

# ~~V.1 DRAFT Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~(Updated 04/10/06) (V.1.F updated 03/29/06, V.1.G updated 03/29/06)~~

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## ~~V.1.1 Members~~ The **FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Members were: **REPORT**

- ~~—Jimmy Goff— Chairman~~
- ~~—Jim Kallinger— Member~~
- ~~—Frances Pignone— Member~~
- ~~—Don Ammerman— Member~~
- ~~—Kathy Putnam— Member~~
- ~~—Carolyn Fennell— Member~~
- ~~—Cari Coats— Member~~

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~~The Fire and Emergency Services Committee held its first meeting on August 22, 2005 and concluded its deliberations on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The Committee meeting dates and presenters are shown in Appendix V.1.A.~~

### ~~V.1.3 Executive Summary~~

~~(To be written after final decisions on recommendations)~~

### ~~V.1.4 Side-By-Side Comparison~~

~~The Orange County Fire Rescue Department and City of Orlando Fire Department 911 Centers Side-By-Side Comparison are at Appendix V.1.F. The Orange County Fire Rescue Department and City of Orlando Fire Department Side-By-Side Comparison are at Appendix V.1.G. The Side-By-Sides present data the Committee thought relevant to their deliberations and conclusions.~~

### ~~V.1.5 Findings~~

~~The Committee finds that:~~

~~**V.1.5.1** The Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD), the fourth largest Fire Department in Florida (based on personnel), responds to more than 86,000 calls per year. The Orlando Fire Department (OFD) answered 47,537 calls in 2005.~~

~~**V.1.5.2** The OCFRD has established itself as a modern and efficient provider of public safety services across a complex urban, suburban and rural area, which includes significant residential, industrial, military, tourism, and higher educational facilities. Under contracts, the OCFRD provides dispatch and/or fire service to Oakland, City of Orlando (Lake Nona), Maitland, Ocoee, Winter Garden, Edgewood, Belle Isle, and Eatonville. The OCFRD's size, financial strength, and governance allow it to provide many sophisticated services beyond firefighting. In addition to EMS transport, fire inspections, and public education activities, the agency also operates a series of technical rescue teams, an aero-medical transport program, bicycle rescue teams and many other activities. (Source: Barry Luke, Division Chief, Fire Communications, OCFRD)~~

~~**V.1.5.3** The OCFRD operating budget is a budget derived from the Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) created in 1981. This budget is unique because the OCFRD~~

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~~receives no funds from the Orange County general fund. All expenditures including personnel services, apparatus purchase, equipment, and other support expenses are spent from this fund.~~

~~V.1.5.4 Both Orange County and the City of Orlando have 911 Communication Centers that receive emergency calls for both law enforcement and fire/rescue services. Orange County has the Orange County 911 Communications Center, a consolidated center that also serves Winter Garden, Maitland, and Ocoee. This contractual relationship has proven to be successful for the OCFRD and the cities by providing the seamless dispatch and response of the closest units regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. The City of Orlando has the Orlando Operations Center (OCC). In both Centers, law enforcement shares the Center~~

~~with the fire department. Eighty percent of 911 calls coming into the Centers are for law enforcement. (Source: Barry Luke, Division Chief, Fire Communications, OCFRD)~~

~~V.1.5.5 On an average day, Orange County Fire Rescue receives 270-280 emergency calls. The performance standard for operators is that the calls must be answered within 10 seconds, 90% of the time. Then, the operators who receive the calls have 60 seconds to dispatch the Fire responders; the average call process time is 46 seconds. (Source: Barry Luke, Division Chief, Fire Communications, OCFRD)~~

~~V.1.5.6 Computers are relied upon at both the Orange County and City of Orlando 911 Centers to determine what vehicles are available for calls, the best vehicle to dispatch, and the best route to the scene. Each Center currently uses different computer-aided dispatch systems, mapping systems, and record management systems. This would make consolidation of these centers very costly, new Computer Aided Dispatch and Records management systems could cost in excess of three Million dollars.~~

~~V.1.5.7 Both Orange County and Orlando operate extremely busy, very professional 911 Centers, with highly trained professional management and staff. Both 911 Centers are working at full capacity in an often high-pressure atmosphere. There are always a number of unfilled positions in part due to the nature of the work being performed. See figure V.1.1 below. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, OFD)~~

<del>2005 COMMUNICATIONS CENTERS WORKLOAD</del>		
<del>ACTION</del>	<del>CITY OF ORLANDO</del>	<del>ORANGE COUNTY</del>
<del>Phone calls received</del>	<del>212,719</del>	<del>335,674</del>
<del>Radio transmissions handled</del>	<del>800,000</del>	<del>Not tracked</del>
<del>Emergency Incident responses</del>	<del>47,537</del>	<del>86,000</del>
<del>Total Unit* Responses</del>	<del>86,016</del>	<del>183,000</del>

~~Figure V.1.1~~

~~\* Unit = one vehicle~~

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~~V.1.5.8~~ Each jurisdiction has reported that in 2005, 45% of all 911 calls originated from cell phones. This is a significant fact because cell phone calls are not always linked to the Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) location of the call that appears on the Call Center's computer. This situation creates difficulties in matching the call to the Enhanced 9-1-1 System, so additional time is needed to determine the location of the caller. When the caller is in transit and not at the incident location, additional problems are created. Dispatchers must take additional time to determine the location of the emergency rather than the location of the caller. It is expected that this problem will get worse as more and more residents decide not to get land line phones installed in their homes, preferring instead to use their cell phones for all calls. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, OFD)

~~V.1.5.9~~ Sometimes multiple 911 Centers are notified of the same accident with multiple responses initiated by the relevant Dispatch Centers. (Source: T.J. Lyon, Division Chief, Fire Operations, OCFRD)

~~V.1.5.10~~ The Orange County 911 Coordinator collects updated information from all jurisdictions and keeps all ten 911 Centers within Orange County informed about new subdivisions and other changes to maps by providing a weekly update to the Centers. This coordination is crucial to help ensure correct and prompt response by all Fire Departments. (Source: OCFRD and OFD)

~~V.1.5.11~~ Each Center houses the Emergency Operations Center for their respective jurisdiction. During states of emergency such as hurricanes this has proven to be a very effective way to manage these events and the emergency incident response needs. Each Center operates as an automatic back up to the other. If a catastrophic interruption occurs, calls seamlessly transfer to the other center for processing and dispatch. This has happened twice in the last two years. Redundancy in regard to the Orange County and City of Orlando 911 Centers is good policy, given the possibility of hurricanes, and other natural or man-made disasters. The question is how to best achieve that redundancy at the lowest cost to taxpayers. The ability of the personnel from the temporarily inoperative Center to safely and quickly relocate to the other Center is a consideration in this matter.

