline
Page One of One



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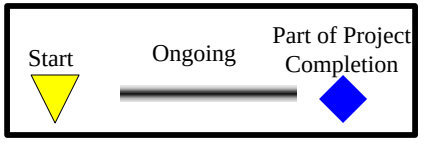

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