



WARWICK EMERGENCY SERVICES ALLIANCE

STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 2012
Facilitated by



Warwick Emergency Services Alliance

Strategic Plan - Executive Summary

During the period of August through October 2011, a project team from VFIS Education, Training and Consulting (VFIS-ETC) conducted a documentation review and site analysis of the fire and Emergency Medical Service delivery system provided by Warwick Emergency Services Alliance (WESA) including Warwick Township, Elizabeth Township and Lititz Borough, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

The Warwick-Lititz-Brickerville area was found to be a very picturesque community with a very positive quality of life. The project team believes the people of the community to be not only proud of their community but are the driving force in making the community a great place to live.

The project team found the fire protection provided to the WESA area to be exactly as anticipated. Four traditional volunteer fire companies comprised of local citizens working to do their best to help their neighbors in time of need. However, the organizations face the same challenges as those in larger communities – staffing, funding, assurance of an adequate response, and coordination with political expectations.

The elected officials, fire and EMS officers of WESA are to be congratulated for their proactive initiative to evaluate fire and EMS services and in developing a plan for the future.

There are many very positive actions being taken at the present time which result in a low fire rate based on actual fire experience reported and policies and practices implemented by each agency.

The suggestions made within this planning document and the comprehensive report are consistent with

- National Fire Protection Association Standard 1720 – Standard for Providing Emergency Services by Volunteer Fire Departments
- Pennsylvania Senate Resolution 60 Report
- Insurance Services Office Guidelines
- Lancaster County Chiefs Association guidelines
- Industry Best Practices e.g. Commission on Fire Service Accreditation Self Assessment Criteria.

MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

Each agency was found to operate independently as separate “businesses”. This is acceptable, however, it does not allow for true integration of planning and routine operation.

To better accomplish this WESA concept, all agencies should individually subscribe to the WESA mission statement, and implement a single administrator for fire service activities should be hired and implement the coordinated efforts of the group consistent with the Strategic Plan.

WESA has adopted a mission statement as follows:

The mission of Warwick Emergency Services Alliance is to provide the highest level of emergency services and protection to our residents and visitors from all hazards through education, awareness, dedication and service of a well-trained, efficient and effective force of volunteer firefighters and volunteer/paid emergency medical providers.

Each fire company and the EMS agency operate under their own by-laws and rules.

Despite all of the positive initiatives, the lack of a true “coordination” role to drive consistency and facilitate tasks and actions needed for consistency was noted by the project team. **A Fire Service Administrator/Coordinator role is necessary for the WESA concept to truly be effective over the long term.** This would be an administrative position that would respond to incidents while at work, but would not have an emergency scene management role. A suggested job description is provided in the report.

STANDARD OF COVER AND RESPONSE TIME

Response data was received and analyzed. It was obtained from the Lancaster County Emergency Dispatch Center to assure consistently recorded and reported information. The current standard of cover was found to be:

In urban/suburban areas (Borough of Lititz and adjoining built-up Warwick Township sections) respond with an apparatus within four (4) minutes of dispatch, arriving within six (6) additional minutes, with a crew of four qualified members on site, 90 percent of the time.

Standards of Response Cover (SOC) is a formalization of what most ESOs have been doing for years—determining what is needed to manage emergencies in your communities and assuring its deployment.

In rural areas of the WESA district, respond with an apparatus within six (6) minutes of dispatch, arriving within twelve (12) additional minutes, with a crew of four qualified members on site, 80 percent of the time.

These response times are consistent with those in similar communities. It is suggested that these times be monitored. If any of the financial metrics change over time (suggest) annual monitoring, the WESA Board should review the data and determine causes for the changes and whether or not material changes have occurred warranting either changes in the standard of cover expectation or changes in staffing, station response, station locations, etc.

INSURANCE SERVICES OFFICE REPORT REVIEW

The most recent Insurance Services Office reports reviewed provide for individual ratings for each community. The ratings result in very respectable ratings and resultant insurance rates for the residents of each municipality. A “region-wide” WESA report should be requested of ISO to better define the ratings/needs based upon a regional response system versus a community response system. This will further help in long-term WESA planning.

