

**DEVELOPMENT OF CRITERIA FOR
AN ASSISTANT PLANNING AND RESEARCH OFFICER**

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

With the inevitable growth in and around the Greensboro area the Greensboro Fire Department realized the need for more efficient and timely planning to prepare for this growth. The problem is the Greensboro Fire Department will have to have an efficient, dedicated, functional and operational Planning and Research Section to meet the needs of the future.

The purpose of this research project was to develop the criteria needed for additional personnel to be added to the Planning and Research Section to allow for this more efficient planning.

An action research methodology was utilized to determine (a) What standards, statutes, standards and/or other criteria are there for providing a planning and research division within the fire service?; (b) What factors/criteria are other emergency agencies utilizing for comparable positions?; (c) What are the criteria to be included in an Assistant Planning and Research Officer's job description?

The procedures used to complete this research project included a literature review of books, professional journals, an evaluation of other emergency agencies' and Greensboro Fire Department's documents and records, and the review of a recently completed survey of other fire departments by the Greensboro Fire Department's Planning and Research Section.

Results of the research showed limited information available on what was required in a Planning and Research Section in the fire service. The information collected from other emergency agencies basically compiled the criteria, as it would relate to the Greensboro Fire Department for a planning and research position. These

criteria along with the requirements within the Greensboro Fire Department are the proposed criteria of this research project.

The recommendations from this research project established that one person could not do all the duties and assignments being placed on a department of this size. Therefore the addition of at least one person to perform the duties of an Assistant Planning and Research Officer is proposed.

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INTRODUCTION

The fire service is steep in tradition and has been apprehensive to change. The fire service has seemed to be a reactive organization instead of proactive. This reactivity has prevented the fire service from being as professional an organization as it should be. By being reactive the fire service has not allowed itself to be open to change and this has possibly cost this profession lives, equipment, monies, opportunities and time.

The fire service is now at the beginning of a new millennium and therefore it needs to change its attitude toward planning. Citizens no longer accept the fire service with open arms and gratitude. The fire service is constantly under scrutiny and observation for its stewardship by its citizens, city, county, and other governing bodies. By planning, the fire service will be able to more thoroughly justifying its needs, whether its buying new apparatus, merging communication centers, building new stations, employing additional personnel or the way they purchase day to day supplies.

The problem that spawned this research project was the need for the fire service to have an efficient, dedicated, functional, and operational planning and research division. The purpose of this research project is to develop criteria to be used in a job description that accurately portrays the duties and responsibilities that are to be performed by the Assistant Planning and Research Officer. To accomplish this the action methodology of research was used to answer the following questions:

1. What standards, statutes, standards and/or other criteria are there for providing a planning and research division within the fire service?

2. What factors/criteria are other emergency service agencies utilizing for comparable positions?
3. What are the criteria to be included in an Assistant Planning and Research Officer's job description?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Greensboro Fire Department is a full service fire department providing emergency services for a community of 213,000 people (City of Greensboro Website). The department currently employs 380 uniformed and non-uniformed personnel working from 19 work locations. Due to the past growth and the future growth to occur due to construction of the Randleman Dam and the construction of the new Federal Express site at the airport the fire department has been under an unusually high amount of pressure to plan for this future growth. The Randleman Dam will be the needed water source to support growth and the Federal Express Distribution center will be the catalyst for growth.

The present fire chief has developed a Vision Statement that requires preparation for the future. One of the goals to accomplish the vision is that the leadership team will create and maintain a plan for organizational development that embraces our core values of integrity, stewardship, respect, and honesty (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000). For the department to be able to meet this goal it must realize the need to reorganize the Planning and Research Section into a comprehensive and efficient section of the department (Greensboro Fire Expectations, 2000).

The Fire Chief's Vision requires the planning and research division to be able to accomplish tasks it cannot efficiently do at this time. Some of the tasks are:

- The capability of planning for future fire stations due to inevitable annexations.
- The increase in personnel to handle this growth.
- To have open communications with the other city and county planning departments to prepare for the influx of communities and businesses.
- Technology enhancements for the department.

Being able to see into the future and make recommendations to the Chief's office for growth, equipment, Capital Improvements Program, etc. the Planning and Research Section will be able to perform more efficiently (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000).