~~V.1.5.12~~ Emergency Services share common radio channels. All emergency service providers are utilizing the 800 mega-hertz radio system. The radios used in this frequency band are programmable and contain channels for all emergency service providers in the area. This allows one agency to talk to another agency directly. There are also multiple statewide mutual aid channels available for use when agencies from outside the region come in to assist. This technology makes radio communications nearly seamless from one jurisdiction to another. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, OFD)

~~V.1.5.13~~ In 2005, the OCFRD provided assistance to OFD 1,363 times. Of that, the OCFRD was committed to the City 17,001 minutes or 11.01 minutes per unit committed to the call. The OFD assisted the OCFRD 603 times. The OFD was committed to

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~~unincorporated Orange County 19,128 minutes or 19.26 minutes per unit committed to the call.~~

~~V.1.5.14 The OCFRD provides medical transportation for designated areas. It believes that this continuity of care provides a higher level of emergency medical services. Additionally, as a result of providing medical transportation services, the OCFRD has generated revenue over the past 5 years in excess of \$16 million with an average collection rate of 66% of net billable. All of the collected revenues are utilized to continually improve pre-hospital emergency care service.~~

~~Both Orange County and the City of Orlando use private transport companies to ensure transport is available to all residents. The City of Orlando uses Rural Metro to provide transport service for the City and has accepted the response standards specified in Orange County's contract with Rural Metro. When Rural Metro cannot transport, the OFD provides the service. The OFD has transport capable rescues, but made the policy decision to use Rural Metro for many reasons, some of which include: high call volume and impact on overall operational strategy. The reasoning for the transport decision by each jurisdiction is at Appendix V.1.B (Source: Jim Reynolds, Deputy Chief, OFD)~~

~~V.1.5.15 The Orange County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Medical Director provides standing orders that direct that the patient be taken to the nearest facility. An exception to this direction may occur if the patient is in stable condition and requests an alternate facility. (Source: Roger Duryea, General Manager, Rural/Metro Ambulance)~~

~~V.1.5.16 People transported by EMS transportation make up 15% of the emergency room visits in Orange County. (Source: Dr. George Ralls, Orange County EMS Medical Director)~~

~~V.1.5.17 Orange County government has established a clinic system, the Primary Care Access Network (PCAN), to provide health care services to uninsured residents. Twenty-One percent of Orange County residents have no health insurance. This system appears to have helped to provide primary care provision in lieu of hospital emergency rooms. (Source: Pete Clarke, Deputy Director, and Randy Lewis, Senior Program Manager, Health and Family Services Department, Orange County)~~

~~V.1.5.18 "Wall Time", the time a vehicle and crew have to wait at a hospital emergency room (ER) until the patient is accepted by the hospital, is a problem faced by all emergency transporters, nation-wide.~~

~~Dr. George Ralls, Orange County EMS Medical Director, said that "wall time" is a national problem. Also, he said that volume isn't the problem. There is a tremendous need in this community for unscheduled care, and walk-in ER patients shouldn't be blamed for the "wall time" problem, as these low acuity patients are seen quickly. The fixed costs related to these patients are there anyway. The problem of "wall time" is not primarily related to the number of~~

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~~patients coming to the emergency rooms for health care; but to the rapidity with which a patient can be admitted to an ER bed, and, if necessary, eventually moved to an appropriate hospital ward. Certain times of the year hospitals are busier, but this may not justify adding beds only to accommodate this periodic influx of patients.~~

- ~~Dr. Todd Husty, EMS Director for Seminole County, Maitland, and Winter Park, has addressed the “wall time” problem by defining it as a hospital “internal disaster” (disaster defined as need outstripping supply) so that the hospital can take actions that usually it wouldn’t, and by setting a 15 minute goal for EMS personnel transferring a transported patient to emergency room (ER) care, and a 45 minute maximum rule. The approach has reduced instances of wall time to 2-4% of Seminole County transports.~~
- ~~Of the 450,000 patients seen at Orange County ERs in 2005, 76,000 were EMS transported, while the rest were walk-ins. Of the transported patients, 50% were admitted to a hospital. Twenty to 30 percent of the walk-ins were admitted. The 911-call volume for Orange County is substantially greater than that of Seminole County because Orange County has more residents and also 35,000,000 visitors per year. Plus, the sickest patients come to Orange County because of the type of hospital services provided in Orange County. (Source: Dr. George Ralls, Orange County Medical Director)~~
- ~~Orange County Fire Rescue Communications monitors emergency room availability and patients are transported in accordance with established protocols. (Source: Dr. George Ralls, Orange County Medical Director)~~

~~**V.1.5.19** The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) requires what data must be collected, stored and searchable (kept in Fire Communications system records). System records can be the most costly part of moving migrating to a new software application because the records in the present system must be moved to the new software. Migration of records from one software application to the other requires the building of intricate programming “scripts”. These scripts create a cross walk from one application to the other so that data contained in each report field are properly migrated from the old application to the new application. Such a crosswalk is also required for all occupancy data so even if you wanted to leave your incident data in the old application archive, you would still have migrate huge stores of data from the occupancy files to the new software. All users of the software would have to be trained and become proficient so that incident or inspection data is accurately captured. The cost of purchasing a new software application is not large (less than \$500,000) but the cost of migration can be very expensive when the labor and scripting costs are factored in. A clear and compelling business benefit must be present in order to justify the decision to migrate from one application to another. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, OFD)~~

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~~V.1.5.20 Both the City of Orlando and Orange County are rated by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO), an independent protection rating organization that is used to set insurance rates nationally. The ISO does not conduct self-assessments/peer reviews. It only collects data on and analyzes the fire suppression service capability of a community. Their analysis is based on criteria such as fire alarms (how well the agency receives alarms and~~

~~dispatches its resources), the number of engine companies (distribution), and water supply (whether the community has a sufficient water supply, etc.). The ISO rating is derived from a comprehensive study of a wide array of factors including deployment strategy, response times, staffing, training and infrastructure. The ratings are on a 1-10 scale with a rating of 1 being the best.~~

~~The City Orlando has an ISO rating of 2.~~

~~Orange County's ISO rating is split 4/9. This score reflects the diverse urban, suburban, and rural service areas that the OCFRD protects. Essentially, ISO only classifies a community's ability to fight fire; this service accounts for only about 2% of OCFRD annual emergency responses. A comprehensive public fire protection program includes many aspects of which the ISO rating, a fire insurance rating tool, is just one. The OCFRD is satisfied with the 4/9 rating and realizes it is an appropriate balance between available funds and fire service delivery.~~

~~The ISO has recently partnered with the Commission of Fire Service Accreditation International (CFAI) to enhance its ability to rate fire departments. The CFAI provides a comprehensive system of fire and emergency service evaluation that helps local governments determine their risks and fire safety needs, evaluate the performance of the organizations involved, and provide a method for continuous improvement. The self-assessment process covers 10 categories that address all aspects of fire service. Within these categories are performance indicators and core competencies to which the agency must show effectiveness. The OCFRD is currently seeking accreditation and will file a formal application this year.~~

~~The OFD is also seeking Accreditation through this process. By obtaining accreditation, the OFD will have validated its business processes as well as its deployment strategy (via ISO's public protection rating) and its performance (via benchmarking against nationally accepted fire service performance standards found in NFPA 1710). The OFD is committed to providing high quality cost effective service through constant review of its business processes. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy chief, OFD)~~

~~V.1.5.21 The current City-County jurisdictional boundary is jagged; islands and enclaves exist creating a fragmented service area, inefficient service delivery and~~

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~~increased response times. Cost inefficiencies are created because of overlapping response areas. (Source: City of Orlando GIS, Orange County Property Appraiser).~~

~~V.1.5.22 Economies of scale are already being realized through like purchasing contracts at the local and state level.~~