APPARATUS

The apparatus was found in excellent condition, well maintained and appropriate for the community. Individually, for each community, there is adequate apparatus. For the region, there may be more apparatus than would be found for a regional response system. This is one area a revised Insurance Services Office report may be of assistance in defining. A recommended long term apparatus plan is provided in the report.

FIRE STATIONS AND STATION LOCATIONS

The fire stations were found to be in appropriate approximate locations for the hazards that are to be protected. Due to multiple stations responding to incidents, the issue of closest station responding to all calls appears to be in place, but this should constantly be monitored to assure proper responses are occurring and closest stations are being dispatched. The fire stations have received upgrades over the years, but there are needs for consideration of a long term station replacement program.

There does not appear to be a need to consolidate the two Warwick Township stations/companies at this time. If the Administrator role does not resolve the administrative demands on fire officers, there may be a need to consolidate them from an administrative aspect in the future.

PERSONNEL, STAFFING, AND TRAINING

Each of the companies indicated an interest in recruiting and retaining more members. The desire is clearly to maintain a volunteer system as long as possible. A FEMA SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant was obtained to assist in firefighter recruitment and retention and a plan was recently implemented to gain more members. There is a need for a more consistent – WESA wide – approach to training and officer training and qualifications. A suggested model has been provided in the report.

The Lititz-Warwick-Brickerville communities the demographics are consistent with communities who are able to sustain volunteer fire companies. A positive recruitment and retention program, with active leadership, should sustain this system for the foreseeable future. VFIS provided additional recruitment and retention tools as part of this strategic planning project.

Standard operating guidelines are in use, but are not consistent among all of the fire companies. Recommendations were provided on the development/adoption/training/implementation of WESA based standard operating guidelines. The Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Association SOGs should be used as the basis for future documents to assure consistency with adjacent agencies that would be co-responding.

FINANCES

Funds for the fire companies are obtained by a variety of revenue streams, different among fire companies. A standardized system for reporting/requesting funds is suggested, given five agencies seeking funds for various operational and capital requirements. Under separate cover a process is provided for consideration in implementing a more comprehensive approach to funding and expense management. Long term it may be highly unlikely that fundraising will suffice and a fire tax would be necessary. However, an approach to better understand revenue and expense streams and patterns is suggested, using the aforementioned document.

A long term capital plan needs to be developed and adopted to define financial needs and allow for appropriate planning. A suggested plan to start discussions is provided in the report. This plan does imply that a defined amount be set aside each year from taxes that will support the financial obligations needed for capital expenses.

OPERATIONS

The project team had the opportunity to observe a joint training exercise at the county training center as well as responses to incidents. The observations resulted in viewing what would be considered normal training evolutions for volunteer fire company operations and are considered acceptable practices.

MUTUAL AID

Mutual aid was found to be effectively planned for and in use, but requires constant monitoring and changes based on risk changes, equipment changes, etc. A standard recommendation for periodic review of mutual aid plans was provided in the text.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Warwick Emergency Medical Services organization was found to be well managed and compliant with state requirements. The organization is appropriately licensed to perform service and is meeting both Regional EMS Council and community expectations for service delivery. Recommendations were provided to annually assure the most current state operating protocols are implemented and to monitor cash flows. Changes in reimbursement rates are occurring which

may or may not affect income/cash flow operations and thus requires close monitoring of income and spending patterns, taking actions as appropriate.

STRATEGIC PLANNING ACTIVITIES

The project team believes that the WESA system has great long term potential for success. The strategic efforts need to focus on

1. Agreement to work together jointly to plan to achieve success
2. Recruit and retain personnel
3. Grow the emergency response system to
 - a. Prevent fires and accidents
 - b. Pre-plan for incidents
 - c. Train
 - d. Suppress/rescue/life save when needed

Appendix 1 is a comprehensive listing of the recommended activities submitted.