At present, the Planning and Research Section is the catch all for all projects, reports, and technology-based ideas with limited, if any time left for actual planning and research. Due to this ever-increasing workload the Greensboro Fire Department has decided to reorganize this section so the department can better meet the Vision Statement Goals.

The reorganization will put the Greensboro Fire Department a step ahead of the other agencies in the city and allow the fire department to set the standard for response to growth. With the reorganization of the Planning and Research Section, planning and research will then be able to produce more accurate and detailed information that the Leadership Team can use. The information obtained by planning and research will provide the basis for an offensive plan that will better educate and prepare our Leadership Team. With this new offensive plan, the Leadership Team will then be able to make justifiable request for new stations, new equipment, different response plans and more people from city staff. These requests may be taken care of through hiring,

automatic dispatch with neighboring departments, building new stations and/or through merger/consolidations with local departments.

This research paper will identify the tools, positions and paths necessary for the department to meet the Vision's goals by better utilizing a truly dedicated planning and research section (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000). In completing this research project the realization of the need for an organizational change and the unlocking of this organization's creativity as suggested in the Managing Creativity chapter in the Executive Fire Officer's Program, Executive Development Course will allow the Greensboro Fire Department to continue to grow efficiently and effectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research Question 1. What standards, statutes, standards, and/or other criteria are there for providing a planning and research division within the fire service? While there are no standards or directives to form a planning and research division, the fire service could not survive this ever-changing world without this division. "Joint Vision 2010" an unclassified document provided by the military as their master plan or strategic concept guide can provide the fire service a format to prepare for the future. Joint Vision 2010 has four main sections: Threads of Continuity, Dynamic Changes, Conduct of Joint Operations and Implementing Joint Vision (Rielage, 2000). In the Greensboro Fire Department, Vision 2010 can be compared to our Vision Statement which states, "The Greensboro Fire Department shall be a community based, regionally aligned organization, truly dedicated to service and excellence through superior leadership and technology that fosters a climate of openness, trust, and diversity that recognizes the achievement of people working together (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000).

Greensboro's Vision Statement's first goal: To accomplish the vision, the leadership team will create and maintain a plan for organizational development that embraces our core values of integrity, stewardship, respect and honesty. In the first goal one of the objectives states: "Develop, implement, and maintain a two to three year Strategic Plan that focuses on the six critical goals" (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000).

Within the Vision statement there are criteria to study merger/consolidation options, maintain ISO #1, maintain our accreditation through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), develop benchmark measurements for the organization, and to continue to implement the Standard of Coverage Policy implemented in 1997 (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000). Planning is a staff function and is one of many functions that must take place before the department can deliver "line" services, such as fire suppression, fire inspections, and emergency medical services (Chapple, 1988). Planning is a fire department function that can reduce the legal risk of a municipality by recognizing, intervening, and reducing ways that can lead to legal risk (Chapple, 1988).

With the ever-changing environment of our workplace and the potential of what the future can bestow on the fire service, the fire service needs to be planning for the future and possible changes that it must endure. These changes will be due to technology, more informed citizens, budgets, and workload. Some of the items the fire service needs to be preparing for are: robotics, advanced imaging, Global Positioning Satellite System (GPS), public education, expanding roles, and interoperability with police, schools, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), etc. (Rielage, 2000).

To summarize this research question it is obvious there are limited, if any standards for a planning and research division. There is however the realization of the need for such a division. Vision 2010 sets the path for what the fire service should be considering by doing a comparison of the fire service with this military document (Rielage, 2000).

Research Question 2. What criteria/factors are other emergency agencies utilizing for a comparable position? The Greensboro Fire Department's Planning and Research Section sent out fifty-one surveys in April of 2000. Of the fifty-one only eleven responses were received. Of the eleven, six of the departments had divisions similar to a planning and research section. Within these six, three were 100% civilian, two were 100% uniform and one was a combination of civilian and uniformed. Only three had more than one person assigned, while the others were sharing workloads throughout the other divisions within the department (Greensboro Fire Department Survey, 2000).

Some of the duties/responsibilities for personnel working in a similar division in the Charlotte Fire Department are: manage the incident reporting system, annual report, manage strategic and business plan processes, manage the annexation process, prepare request for council, impact studies are just a few of the duties (Greensboro Fire Department Survey, 2000).