~~V.1.23 Both the OCFRD and OFD have programs in place that have resulted in similar success in the hiring and promotion of minorities and women. There is not a statistically significant difference in the relevant percentages of minorities and women in their respective workforces. The OFD pointed out that their numbers went down somewhat as a result of the recent~~

### ~~V.1.6 Conclusions~~

~~Upon conclusion of deliberations the Committee determined:~~

~~V.1.6.1 Both the Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD) and the City of Orlando Fire Department (OFD) are well run, professional organizations that handle very large volumes of emergency responses.~~

~~V.1.6.2 The OCFDR and the OFD have joint response, automatic aid, mutual aid agreements, and Memorandums of Understanding with each other.~~

~~V.1.6.3 "Wall time" is an issue for patient transporters within Orange County.~~

~~V.1.6.4 911 Communication Centers redundancy is good policy.~~

~~V.1.6.5 The present fire and emergency services boundaries between Orange County and the City of Orlando cause inefficiencies such as the duplication of the delivery of emergency services, as well as both agencies responding to the same calls.~~

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### ~~V.1.7 Recommendations~~

~~Consolidation of the Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD) and City of Orlando Fire Department (OFD) was studied for efficiencies in service delivery, economies of scale, opportunities for enhanced intergovernmental cooperation, and other related issues. The Committee recommends:~~

~~V.1.7.1 That Orange County and the City of Orlando should develop a fire service boundary agreement that rounds off jurisdictional boundaries to clearly establish service delivery areas for both agencies.~~

~~V.1.7.2 That the 911 Communications Centers of Orange County and the City of Orlando not be consolidated, but that Orange County and the City of Orlando acquire technology improvements to allow interoperability, thus speeding up emergency call response times and the availability of units and maintaining current redundancy.~~

~~V.1.7.3 Orange County and the City of Orlando planning for land use, new developments, etc., should include fire and emergency services representatives and should include joint planning for emergency service provision, for example, planning future locations for fire stations, especially in areas that are underserved.~~

~~V.1.7.4 That the Fire Rescue Administrations from both Orange County and the City of Orlando address the potential of joint purchasing fire and emergency vehicles and equipment, establishing common radio terminology, improving accountability practices, and coordinating emergency response resources and command procedures, based on the National Incident Management System and National Fire Protection Association 1561, Emergency Services Incident Command System.~~

~~V.1.7.5 That, because the Committee found that neither efficiencies in service delivery nor economies of scale would result from consolidation of services, and because bigger is not necessarily better, neither the Orange County and the City of Orlando Fire Departments nor their services be consolidated.~~

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### APPENDIXES

~~APPENDIX V.1.A, MEETING SCHEDULE AND PRESENTERS to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~APPENDIX V.1.B, RESCUE TRANSPORT COSTS to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~APPENDIX V.1.C, ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY THE ORANGE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT (OCFRD) to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~APPENDIX V.1.D, ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY THE CITY OF ORLANDO FIRE DEPARTMENT (OFD) to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~APPENDIX V.1.E, ORANGE COUNTY 2005 FIRE/RESCUE SERVICES IMPACT FEE UPDATE STUDY, to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~APPENDIX V.1.F, SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF OCFRD AND OFD 911 CENTERS to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

~~APPENDIX V.1.G, SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF OCFRD AND OFD to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

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## APPENDIX V.1.A, MEETING SCHEDULE AND PRESENTERS to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report

<b>FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING DATE</b>	<b>PRESENTER(S)</b>	<b>FORMAL PRESENTATION(S)</b>
August 22, 2005	<b>Jim Fitzgerald</b> —Deputy Chief, Orange County Fire Rescue Department; <b>Thomas Lyon</b> —Division Chief, Orange County Fire Rescue Department; <b>Matt McGrew</b> —Acting Division Chief, Orange County Fire Rescue Department	Orange County Fire Rescue Presentation
September 9, 2005	<b>Barry Luke</b> —Division Chief, Orange County Fire Rescue Department;	Orange County Fire Rescue Communications Presentation
September 26, 2005	<b>Rudy Johnson</b> —Assistant Chief, Orlando Fire Department; <b>Laura Kinnear</b> —Fire Communications Manager, Orlando Fire Department; <b>Priscilla Mallory</b> —Orlando Fire Department	City of Orlando Fire Department Communications Overview
October 6, 2005	<b>Roger Duryea</b> - Rural Metro	Rural Metro Ambulance Presentation; City of Orlando Fire Department EMS 2004 Incidents; City of Orlando Fire Department Fire Incidents 2004; City of Orlando Fire Department Risk Assessment Presentation
October 27, 2005	<b>Jason Brown</b> —President of IAFF Local 2057; Orange County Fire Rescue Department, <b>Steve Clelland</b> —President of IAFF Local 1365, Orlando Fire Department; <b>Ron Glass</b> —Chairman of IAFF Local 1365 Pension Board, Orlando Fire Department	
November 2, 2005	<b>Robert Heffner</b> —Regional Chief, Rural Metro; <b>Pete Clarke</b> —Deputy Director, Orange County Health and Family Services (Primary Care Access Network	Primary Care Access Network (PCAN) Presentation
November 8, 2005	<b>Dana Loncar</b> —Director of Government Relations, Orlando Regional Health Care; <b>Joe Bob Pearce</b> —Manager of Trauma and Emergency Services, Orlando Regional Medical Center; <b>Bob Stein</b> —Director, emergency Department, Health Central	Health Central Emergency Department Presentation
December 8, 2005	Committee Discussion	
January 6, 2006	Committee Discussion	
January 23, 2006	<b>Dr. Todd Husty</b> —EMS Director for Seminole County, Maitland, and Winter Park; <b>Dr. George Ralls</b> , Orange County Medical Director	
February 7, 2006	Committee Discussion	
February 21, 2006	Committee Discussion	
March 9, 2006	Committee Discussion	
March 21, 2006	Committee Discussion	
April 6, 2006	Committee Discussion	

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### ~~APPENDIX V.1.B, RESCUE TRANSPORT COSTS to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

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##### ~~V.1.B.1 Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD)~~

###### ~~V.1.B.1.1 Average Cost for a Rescue Transport (November 2005)~~

###### ~~V.1.B.1.2 Rescue Transport Costs~~

###### ~~V.1.B.1.3 Medical Supplies Cost~~

##### ~~V.1.B.2 Orlando Fire Department (OFD)~~

###### ~~V.1.B.2.1 City of Orlando Reasoning For Not Transporting~~

###### ~~V.1.B.2.2 Average Cost For an EMS Call Answered by a Rescue Truck~~

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### ~~V.1B.1 Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD)~~

#### ~~V.1.B.1.1 Average Cost for a Rescue Transport (November 2005)~~

~~(Received from Deputy Chief Jim Fitzgerald, OCFRD, 4:39 p.m., November 28, 2005, in an e-mail, Subject: Hourly Cost for a Transport)~~

- ~~— Average annual transport time (All OCFRD transports) = 15 minutes~~
  - ~~— Average annual hospital turn-around time (All OCFRD transports) = 29 minutes~~
  - ~~— Average annual EMS call duration in OCFRD Transport Areas = 1 hour, 8 minutes~~
    - ~~\* Using the transport rescue vehicle times until they are available for next call.~~
  - ~~— Average annual EMS call duration in OCFRD Non-Transport Areas = 24 minutes~~
  