CONCLUSION

The reality is that today's fire service is based on three levels of expectation;

1. What the fire department/emergency medical team believes is the best service they can provide
2. What elected officials believe is what should be provided to the people they serve
3. What those who live, work, worship and leisure in the community expect and are willing to pay for.

The provision of this service can be challenging if expectations are different, thus working together to develop reasonable solutions to solve problems and provide service is the key to success. This strategic effort will move key issues to resolution while allowing for open dialogue and change if needed as directed by the WESA team.

Warwick Emergency Services Alliance

Strategic Planning Tasks

2011

Task	Report Recommendation	Responsibility	Status
Adopt Fire and Emergency Services Plan	11-3	WESA Board	
Adopt Strategic Guideline to manage emergency operations, using Lititz FC plan as initial guideline	11-4	WESA Board	
Request Region-wide Assessment by ISO	--	WESA Board & Municipal Officials	

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Strategic Planning Tasks

2012

Task	Report Recommendation	Responsibility	Status
Revise WESA Agreement, Hire WESA Director, & Require dissolution statement in company by-laws, per PA requirements	11-1	WESA Board	
Determine Service Delivery Statement and Standard of Response Cover	11-2	WESA Board	
Determine Standard Reporting Requirements for Companies	11-6	WESA Board	
Develop and release individual company and WESA Collective Annual Report	11-7	Company Presidents	
Develop Long Term Funding/Planning Model	11-9	WESA Board	
Develop standard documentation requirements	11-11	WESA Board	
Implement Recruitment and Retention plan consistent with SAFER Grant	11-12	WESA Board and companies	
Review and develop conceptual vehicle replacement plan consistent with Service Delivery and Standard of Cover Statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish committee - Adopt replacement/funding plan - Develop equipment standardization requirements - Act as needed 	11-15	WESA Board	

Vehicle Rollover Prevention Training	11-16	Company Chiefs	
Submit grant for exhaust systems for stations needing them	11-17	WESA Board	
Standard Operating Guideline Development and approval (1 per month)	11-18	Company Chiefs	
Implement consistent membership requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard application - Entry level physical 	2002 Study recommendation	WESA Board	
Coordinate & promote fund drive	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & committee	

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Strategic Planning Tasks 2013

Task	Report Recommendation	Responsibility	Status
Preplanning process for shared use by companies (1 risk per month or every other month during training sessions)	11-5 and 11-8	Company Chiefs	
Implement Standardized Budget Model	11-10	WESA Board	
Revise Training and officer requirement to be consistent among all agencies	11-13	WESA Board	
Implement Recruitment and Retention plan consistent with SAFER Grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publicize - Community Outreach - Workplace & Business notification - Actively recruit administrative support 	11-12	WESA Board and companies	
Conduct annual pump, ladder, hose and aerial testing	11-14	Company Chiefs	
Standard Operating Guideline Development and approval (1 per month)	11-18	Company Chiefs	
Create a group of non-emergency volunteers	2002 Study recommendation	WESA Board	
Create an ordinance requiring compensation for services rendered at special events	2002 Study recommendation	WESA Board & Municipalities	
Apparatus replacement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine need to replace and 	11-15	WESA Board	

act as necessary			
Combine Fire Police Resources	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & Police Chiefs	
Create uniform WESA name/logo	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & WESA Coordinator	
Implement group purchasing program	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & WESA Coordinator	
Single cell phone contract	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & WESA Coordinator	
WESA Group insurance	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & WESA Coordinator	

Warwick Emergency Services Alliance

Strategic Planning Tasks

2014

Task	Report Recommendation	Responsibility	Status
Begin Preplanning process for shared use by companies (1 risk per month or every other month during training sessions)	11-5 and 11-8	Company Chiefs	
Implement Recruitment and Retention plan consistent with SAFER Grant	11-12	WESA Board and companies	
Conduct annual pump, ladder, hose and aerial testing	11-14	Company Chiefs	
Standard Operating Guideline Development and approval (1 per month)	11-18	Company Chiefs	
Apparatus replacement Plan - Determine need to replace and act as necessary	11-15	WESA Board	
Combine Junior Program	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & WESA Coordinator	
Establish Annual WESA Community Day	WESA Action Plan	WESA Board & WESA Coordinator	