In the Plano Fire Department an employee performs some of the same duties as Charlotte along with being the Fire LAN Administrator. This employee prepares and trains the department on software and the computer network, coordinates long range planning, performs cost/benefit analysis of alternative configurations of the LAN, prepares network budget. The education and experience requirements and the

minimum qualifications for this position are a Bachelor's Degree in Public or Business Administration with college level coursework in information management systems and intermediate statistics, three years experience in developing system specifications, analysis of networking systems and one year performing statistical analysis (Plano, 1998).

Another position in the Plano Fire Department is the Fire Research Analyst. A few of the principal responsibilities of this position is to analyze operational procedures; collect, analyze and review fire and emergency medical service (EMS) statistical data; develop questionnaires and surveys; maintain working relationship with the Geographic Information Systems Department. Educational requirements include a Bachelor's degree in Public or Business Administration, including nine-semester hours college-level course work in statistical analysis. Experience required is two years in statistical research and analysis, using automated systems and records, preferably in the fire service (Plano, 1999).

In Henrico County, Virginia the fire department requires one of the positions within planning to have considerable knowledge of administrative procedures, research procedures, office automation and the ability to interface between fire and Information systems department. This position must also be able to prepare analytical reports, and statistical analysis of the fire department (Henrico County, 1998). Another position in Henrico County Fire is the Technician Support Specialist that must be familiar with equipment and systems within the record management system and fire stations. This technician position will be able to instruct/teach personnel how to properly use the technology placed at the work-sites and will have the organizational skills to maintain a

listing of user names, passwords, and technological problem list. This position will also be able to write documents and procedures for the use of the records management system and update as required (Henrico County, 1998).

In Prince William County, Virginia, the Fire and Rescue Information System Administrator needs to have database administration and design skills, and ability in programming with software report. This position must also coordinate the establishment of automated systems standards, procedures, policies and performance analysis for information systems. Education and/or experience requirements must be equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in computer science, automated data processing, management information systems, or related field. Experience in a fire and rescue services environment is desired for the more versatile administrator (Prince William County Fire and Rescue, 1995).

Prince William County also has a position that serves as the primary contact for contractors doing development for their records management system and coordinates the establishment of automated systems standards. This position:

- Implement department activities associated with integrating automated and non-automated information systems.
- Will manage daily operations of computers and support activities.
- Develops and maintains information system plan for fire department, develops standard reports from fire records management system and develops inventory system to track computers and software licenses.

- Consults with the Fire Program Manager to define requirements for future modules and in the development of the department's budget as it relates to information system needs.
- Will also consult with the county information systems department on system design and enhancements to maintain county standards.

The education requirements for this position are Bachelor's of Science in computer science, Management Information System or related field. This position prefers to have two to three years of experience that includes database administration and design and also experience in the fire and rescue environment (Prince William County, 1995).

Houston Fire expects their Planning and Research division to analyze and evaluate current operations in the risk management office to improve overall effectiveness and to continually improve operational guidelines to raise overall performance of the department (Houston, 2000).

In summary, this researcher found several departments that either have a Planning and Research Section or personnel who perform planning and research duties. There were several criteria reviewed and can be utilized in the criteria for the position within the Greensboro Fire Department.

Research Question 3. What are the criteria for an Assistant Planning and Research Officer's job description? The present Planning and Research Officer's basic function is to organize and direct the Fire Department's planning and research programs and management information systems. The position also provides administrative support to the Deputy Chiefs and the Fire Chief. This position is responsible for preparing and coordinating research and evaluative reports on fire related projects and

conducts research and analysis for forecasting departmental programs and operations. This position can also be expected to perform as a command officer in emergency operations if needed (Greensboro Fire Department Planning and Research Officer, 2000).

A list of principal responsibilities and accountabilities are as follows: maintains budget for management information systems, maintains Planning and Research's budget, manages and evaluates assigned employees, works closely with other city departments, is the liaison for contracts with neighboring departments, generates periodic reports, provides up to date monitoring with reference to population trends, water system analysis and industrial growth patterns. This position is responsible for managing the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), manages departmental specific programs, and is the chair of the technology committee (Greensboro Fire Department Planning and Research Officer, 2000). Desirable skills for the present position include extensive knowledge of department and city policies and procedures, municipal budget system and procedures, extensive knowledge of all departmental operations, skilled in project development and management, considerable analytical skills, working knowledge of available fire service based software, and considerable knowledge of present and future computerized systems. Qualifications are the rank of Assistant Chief, some undergraduate work and an Associates Degree (Greensboro Fire Department Planning and Research Officer, 2000).