  - ~~— Average cost of a rescue vehicle \$141,000 (amortized over 8 years)~~
    - ~~— \$141,000 / 8 = \$17,625 per year~~
    - ~~— \$17,625 / 365 = \$ 48.29 per day~~
    - ~~— \$48.00 / 24 = \$ 2.01 per hour~~
  
  - ~~— Average cost of rescue equipment \$ 65,000 (amortized over 8 years)~~
    - ~~— \$65,000.00 / 8 = \$8,125 per year~~
    - ~~— \$8,125 / 365 = \$22.26 per day~~
    - ~~— \$22.26 / 24 = \$ 0.93 per hour~~
  
  - ~~— Average cost estimate of supplies used on a typical EMS transport by OCFRD~~
    - ~~— \$25.00 = \$25.00 per call duration (1 hour, 8 min)~~
  
  - ~~— Average annual maintenance costs for a rescue? \$ 6,339~~
    - ~~— \$6,339 / 365 = \$17.37 per day~~
    - ~~— \$17.37 / 24 = \$ 0.72 per hour~~
  
  - ~~— Average annual fuel costs for a rescue? \$ 2,750~~
    - ~~\*At 15,684 miles per year / 11 miles per gallon / Diesel costs \$ 1.93 per gallon~~
    - ~~— \$2,750 / 365 = \$ 7.53 per day~~
    - ~~— \$ 7.53 / 24 = \$ 0.31 per hour~~
  
  
  - ~~— Average hourly rate (including benefits) for a Firefighter/Paramedic~~
    - ~~— FF/PM = \$26.08 per hour~~
  
  - ~~— Average hourly rate (including benefits) for a Firefighter/EMT~~
    - ~~— FF/EMT = \$23.71 per hour~~
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~~Total Rescue Costs = \$78.76\* per hour~~

~~\* Does not include any Administrative Costs (i.e., Risk Charges, Support Personnel, etc.)~~

### ~~V.1.B.1.2 Rescue Transport Costs~~

~~(Received from James M. Fitzgerald, Deputy Chief, OCFRD, January, 23, 2006, in hard copy and an e-mail, Subject: Information Request)~~

~~TO: \_\_\_\_\_ Dennis O'Neil, Executive Director~~

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~~FROM: \_\_\_\_\_~~

~~RE: \_\_\_\_\_ Information Request~~

~~In response to your request for information concerning additional EMS transport questions that were raised, I have provided the attached data. I hope this information is helpful.~~

~~If you require further assistance, please contact me at 407-836-9115.~~

~~JF/de  
Attachment \_\_\_\_\_~~

### ~~Fire Consolidation Committee~~

~~Orange County Fire Rescue Department response to questions regarding the number of OCFRD EMS Transports, the amount we have collected since inception and our collection rates.~~

~~In 1996, Orange County Fire Rescue was able to formalize our procedures and boundaries for EMS transport, even though at the time, EMS transport wasn't new to Orange County. Prior to consolidation in 1981 and even up to our formal entry as an EMS transport provider in 1996; we had been transporting patients to area hospitals.~~

~~EMS transport allows for complete control of resources and more importantly excellent patient treatment by providing an uninterrupted continuity of care. Fire based EMS transport service has become the logical solution to effectively provide emergency transport services both on a local and national basis. Below you will find a listing of some of the local Fire Departments that provide transports in Central Florida and around the State.~~

~~The decision to provide full time transport services and collect fees did result in some key corporate decisions that have saved us money. First, we decided to go outside to a billing company rather than having to train and employ additional staff to handle this task. Secondly, we decided; with the input of our field personnel and fleet maintenance to move to a larger more durable rescue vehicle that was diesel powered, that was built on a commercial truck chassis and could remain serviceable for 5-10 years if needed.~~

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~~The EMS transport service we provide has created a viable revenue source back to the department to help us continue this life-saving service. The transport revenue received by Orange County Fire Rescue since its inception, in October 1996 through November 2005, has mounted to \$22.8 million dollars with an average collection rate for the past five years of 66%\*.~~

~~This decision has produced a long-standing program that fits within the mission and core values of our organization and provides the best pre-hospital patient care to the citizens and visitors to unincorporated Orange County.~~

~~\*This percentage is from our net billable amount, meaning what we are legally able to collect. For example, when a Medicare or Medicaid patient is transported, we must accept assignment and the amount paid becomes what we are able to bill, so the difference is considered an adjustment. This adjustment amount is reduced from our gross billing figure, thus giving a net billing amount.~~

~~See attached Data~~

~~The amount of money the department has taken in for emergency transport during the past five years and most recent 2005 data:~~

~~FY00-01=\$2.4M  
FY01-02=\$2.8M  
FY02-03=\$2.7M  
FY03-04=\$3.3M  
FY04-05=\$4.1M  
FY05-06 = \$0.7M (through November 2005) ————— Total = \$16M~~

~~The number of transports during the past five years and most recent 2005 data:~~

~~FY00-01=12,287  
FY01-02=12,393  
FY02-03=13,872  
FY03-04=15,652  
FY04-05=17,977  
FY05-06 = 2,647 (through November 2005) ————— Total = 74,828~~

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### ~~The collection rate during the past five years and most recent 2005 data.~~

~~\*The percentages below reflect funds received from July 1999 through November 2005. The financial report which tracks the percentage of collection allocates the emergency transport money back to the fiscal year the transport occurred, which may not necessarily be the fiscal year the funds were collected. In most instances there is a lag time between when the transport occurred and when the fees for that transport are collected. Therefore, the percentages below may increase monthly for all years, with the most significant increases reflected in the most recent years.~~

~~FY99-00=71.4%~~

~~FY00-01=71.7%~~

~~FY01-02=72.5%~~

~~FY02-03=68.8%~~

~~FY03-04=63.8%~~

~~FY04-05=47.9% Total Average = 66%~~

### ~~Central Florida Fire/Based Agencies providing EMS Transport:~~

<del>City of Apopka Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Sanford Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Maitland Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Casselberry Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Seminole County Fire Rescue</del>	<del>Reedy Creek Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Cocoa Beach Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of St. Cloud Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Longwood Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Kissimmee Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Winter Park Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Oviedo Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Lake Mary Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Winter Springs Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Orange County Fire Rescue</del>
<del>Brevard County Fire Dept.</del>		

### ~~Other Fire/Based Agencies providing EMS Transport around the State:~~

<del>City of Boca Raton Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Margate Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Charlotte County Fire/EMS</del>
<del>City of Coral Springs Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Miami Beach Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Riviera Beach Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Dania Beach Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Miami-Dade Fire Rescue</del>	<del>Monroe County Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Deerfield Beach Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of North Port Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Okaloosa County Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Ft. Lauderdale Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Plantation Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Palm Beach County Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Hallandale Beach Fire Dpt.</del>	<del>City of Pompano Beach Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Sarasota County Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Hialeah Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Miami-Dade County Fire Dept.</del>	<del>Town of Davie Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Jacksonville Fire Rescue</del>	<del>Tamarac Fire Dept. (Broward)</del>	<del>City of Lauderhill Fire Dept.</del>
<del>City of Lighthouse Pt. Fire Dept.</del>	<del>City of Lauderdale Lakes Fire Dpt</del>	