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Strategic Planning Tasks

2015

Task	Report Recommendation	Responsibility	Status
Begin Preplanning process for shared use by companies (1 risk per month or every other month during training sessions)	11-5 and 11-8	Company Chiefs	
Implement Recruitment and Retention plan consistent with SAFER Grant	11-12	WESA Board and companies	
Conduct annual pump, ladder, hose and aerial testing	11-14	Company Chiefs	
Standard Operating Guideline Development and approval (1 per month)	11-18	Company Chiefs	
Apparatus replacement Plan - Determine need to replace and act as necessary	11-15	WESA Board	

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Strategic Planning Tasks

2016

Task	Report Recommendation	Responsibility	Status
Begin Preplanning process for shared use by companies (1 risk per month or every other month during training sessions)	11-5 and 11-8	Company Chiefs	
Implement Recruitment and Retention plan consistent with SAFER Grant	11-12	WESA Board and companies	
Conduct annual pump, ladder, hose and aerial testing	11-14	Company Chiefs	
Standard Operating Guideline Development and approval (1 per month)	11-18	Company Chiefs	
Apparatus replacement Plan - Determine need to replace and act as necessary	11-15	WESA Board	

WESA EMERGENCY SERVICES ALLIANCE

STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK LISTING

Recommendation Number	Item	Year To Accomplish
11-1	Revise WESA Agreement, hire WESA Director	2012
11-2	Determine Service Delivery Statement & SOC	2012
11-3	Adopt Fire & Emergency Services Plan	2011
11-4	Adopt Strategic Guideline for Emergencies	2011
11-5	Preplanning development process	2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
11-6	Develop Standard reporting requirements	2012
11-7	Develop & release individual & collective annual reports	2012
11-8	Pre-planning implementation	2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
11-9	Develop long-term funding/planning model	2012
11-10	Implement Standardized Budget Model	2013
11-11	Develop standard documentation requirements	2012
11-12	Implement Recruitment & Retention program with SAFER Grant	2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
11-13	Revise Training & officer requirements for consistency	2013
11-14	Conduct annual pump, ladder, hose, & aerial testing	2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
11-15	Revise & Develop conceptual vehicle replacement plan	2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
11-16	Vehicle Rollover Prevention Training	2012
11-17	Submit AFG Grant for exhaust systems for stations	2012
11-18	SOG Development – WESA-wide	2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
	Request Region-wide Assessment by ISO	2011
2002 Study rec.	Implement Consistent Membership Requirements	2012
WESA Plan	Coordinate & Promote WESA-wide Fund Drive	2012
2002 Study rec.	Create a group of non-emergency volunteers	2013
2002 Study rec.	Create ordinance for compensation at special events	2013
WESA Plan	Combine Fire Police Resources	2013
WESA Plan	Create Uniform WESA Name/logo	2013
WESA Plan	Implement group purchasing program	2013
WESA Plan	Single Cell Phone Contract	2013
WESA Plan	WESA Group Insurance	2013
WESA Plan	Combine Junior Program	2014
WESA Plan	Establish Annual WESA Community Day	2014

FIRE ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE

Fire Services Administrator

Supervisor:

WESA Board

Hours of Work:

The Fire Administration Officer will work a 40-hour week with a flexible schedule to frequently include evenings. Overtime may occur upon assignment by the supervisor. The Fire Administration Officer will receive one hour for lunch, not paid.

Place of Work:

The Fire Administration Officer is based at _____.
_____. but will also be required to work throughout the WESA district.

General Description:

The Fire Administration Officer will perform administrative and training functions for the WESA Emergency Services Alliance organizations. The WESA organizations will assist in recruitment/retention of volunteer firefighters, organize fund-raising activities and perform liaison duties between the municipalities and the Fire Companies.