Deputy Chief B.C. Cox, Administrative Chief authorized an internal study of the Planning and Research Section. This study recognized not only assigned duties but also additional duties being performed in this section. In the field of technology,

planning and research is responsible for all technology research and implementation, teaching, updating and software backups. Planning and research is also responsible for the research and implementation of a new fire records management system (FRMS). Presently, planning and research maintains the FRMS by providing training, updates and input of selection criteria. Additionally, with the implementation of the GIS program, ArcView®, planning and research handles all requests for maps. This includes territory maps, annexation studies, station placement studies and analytical maps to be used by personnel within the Greensboro Fire Department, other city departments and neighboring fire departments (Greensboro Fire Expectations, 2000).

The record system now in place can only produce a limited assortment of reports. Additional reports are to be ran using Seagate's Crystal Reports® software. Types of reports being requested are for training hours, specific equipment usage, Assistant City Manager Report, and reports related to Insurance Service Organization (ISO) and the accreditation (Greensboro Fire Expectations, 2000).

Planning and research must also participate on several committees. Those committees within the fire department are Technology, Productivity, and Audit Review committees. Participation in the city/county committees have been in Consolidated Communications, GIS, City Mainframe and Planning/Growth committees (Greensboro Fire Expectations, 2000).

Future changes in the way Greensboro Fire Department will do business have increased the amount of research being requested and/or expected. Types of research so far have been limited to mobile devices, Automatic Vehicle Locations (AVL) systems, mobile command software and wireless systems (Greensboro Fire Expectations, 2000).

The Planning and Research Section must also maintain state certifications, handle contracts with neighboring departments and be the representative for the fire department at most multi-agency planning meetings (Greensboro Fire Expectations, 2000).

A more definitive path has been established for the fire department with the introduction of the Greensboro Fire Department's Vision and Strategic Plan. In this plan, Planning and Research can now visualize the future of where the Fire Chief wants the fire department to be. There are several goals and objectives listed with most directly or indirectly affecting the Planning and Research Section. In the Plan there are objectives dealing with merger/consolidation, communications, public education, ISO and Accreditation, benchmark measurements and risk assessments. All of these objectives pass through the Planning and Research Section in some form, whether as a special report, research, implementation of new technology, mapping or just pure manpower (Greensboro Fire Plan, 2000).

This question asked for criteria specific to Greensboro. By reviewing the Vision Statement, the present Planning Officer's job description, and the Planning and Research Expectations document this researcher will be able to develop criteria for the this position.

PROCEDURES

Definition of Terms

Leadership Team. Within the Greensboro Fire Department the team is composed of the three Deputy Chiefs, the Chief of Staff and the Fire Chief.

The preferred outcome of this Applied Research Project is the development of a minimum set of criteria to be used in organizing the present Planning and Research Section of the Greensboro Fire Department. An understanding of what was expected, what was being done today, and what was being done across the United States was performed using action research through the literature review. The type of information collected was job descriptions, strategic plans, and visions of different fire organizations. Through the review and evaluation of the data collected a job description listing criteria was developed and is listed in Appendix A.

The Greensboro Fire Department sent a survey via e-mail to fifty-one fire organizations and received eleven responses. After six to eight weeks, Planning and Research reviewed and summarized the responses. The responses not only sent answers to the survey but also several copies of analytical reports and job descriptions were received. The survey questions are included in Appendix B.

Research was also accomplished by searching the World Wide Web for information on planning and research divisions. The web provided the Strategic Plan from Houston Fire Department. Within the Greensboro Fire Department, archived records and present job descriptions were reviewed to gain an understanding of where planning and research was in comparison to where the department would like for it to be.

Research was limited to interpreting what other agencies were accomplishing or wanting to accomplish, then evaluating the data to see what would or could apply to the Greensboro Fire Department. Also, there are no set standards or guidelines for this type of position located in any of the National Fire Protection Standards.