### ~~V.1.B.1.3 Medical Supplies Costs~~

~~(Received from Matt McGrew, OCFRD, 4:31 p.m., December 12, 2005 in an e-mail, Subject: EMS Supplies used on average medical call OCFRD)~~

~~Mr. Dennis O'Neil~~

~~In determining the average costs of running an EMS call we used and typical call that would fall into the mid-range (ALS-1) irregardless of transport. These include tasks and associate medical supplies used that would normally be required in the first 10 minutes~~

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~~of patient contact. This assumes there will be a Paramedic assessment and the use of the following standard consumable items:~~

~~Disposable gloves  
EKG electrodes set (12-lead)  
Glucose check strip  
Oxygen delivery device with co2 detection capability  
Oxygen used/consumed  
Tourniquet  
4x4 gauze  
IV needle/catheter  
IV tubing/set up  
IV solution/bag  
IV site bandage  
Medication delivered/consumed~~

~~Keeping in mind that disposable medical supplies are relatively inexpensive, I would still submit that a \$25.00 average medical supplies usage is a very reasonable figure.~~

~~Matt McGrew, Acting Division Chief, Fire Administration  
Orange County Fire Rescue Department  
(407) 836-9019 — office  
(407) 836-9106 — fax~~

### ~~V.1.B.2 Orlando Fire Department (OFD)~~

~~**V.1.B.2.1 The City of Orlando Reasoning For Not Transporting.** The Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD) provides medical transportation for designated areas. It believes that this continuity of care provides a higher level of emergency medical services. Additionally, as a result of providing medical transportation services, the OCFRD has generated revenue over the past 5 years in excess of \$16 million with an average collection rate of 66% of net billable. All of the collected revenues are utilized to continually improve pre-hospital emergency care service. Both Orange County and the City of Orlando use private transport companies~~

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~~to ensure transport is available to all residents. The Orange County Department of Emergency Services contracts with Rural Metro to provide transport services throughout Orange County regardless of jurisdiction. The City of Orlando uses Rural Metro to provide transport service for the City. When Rural Metro cannot transport, the Orlando Fire Department (OFD) provides the service.~~

~~The City of Orlando studied the issue of transporting EMS patients for a fee in 1999. The analysis considered the costs and benefits associated with starting a new service to transport EMS patients for a fee. Costs were analyzed from both an incremental costing approach and a full cost accounting approach. Because the implementation of transport services would place the OFD in competition with private providers currently under contract with Orange County, the transport study team opted to utilize a full cost accounting approach so that the cost comparisons to the private provider would be an apples-to-apples comparison. The City of Orlando and the OFD were in agreement that it would not be good public policy to drive private providers out of business in order to generate revenue for government unless government could provide the same service at a lower cost.~~

~~The analysis followed a transport costing template (*Fire Service EMS Costing Template*) developed by Lazar, Jensen and Goebel, a Pre-hospital Systems Consulting firm for the International Association of Fire Chiefs to ensure all aspects of the transport business were considered. Upon completion of the transport program analysis, Mr. Goebel was contracted to review the study and confirm its findings.~~

~~The City of Orlando Administration and OFD Administration were in agreement that in order for the OFD to provide transport for a fee, several conditions must be met:~~

- ~~—The cost of the new service would have to be cost neutral to the City. In other words the revenue generated must cover 100% of the cost of the service.~~
- ~~—Cost neutrality must be perpetual. In other words, the new service must always pay for it self. This required a hard look at the labor costs, medical supply costs, variables concerning the ability of the City to set fees and national average collections on billing. These conditions also required the project team to forecast population growth, service population growth as well as growth of the City boundaries. The revenue generated from transport services must be able to keep up in real time with the demand, in other words enough revenue had to be generated to put additional transport units in service when demand required additional resources.~~
- ~~—The implementation of this new service could not cause a degradation of first response unit compliance with response time goals, or interfere with core service delivery (first response fire, medical, and special operations alarms) responses.~~

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- ~~—The fees charged by the fire department could not exceed the fees charged by the private provider.~~
- ~~—The benefit to the citizen must be clearly discernable, i.e. increased service for the same or less cost.~~
- ~~—The service must be implemented citywide; all residents must be provided the same set of services.~~

~~The analysis of transport for a fee determined that the fire department would not be able to cover the costs of implementing the new service unless collection rates were maintained above 50% of billable. The national average for transport fee collections is less than 50%. To guarantee cost neutrality to the City, the fire department would have to charge more than the private provider charged. Even utilizing an incremental costing approach, the predicted revenue would not completely cover the cost of transport. In 2005, approximately 22,000 (source: CAD transport code — includes both Rural Metro and Health Central transports from within the City limits) patients were transported to area hospitals from the City limits. In order to maintain response time goals, 4 additional rescues would need to be purchased and staffed. Two of these units would be full time units; bringing the total number of full time OFD full time transport units to 10, and 2 of the new units would be peak load units operating half time. Staffing for these units would result in an additional salary expense of \$2,089,359, an additional equipment expense of \$189,812 (excluding the capital cost of vehicle purchase), as well as additional supplies and pharmaceutical cost. This is an estimated \$2.2 million in new money just to start transporting. This estimated cost excludes the allocated cost of that portion of time each of our existing rescues would spend on transport (2000 hours per year, per unit, or an additional 3.56 hours per day each rescue would be out of service and unavailable for response to subsequent~~

~~emergencies). The amount of money that it would cost to initiate and maintain transport services would also staff a 4- person engine company and an additional first response rescue in a developing area of the City.~~

~~The quality of pre-hospital care is not defined by patient transport alone. The OFD provides outstanding Emergency Medical Service. All of the OFD emergency response units (engines, rescues and towers) are advanced life support units. All are staffed with paramedics and equipped with appropriate life saving medicines and devices. The patients who receive care from the OFD enjoy the highest level of care from the moment the firefighters arrive at the patient's side. There is no transfer of care from basic life support responders to advanced life support providers. Patients do not have to wait extra minutes for advanced life support interventions. In 77% of all requests for medical assistance, the highest level of pre-hospital care is on the scene in 4 minutes or less, meeting the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard 1710 performance goals for first unit of any type on the scene and exceeding the NPFA 1710 performance goal for ALS arrival on scene. The OCFRD reports ALS arrives on scene~~

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~~in 5 minutes 30 seconds in only 64.5% of responses, which is not compliant with any nationally recognized response goal. Arrival on the scene of any emergency within 4 minutes of dispatch is a core competency for the OFD.~~

~~The ability of the department to comply with nationally recognized benchmarks for service is a major consideration whenever new services are added. Transport would tie up OFD rescue units an additional 3.56 hours per day over first response only. This would have a negative domino effect on first response performance citywide. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy chief, OFD)~~

~~Continuity of care is a phrase that has also been used frequently to describe the benefits of a transport program. Patient care is extremely important and whenever a patient that OFD initiates care for is unstable, the paramedic who initiates care accompanies the patient to the hospital with the private transport provider, so there is absolute continuity of care in cases where it matters the most. Continuity of care applies both in the individual patient-provider relationship as well as across the service area. In the case of OCFRD, where transport is provided only in certain areas of the county but not others, there is not systemic continuity of service. Even worse is the practice of drawing ALS capable rescue units from the west side of the county to transport patients on the east side and potentially leaving the west side of the county with out timely ALS first response. This creates inequitable service delivery across the county, even though all citizens pay the same MSTU for first response. Consistent revenue generation from transport services is not guaranteed. There are many variables that impact the ability of an agency to consistently collect on billing. The majority of those variables are not within the control of the transport agency.~~