Essential Functions:

In accordance with WESA policies, respond to reported structure fires and other life threatening emergencies during regular working hours. Respond to a fire station for alarms when needed to fulfill crew requirements or to operate emergency apparatus (excluding transfer assignments).

When requested by WESA, provide input for safety/fire-related amendments to Township adopted codes and ordinances.

Assure that first due fire company has reviewed proposed land development plans for hydrant placement, water sufficiency, and equipment access and fire lane adequacy. Forward written comments and recommendations to the Township Engineer. Check new hydrants for Fire Company accessibility.

Assist in the preparation of long-range plans for fire prevention, company operation and equipment purchase.

Prepare and maintain digital Preplans for WESA area high risk and high dollar loss properties.

Assist in planning and executing the recruiting/retention effort. Advise the Fire Companies and Townships/Borough on proposed initiatives to assist in recruiting and retention of members. Assist in new membership/live-in application processing.

Provide to the community, including civic, business, social and other groups, fire prevention, fire fighting, general safety and fire-related training under the auspices of the Fire/EMS Chiefs.

Oversee the publication of the inventory of hazardous material within the Townships/Borough as required by PA Act 165 and SARA Title III.

Act as Purchasing Agent for fire-related equipment.

Initiate, coordinate and assist in, as necessary, all fundraising efforts for the WESA Agencies.

Attend evening meetings and trainings as required/requested.

Be point of contact between Fire Chief and State Police Fire Marshall and assist in all fire investigations as needed.

Provide administrative input, as requested. .

Act as Township liaison with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Act as liaison between the Borough/Townships and the Fire/EMS Companies, keeping both parties informed of developments, events, policies and issues that would affect either.

Perform all administrative functions for the Brunnerville, Rothsville, Brickerville and Lititz Volunteer Fire Companies, as assigned by WESA, to include but not limited to:

- (1) Prepare Grants on behalf of the Fire Company.
- (2) Prepare all records and reports as required by NFPA and ISO on a computerized information system. Act as point of contact for any state/county interface required by the system.
- (3) Act as single source of contact for training information, course availability and scheduling. Maintain training equipment inventories and training records on all members.
- (4) Maintain personnel files on all members to ensure records of participation, certification, awards, discipline, etc. are properly documented.
- (5) Maintain current reference library for use by all members.
- (6) Prepare quarterly and annual reports informing municipal officials of number and types of alarms, responses, incidents of note and other activities.
- (7) Provide to the Borough/Townships all required reports of injured firefighters.

- (8) Maintain and update WESA SOG's as directed by the Fire Chiefs.
- (9) With assistance from Warwick Township GIS personnel make all updates to apparatus map books and provide officers with copies of map updates.
- (10) Be point of contact for and promote the Knox Box Program to township businesses.
- (11) Assure an annual review of Fire Company Box Response System is conducted to reflect changes needed for fire response.
- (12) Open mail; correspond or distribute as appropriate.
- (13) Answer telephone and provide assistance or have appropriate party return call.
- (14) Maintain documentation as directed by WESA (personnel data & department data)

Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

Associate Degree in Fire Science or related field (technical education or experience may be considered in lieu of degree) with an additional five (5) years experience as a firefighter, preferably at the officer level.

Qualification as Firefighter I, Firefighter I equivalent or demonstrate ability to achieve such status within one (1) year of hire.

PA Commercial Driver's License is required within six months of employment.

Possess basic computer literacy skills to include word processing and spreadsheet software.
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Ability to communicate professionally in English, both verbally and in writing, including the art of public speaking.

Ability to become a member of each of the WESA Volunteer Fire Companies and remain in good standing.

The statements contained herein reflect general details as necessary to describe the essential functions of this position, the level of knowledge and skills typically required and the scope of responsibility, but should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work requirements. Individuals may perform other duties as assigned, including work in other functional areas to cover absences or relief to equalize peak work periods or otherwise to balance the workload.