RESULTS

Research Question 1. What standards, statutes, standards and/or other criteria are there for providing a planning and research division within the fire service? While there were no definite criteria for a Planning and Research Section the “Joint Division 2010” document that was reviewed in *Fire Chief* magazine listed four main sections: Threads of Continuity, Dynamic Changes, Conduct of Joint Operations and Implementing Joint Vision (Rielage, 2000).

In Houston Fire Department’s Strategic Plan, planning and research is responsible for identifying improved methods, apparatus, and equipment for the department. They assume that safety, effectiveness, and efficiency is the criteria for all changes. Change for the sake of change is counter-productive if analysis and evaluation are absent from the process (Houston, 2000).

The action of planning is a staff function that can reduce the legal risk of a municipality by recognizing, intervening, and reducing ways that can lead to legal risk (Chapple, 1988).

The future holds criteria for the fire service with the introduction of robotics, advanced imaging, Global Positioning Satellites, the fire services expanding roles and interoperability with police, schools, Federal Emergency Management Agency, etc. (Rielage, 2000).

Research Question 2. What factors/criteria are other emergency service agencies utilizing for a comparable position? Charlotte Fire Department’s Planning and Research Section manages the incident reporting system, annual report, manages the strategic and business plan processes, manages the annexation process, prepares

request for council and performs impact studies (Greensboro Fire Department Survey, 2000).

The Plano Fire Department in Texas uses its planning and research section to employ the LAN Administrator who is responsible for administrative duties, prepares and trains the department on software, coordinates long range planning, performs cost-benefit analysis (Plano, 1998). Also in the Plano Fire Department is a fire research analyst who analyzes operational procedures, collects, analyzes and revises fire and emergency medical system statistical data, maintains working relationship with the geographical information systems (GIS) department (Plano, 1999).

An information systems administrator is part of Planning and Research in Prince William County. This position needs to have database administrative and design skills, along with reporting software experience. This position must also coordinate the establishment of automated systems, standards, procedures and performance analysis for information systems. The primary contact for contractors working on Information Systems projects in Prince William County will be this position's responsibility (Prince William County, 1995).

In Henrico County the Planning and Research Section must be able to prepare analytical reports, perform financial and statistical analysis of fire department operations (Henrico County, 1998). This section must also be able to instruct personnel on how to properly use the technology in place, be able to write documents and procedures for the use of the records management system and update as required (Henrico County, 1998).

Research Question 3. What are the criteria to be included in an Assistant Planning and Research Officer's job description? The only additional criteria found through the research were for several position criteria that are now or could be in the Planning and Research Section.

Some of the present day duties within the Planning and Research Section within the Greensboro Fire Department is to maintain the planning and research budget, work with other city departments, generate reports, and is responsible for the managing the fire incident reporting system. This position is to also organize and direct the fire department's planning and research programs. This position will provide administrative support to staff officers and is responsible for preparing and coordinating research and evaluative reports on fire related projects. This position may also be expected to perform as a command officer if needed (Greensboro Fire Department Job Description, 2000).

Skills needed for this section include extensive knowledge of departmental and city policies and procedures, project management skills, and analytical skills. This person should also be up to date on fire service software packages and keeping up with technology as it relates to emergency services and what that could mean to the Greensboro Fire Department. This position should have a minimum of an Associates Degree in Fire Science with undergraduate studies in business and statistics (Greensboro Fire Department Job Description, 2000).

Greensboro Fire's Vision Statement places a lot of responsibility on the planning and research section. Some of the goals and objectives that are to be maintained by the planning and research sections are: maintain ISO #1 rating and the CFAI

Accreditation; maintain the merger/consolidation studies; develop appropriate benchmark measurements for the department; perform a new risk assessment of the city (Greensboro Fire Department Plan, 2000).

An internal survey was completed showing the strengths and weaknesses within the section, which occurred when the Fire Chief directed the Deputy Chief of Administration to reorganize the Planning and Research Section. It also showed where the Section was lacking skills due to technology and software advancements in the fire service. Geographical information system (GIS) is now the responsibility of the fire department, along with the fire records management system, which included both hardware and software. This change brought about the need for sophisticated reporting software to be utilized and the addition of web base authoring was now a requirement due to e-Government. Additional workloads were assigned or were birthed from the knowledge now available thanks to technology. Some of the items included but were not limited to: the Internet, the intranet, web based reporting, FIRE STAT (a report for the Fire Chief showing education and fire areas on a map), the need to revamp all of our annual reports and the growth of the section by adding additional personnel (Greensboro Fire Department Expectations, 2000).