~~There is currently a reliable private provider to transport patients from an emergency scene within the City of Orlando. The private provider can transport patients at less expense to the patient and can make up the difference in revenue by providing scheduled transport services in the community. Depth of service is also created in a two-tiered system. In times of extremely busy patient load or catastrophic events, there are more transport capable units in the system with both OFD first response and private transport, than there would be with the OFD transport alone.~~

~~The City of Orlando carefully and thoughtfully weighed all of the benefits of transports against the contraindications. There is no clear or compelling reason for the OFD to transport for a fee and so the City of Orlando opted not to transport because across the whole of the fire department's mission, implementing transport would not have improved the service delivery or reduced costs for service to the citizen. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy chief, OFD)~~

~~Transport cost information for the OCFRD is in Appendix V.1.B.1.1 and for the OFD is in Appendix V.1.B.2.2 to this Committee Report.~~

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### ~~V.1.B.2.2 Average Cost for an EMS Call Answered by a Rescue Truck (Received from Linda Rhinesmith, Economic Development Manager, City of Orlando, 1:34 p.m., December 1, 2005, in an e-mail, Subject: Rescue Unit Costs)~~

~~Average annual transport time - OFD does not transport; however, Orange County EMS data reveals that transport adds, on average, an additional 37 minutes to the out of service time for the rescue responding to and transporting a patient. (Lancet Reporting System, Orange County DES)~~

~~Average annual Hospital turn around time - OFD does not transport~~

~~Average annual out of service time per EMS call - 21 minutes~~

~~Average purchase cost of a rescue vehicle \$175,000 (depreciated over 10 years)~~

~~Average cost of rescue equipment \$ 85,754 (depreciated over 10 years)~~

~~\$85,754/ 10 = \$8,575.00 per year~~

~~\$ 8,574/365 = \$24.00 per day~~

~~\$ 858/24 = \$0.99 per hour~~

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~~Average annual cost of supplies per rescue = \$7,934  
\$7,931/365 = \$ 21.73 per day  
\$ 21.73/24 = \$ 0.90 per hour~~

~~Average annual fuel, insurance, depreciation and maintenance cost per rescue  
= \$47,453.00  
\$47,453/365 = \$130.00 per day  
\$ 130/24 = \$5.42 per hour~~

~~Average annual personnel cost (includes salary, benefits, incentive, uniforms, PPE, and other issued equipment) = \$ 696,459.00  
\$696,459.00/365 = \$1908.10 per day  
\$ 1,908.10/24 = \$79.50 per hour~~

~~Total hourly rescue costs = \$86.81~~

~~Hourly costs for operation of apparatus is less informative than per call costs or per capita costs. While units are available 24 hours a day, they are not engaged in patient care or other emergency response 24 hours a day. By analyzing the cost per call, the entire service is considered against the total demand providing a more accurate cost for service picture.~~

## ~~APPENDIX V.1.C, Additional Material Submitted by Orange County Fire Rescue Department to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

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### ~~V.1.C.10 Training/IT~~

### ~~V.1.C.1 General~~

~~The Orange County Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD) has established itself as a modern and efficient provider of public safety services across a complex urban, suburban and rural area, which includes significant residential, industrial, military, tourism, and higher educational facilities. The agency responded to more than 88,095 emergency calls in 2005. With more than 1,100 employees and a \$146 million dollar MSTU budget, the agencies workforce and budget is larger than many cities in the region. Thirty-seven fire stations help protect more than a million residents and visitors in the metropolitan area.~~

~~The OCFRD's size, financial strength, and governance allows it to provide many sophisticated services beyond firefighting. In addition to EMS transport, fire inspections, and public education activities, the agency also operates a series of technical rescue teams, an aero-medical transport program, bicycle rescue teams and many other activities.~~

~~The OCFRD is proud of its commitment to customer service and places a high priority on its seven core values, which include customer service, internal and external accountability, communications, readiness, and safety and wellness.~~

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~~The OCFRD is also a "neighborhood friendly" fire department that interacts with the community at many levels. These include blood pressure checks for residents who stop by the fire station, health and wellness checkups at community health fairs, and through neighborhood child safety seat inspection programs. The OCFRD also believes that the agency should reflect the community it serves, and has made a significant and successful commitment to bring women and minorities into the workplace.~~

~~The agency continually examines itself and makes improvements to better serve the citizens of Central Florida. The fire accreditation process is the most recent example of forward progress. The agency has also been praised for its proactive response to several recent disaster situations, including the 1998 Wild Fire Disaster and the 2004 Hurricane season.~~

~~The OCFRD is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary this year in 2006. Since 1981, the Department has successfully integrated and consolidated the County's 14 independent fire and rescue districts. There are currently 37 stations providing fire suppression and emergency medical services to our growing residential and tourist populations. OCFRD is the fourth largest metro fire and rescue department in Florida (in terms of personnel) and provides high quality services to the Central Florida area through direct service delivery, contractual service delivery, joint response, and automatic aid agreements. OCFRD provides complete fire protection and EMS service for the cities of Belle Isle, Edgewood, Oakland and a portion of the City of Orlando, known as Lake Nona. The agency~~

~~also operates a consolidated dispatch center, which has multi-year agreements with the cities of Maitland, Winter Garden, Ocoee and Eatonville. This successful program insures rapid and efficient use of fire and EMS resources.~~

~~Oversight for the Department is provided by the Director of Public Safety and County Administrator with County Commission concurrence. The department submits all budgets, including capital and operation to the Board of County Commissioners for their approval, and participates in the county's Biennial Budgeting and Capital Improvements Program, Comprehensive Policy Plan, and Continuity of Operations Plan. The organization is divided into six divisions for efficient management: Operations, Logistics, Administration, Training/IT, Emergency Management, and Fire Communications.~~

### ~~V.1.C.2 Budget~~

~~**V.1.C.2.1 Municipal Taxing Service Unit (MSTU)** The OCFRD operating budget is a budget derived from the Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) created in 1981. This budget is unique because the OCFRD receives no funds from the Orange County general fund. All expenditures including personnel services, apparatus purchase, equipment, and other support expenses are spent from this fund. The organization currently maintains an 8% reserve and the budget allows for unused and~~

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~~unencumbered funds to be carried into the next fiscal year. The agency has an annual MSTU operating budget of \$117 million for 2006, and places a high priority on fiscal monitoring and budget forecasting. Capital improvement projects for new fire stations, fire equipment, and rehabilitation of some existing facilities are projected at more than \$8 million for this year. The Financial Services Bureau uses a five-year financial model that allows them to accurately project future costs. Long-range forecasting is part of the collective bargaining process as well as the annual budget preparation. The Fire Rescue MSTU millage rate has remained constant since FY99-00, showing the ability of the agency to live within the provided revenue stream. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has awarded a Certificate of Achievement of Excellence in Financial Reporting to Orange County for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for over 23 years along with the GFOA Certificate of Excellence in Budgeting since 1985.~~

~~**V.1.C.2.2 Grants** The Department actively seeks out grant funds and is currently managing two federal grants and one state grant. One grant is for twenty-seven Auto Pulse devices that automatically provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation when a person's heart stops. Another federal grant awarded OCFRD \$1,851,428 for the installation of Vehicle Preemption Traffic Signal systems at 300 Orange County intersections. The enhanced technology will automatically change traffic signals when an emergency vehicle approaches, helping cut down on response times to the scene of an incident. The agency also received a grant for fifteen mobile radio repeaters, which will boost radio~~

~~signals into large buildings and allow for uninterrupted communications between firefighters and paramedics.~~

### ~~V.1.C.3 Fire Suppression~~

~~The OCFRD has 43 first response firefighting units strategically placed across a 780 square mile service area. This number includes 37 engine companies, four ladder trucks and two Heavy Rescue Squads (water equipped). Six tankers, 15 off road brush trucks, three heavy rescue squads that handle hazardous materials emergencies and technical rescue calls, six Battalion Chief's, three EMS field supervisors, one Safety Captain, and one Assistant Chief (who functions as the shift manager) complement this response capability. Twenty-two of the 37 engine companies are staffed at the four person minimum level in accordance with NFPA 1710. The OCFRD plans to increase this number in future years. The County is geographically divided into six battalions and 37 response districts. The OCFRD uses a three platoon, 24-hours on and 48-hours off schedule. Two hundred twenty-nine (229) dual certified (EMS/Fire) firefighters and supervisors staff the fire stations throughout the county each shift. The OCFRD uses an incident command system for incident management in compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Firefighter safety is paramount and OCFR institutes an aggressive firefighter accountability (firefighter tracking) system for all hazardous incidents in accordance with NFPA 1500.~~

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### ~~V.1.C.4 Emergency Medical Services (EMS)~~

~~The OCFRD has developed an EMS philosophy centered on providing the best pre-hospital patient care to the citizens and visitors to unincorporated Orange County. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of all calls are EMS related and all certified personnel are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians or Paramedics.~~

~~**V.1.C.4.1 Fire-Based EMS Transport Services**—The growing demand for EMS from the community has led the department along with the City of Maitland, City of Winter Park, and The Seminole County Department of Public Safety to provide fire-based EMS transport services. Using this model patients are not only treated and stabilized by fire department first responders, they are also transported in fire department rescue units to the appropriate area hospitals. With a total of 320 Paramedics and 620 Emergency Medical Technicians, 28 licensed transport units and 22 full time Advanced Life Support engines, the OCFRD is the largest provider of pre-hospital emergency medical service in Central Florida. In addition, the department has 60 Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) deployed in staff vehicles throughout the county.~~

~~**V.1.C.4.2 Collection Rate**—In 2005, the OCFRD transported 17,977 patients to area hospitals. A collection rate of 65% equated to transport revenue of \$4.3 million. This is revenue that stays in the community and is invested back into the Fire/Rescue budget to continue to fund life saving services. The OCFRD supports fire based EMS transport because it provides continuity of care, revenue, and accountability. Transport services enhance service delivery by utilizing resources and personnel already in place.~~

~~**V.1.C.4.3 Fire Star**—The OCFRD also operates the only fire-based scene response medical helicopter (Fire Star) in Central Florida. Fire Star is a public-private partnership, which operates on user fees and transports critically ill and injured patients from remote locations in and around Orange County to local trauma, stroke, and cardiac centers. Although the program is a public-private partnership, the OCFRD has complete management oversight of the program. The OCFRD is proud to have pioneered and now annually conducts a fully accredited In-house Paramedic program, and was recently selected by the United States Air Force to instruct elite Para-Rescue Special Forces personnel.~~

### ~~V.1.C.5 Communications~~

~~The Fire Communications Center operates as one of the 6 Divisions in the organization. All emergency communications issues are handled from a consolidated center that also serves Winter Garden, Maitland, and Ocoee. This contractual relationship has proven to be successful by providing the seamless dispatch and response of the closest units regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. Emergency 911 calls are received, units are dispatched, and emergency incidents are tracked. The Fire Communications Division complies with both state law and national consensus standards (ISO and NFPA) for~~

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~~alarm processing and handling. This is validated by internal performance measures and exemplary marks received from recent ISO inspections in the City of Ocoee. The Communications Center achieved 100% of the eligible points issued by ISO. The OCFRD runs an efficient communications center with emphasis on customer service, quality assurance, and performance. Using enhanced 911 Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), digital GIS mapping, and an 800 MHz interoperable radio system, Fire Communications is able to dispatch emergency calls in 46 seconds 90% of the time. This time is measured from the time the phone is answered until field units are notified of the need to respond. The use of technology, performance standards, and comprehensive training has allowed OCFRD Fire Communications to establish itself as one of the premier communication centers in the nation, and Fire Communications was recently awarded the Congressional 911 Center of the Year Award (2004).~~

### ~~V.1.C.6 Special Operations~~

~~The OCFRD has a well-established Special Operations Program encompassing all facets of technical rescue and hazardous material response. The OCFRD currently staffs three Heavy Rescue Hazardous Material units with a minimum of twelve Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) Technicians per shift per day. These Heavy Rescue units carry a vast array of specialized equipment to provide heavy vehicle/machine rescue, confined space rescue, elevated victim rescue, structural collapse rescue and hazardous material response services. The OCFRD also provides personnel and logistical support to the Central Florida Urban Search and Rescue Team, Florida Task Force 4. This is a cooperative effort between the OCFRD, The City of Orlando, and the Seminole County Department of Public Safety. This task force is both a local and state asset and was deployed in 2004 for Hurricanes Charlie, Ivan, Jeanne, and more recently to the Gulf Coast in support of search and rescue operations for Hurricane Katrina.~~

### ~~V.1.C.7 Fire Prevention / Public Education~~

~~**V.1.C.7.1 Inspections** The Office of The Fire Marshal contributes to the reduction of fire loss and personal injuries that can result from structure fires. This bureau supports fire prevention through the implementation of building plan reviews, building inspections, and client education. Orange County currently has 29,827 properties to inspect spread over its 37 districts. Orange County separates properties in four priority levels for inspection. These priority levels range from a Priority IV considered low risk to Priority I considered high risk. The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) is staffed by thirty-four specialist dedicated to the prevention of fires.~~

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~~V.1.C.7.2 Public Education~~ To meet its goals to promote fire safety and basic health awareness in the community, the OCFRD has developed and implemented several educational programs to accomplish its mission: The Public Information Office handles all media relations including media advisories, press releases and public service announcements. Community Health provides medical services to areas in the community that are in need of some type of health screenings, mostly uninsured children and seniors. Additional value added services include Car Seat Inspections and Installations, Sharps Disposal Program, Public Access Defibrillation Program (PAD), Immunizations, Home for the Holidays, Community Resource Program, and CPR Training to the Community. Fire Safety programs are focused on fire prevention and fire safety:

The Citizens Fire Academy, Fire Extinguisher & Safety Training, safety presentations to schools, Hug-A-Bear Program, FLAMES TV Show (Orange TV), Juvenile Fire Setters, Children's Safety Village, and Risk Watch Puppet Shows are used to create a fire safe community.