DISCUSSION

The present Planning and Research job description for Greensboro shows the position responsibilities before the survey and the implementation of technology. With the overview from other agencies the Planning and Research Section will be able to enhance the present Section. Houston's Strategic Plan stated planning and research was responsible for identifying improved methods, apparatus and equipment. Along

with this responsibility, the Houston's Planning and Research Section is responsible for making sure changes were analyzed before implementation to prevent change just for the sake of change (Houston, 2000). With Houston's attitude in place the Planning and Research Section could also prevent any possible morale problems due to unnecessary changes.

In Charlotte some of the basic duties were to manage the incident reporting system, produce the annual report and manage the annexation (Greensboro Fire Department Survey, 2000). Plano Texas put the LAN Administrator under the Planning and Research Section. This position is responsible for preparing and training the department on software changes and new additions (Plano, 1998). In Plano there is also a fire Research Analyst whose duties include reviewing and analyzing fire and EMS data and maintaining a working relationship with Plano's GIS Division (Plano, 1999).

The Information Systems Administrator in Prince William County was to coordinate the establishment of automated systems, standards, procedures, policies and performance analysis for information systems (Prince William County, 1995).

Henrico County had a business manager and technician support position. These two positions were responsible for preparing analytical reports, doing statistical analysis, were able to instruct personnel on how to use the technology available. They must also have organizational skills to maintain databases of equipment and personnel (Greensboro Fire Department Survey, 2000).

One very common requirement or qualification was education, preferably at the undergraduate level. There was also the need for this position to be up to date on

technology and how it affected the fire service. There was a consensus that a person in this position should be able to analyze and evaluate data being collected by a records management system. This position should have instructor traits so they can teach/share knowledge of updates and new technology with the department.

A very crucial element was that this position must be able to work with and maintain a good relationship with other departments in the city and/or county. This relationship will allow a smoother transition of any and all technology changes and updates as well as keep everyone informed on what is happening in the local government.

With the presumed consensus by administration of this research, if this new position was made available for the Planning and Research section, this section could operate at a more efficient and timely manner. The Section would be able to prevent the other sections of the Fire Department from duplication of work because of this centralization of technology training and updates. The Greensboro Fire Department's Vision Statement would be more realistically obtained by having this additional position due to the consolidation of duties under one section. There would also be a major educational process for the entire department to inform them of what the new capabilities would be in the new Planning and Research Section.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the growth of the Greensboro Fire Department and the information being obtained through this research project, the Assistant Planning and Research Officer would be heavily grounded in technology and analytical abilities. This position should have at a minimum an intermediate knowledge level of technology, be able to manage

the records system as well as any new technologically based projects. This position should be able to assist the Planning and Research Officer with collecting and analyzing data for the annual report, the productivity report and any special request reports from Staff. This position will need to have an understanding of how the Fire Department and the City operate and be able to develop and maintain relationships within the city and county, and be able to perform the duties of the Planning and Research Officer in their absence.

An additional skill or quality would be the capability of this position to be an instructor. This position should be able to develop and deliver course material for any software, technological change and operational change to the rest of the department at any level of expertise using different types of media. There should be a working knowledge of GIS and reporting software to assist in the analysis of data being collected.

The educational requirements should be at the minimum an Associates Degree in Fire Science with undergraduate work in statistics and preferably information management systems. This position should be active in external training opportunities by attending the National Fire Academy to build a peer network and attend non-fire related classes to maintain the technological edge that the emergency services needs.

The attached job description (Appendix A) shows the complete requirements for this position. The fire department should be able to provide a more efficient and accurate service to the community, but more importantly to the department, based on the analysis of data collected and presented in this research project.

In the future a definitive role in the fire service will have to be the planning and research sections. This will only be accomplished if the fire service is able to develop consistent and workable guidelines for developing and improving planning and research sections. If the fire service and future readers can work together in developing the core responsibilities of our planning and research sections then the fire service can become an even more professional and respected profession.

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APPENDIX A

Proposed Assistant Planning Research Officer Job Description

Basic Function

Position involving administrative and technical work assisting the Administrative Chief, Emergency Services Chief, Resource Management Officer, Safety Officer, Chief of Staff and the Planning/Research Officer.

Provides administrative support in preparing and coordinating research and evaluative reports on fire-related projects and conducts research and analysis for forecasting departmental programs and operations.

Work requires extensive initiative and independent judgement in the implementation of Fire Department policies and programs with organization wide impact.

Organizational Relationships

Reports to: Assistant Chief of Planning and Research.

Supervises: Entire department on the operation and maintenance of the Records Management System.

Principal Responsibilities/Accountabilities

Work involves formulating and implementing departmental goals and objectives and performing other related functions as a member of the department's administrative staff.

Develops and maintains close working relationship with other city departments, local, state and federal agencies, associated departmental personnel and the general public, to ensure the most efficient and effective service delivery system possible.

Generates reports, periodically and on demand, targeting major fire problems based upon statistical data.

Participates in and directs the preparation of special projects of special projects and evaluative reports.

Researches data collection systems from within the department and outside sources.

Assists other Fire Departments from across the United States and abroad as the contact person for FRMS and research request for the department.

Provides up to date monitoring with reference to population trends, water system analysis and industrial growth patterns.

Maintains response requirements for citywide fire protection needs including growth and expansion of city services.

Assist with the department's automated information systems and develops automated applications for individual users as needed.

Assist with the management of the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) for data collection and processing purposes.

Assist in conducting an in depth, annual, analysis of all departmental, divisional, activity and presents findings in an annual report and publication of statistical summary.

Assist *Training Division* when necessary, assisting with hiring process, evaluating recruits, teaching classes, and with the development of new training outlines and aids.

Assist *Fire Prevention Division* when necessary in performing fire inspections, fire prevention programs, developing databases, and teaching computer classes.

Assist *Operations Division* when necessary performing the duties of a Line Captain and/or Acting Battalion Chief.

Performs the duties and assumes the responsibilities of the Assistant Chief of Planning and Research as required.

Assist in and assumes other duties and responsibilities as directed by the Deputy Chief of Administrative Services and the Fire Chief of the department.

Desirable Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

Knowledge of department and city organizational structure, operations, policies and procedures.

Knowledge of modern management principles and practices including municipal and fire department organization and administration.

Knowledge of municipal budget system and procedures.

Education/Career Development

Minimum education of Associates Degree in Fire Science with classes at undergraduate level preferred.

Continued involvement in the Fire Service through attendance of conferences and seminars.

Experience in Microsoft products with experience in Oracle or Crystal Reports preferred.

Attended/Attending National Fire Academy on a regular basis to develop a network of individuals and contacts.

APPENDIX B
Greensboro Planning and Research Survey

1. How is your Planning and Research section/division set up? (Organizational chart)
2. How many personnel work in the area of Planning and Research?
3. How many of the personnel are civilian and how many are uniform?
4. If the personnel are uniform, what are the ranks of each?
5. Could you include job descriptions of each person working in the area of Planning and Research? (GIS, Planner, Information Systems person, Records Management Manager, Statistician, etc)
6. What division or position is responsible for station placement studies, annexation studies, CAD liaison, mapping for stations, gathering statistics and GEO files if they are not accomplished within a Planning and Research Division?
7. If you do not have a GIS person where do you go for GIS information?
8. What benchmarks/performance measures do you track for the department? (how often do you gather this information)
9. What type of fire records management system does your department use?
10. Are you presently looking at other systems and if so which ones?
11. What response time measures do you use (time stamps)?
12. Do you track cost per fire call and if so what elements are included in the calculation? Is this specific or a good average?
13. When was your last ISO rating?

We are presently reorganizing our Planning and Research Division, and hope to expand our level of service in this area. Any information you could send our way rather good or bad will be greatly appreciated. After we gather the information we hope to do on-site visits with a few of the departments by the end of June.

If at all possible we would like to receive responses by May 19th, but will gladly accept responses beyond this date. If you would like any information obtained from the above questions please feel free to request it.

We appreciate any response to any or all of the above questions.