### ~~V.1.C.8 Human Resources~~

The OCFRD is a diverse organization and complies with all local, state, and federal regulations with regard to employment, hiring, and promotions. The diversity of the OCFRD is considered an organizational strength and the department is committed to maintaining a well-qualified and diverse workforce. This is demonstrated by its commitment in recruiting minorities during the past five years. Sixty-three percent (63%) of new hires have been minorities. Thirteen percent (13%) of all firefighters are female which represents one of the largest percentages in the nation. The OCFRD has 940 certified and 159 support positions authorized. Twenty-seven (27%) of the workforce is represented by minorities and the organization acknowledges the importance of a culturally diverse workforce to deliver service to a diverse community.

### ~~V.1.C.9 Safety and Wellness~~

The OCFRD uses the International Association of Fire Fighter's Physical Ability Test (CPAT) for all entry-level employees. All Fire Rescue personnel have access to physical fitness equipment, peer fitness trainers, and the most up to date firefighter safety equipment available. All incumbent employees are encouraged to participate in physical fitness activities and receive a biannual physical fitness profile by peer fitness trainers in the mobile fitness unit and must complete the biannual Incumbent Physical Ability Test (IPAT). Employees are provided a comprehensive annual physical in accordance with NFPA 1582 and the Florida Firefighter Occupational Safety and Health Act. The safety program is managed by three shift Safety Officers and a department Health and Safety Officer. All accidents and injuries are investigated to prevent further similar mishaps and the safety program has contributed to a reduction in lost workdays and a reduction of workers compensation costs of \$500,000 during the past three years.

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~~The OCFRD has gained national notoriety for its wellness and safety initiatives, and, as a result, the International Association of Fire Chiefs and the Fire Department Safety Officer's Association selected Fire Chief Carl Plaugher as the Executive Safety Officer of the Year. The Department sponsors a Combat Challenge Team, which competes in state, regional, national, and world competition. This team recently finished first in the female tandem skills challenge world competition.~~

### ~~V.1.C.10 Training/IT~~

~~The Training/IT Division is charged with employee development and training of the entire organization. The staff delivers training in several formats including in-service station training, online computer instruction, and structured multi-company training. Through a state-of-the-art incident command training simulator, personnel are instructed in the proper use of the National Incident Management System. To provide consistent training opportunities, each~~

~~battalion is assigned a designated training officer who provides instruction and continuing education to on-duty personnel. The OCFRD has its own dedicated training facility and is capable of providing both classroom and hands on training. This training includes firefighting strategy and tactics, EMS skills, technical rescue, Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT), driver/operator, officer development, and individual firefighting skills. The Training Division provides thousands of hours of training each year.~~

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## ~~APPENDIX V.1.D, ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY ORLANDO FIRE DEPARTMENT to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

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### ~~V.1.D.1 General~~

~~Orange County Fire Rescue and Orlando Fire Department Communications Centers are busy.~~

~~a. Phone calls answered~~

~~Orlando Fire - 212,719~~

~~—Annual average phone call volume per dispatcher - 10,129~~

~~b. Radio transmissions handled~~

~~Orlando Fire — 800,000~~

~~—Annual average radio transmissions per dispatcher - 38,095~~

~~c. Alarms dispatched~~

~~Orlando Fire — 48,347~~

~~—Annual alarms per dispatcher - 2302~~

~~(Source: Orlando Fire Department CAD records calendar year 2005, Orange County Fire Rescue Side by Side service comparison dated 1/13/05)~~

~~Calls, Radio Transmissions and alarms dispatched are primarily (98.6%) mutually exclusive events (not mutual aid to each other)~~

~~(Source: Orlando Fire Department Printrae CAD database)~~

~~d. Centers are operating at or near capacity~~

~~(Source: In 2001, a comprehensive national survey of municipal fire departments was conducted by Orlando Fire Department as part of a strategic planning process included a survey item on number of alarms per dispatcher per year. Of the agencies surveyed, the average number of alarms handled per dispatcher was 2012 alarms).~~

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~~e. Reduction in number of personnel in consolidation of centers is not likely due to current workload. Workload must be balanced against the ability of the center to maintain compliance with performance goals. NFPA 1710 and APCO have performance goals of handling the call in 60 seconds or less 90% of the time.~~

~~f. No gain in efficiency or service would result from consolidation and could reduce the ability of dispatchers to meet their performance goals. Reduction in personnel will not create efficiencies and therefore no money would be saved.~~

### ~~V.1D.2 Interoperability and Redundancy~~

~~Redundancy of communications capability is needed in case one center fails. Two such failures have occurred in the last 24 months.~~

~~—During hurricane Charlie, tornadic activity damaged the roof membrane of the Orlando Emergency Operations Center where the Orlando Police and Orlando Fire Communications Centers are located. The damage to roof created a significant water leak near the police communications area. The police communications personnel were relocated to the Orange County Sheriff's Communications location. Orlando Fire Communications continued uninterrupted.~~

~~—In October of 2005, the Orange County Fire Communications had an electrical problem that caused an interruption in their communications system. Calls were shifted from Orange County Fire Communications Center to the Orlando Communications Center automatically, and with out any interruption of service to the public.~~

~~Recommendations from the 911 Commission Report include building redundant communications capability for public safety.~~

### ~~V.1D.3 Efficiencies~~

~~Efficiencies gained or lost at the result of consolidation of communications Centers:~~

~~a. Cost of migration to single technology—Loss~~

~~—Communications centers operate on different Computer aided dispatching software applications and interface with different incident records management applications.~~

~~—Cost to migrate from ones system to the other could exceed 2 million dollars.~~

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- ~~—It is possible that neither system could handle current or future volume in current configuration and would require an upgrade or scrapping in favor of a system built to handle this volume. Cost for a new CAD/RMS system could exceed 3 million dollars.~~
- ~~—Such a consolidation would result in new money spent with no gain in efficiency or service.~~

### ~~b. Personnel Loss~~

- ~~—OFD Dispatchers are covered by a labor agreement.~~
- ~~—OFD Dispatchers are part of a City Pension plan. Orange County Dispatchers are covered by the State Pension Plan.
  - ~~oTo consolidate pension plans would have to be transitioned or bought out costing new money.~~
  - ~~oLabor agreements would have to be honored creating different terms and conditions of work within the consolidated center.~~~~
- ~~—OFD Dispatchers are incident partners. They have a described role in incident operations that bring an additional layer of functionality and safety to emergency incidents. They are trained on the OFD Standard Operating Procedures and partner with incident command operating on emergency scenes. (Source: OFD Standard Operating Procedures).~~
- ~~—Consolidation of communications centers would eliminate Orlando's ability to utilize dispatchers as partners in emergency scene operations. Training of more dispatchers would create additional training expense and if the consolidation were to occur under the county, OFD would lose the ability to mandate such training.~~
- ~~—Consolidation of communications centers would not result in the reduction of personnel and would result in a loss of functionality to the OFD. No increase in efficiency or service would result from consolidation. No money would be saved.~~

### ~~V.1D.4 Infrastructure~~

- ~~a. Current and future workload would prohibit the reduction of staff or consoles.~~
- ~~—b. Current facilities would still be occupied and operating.~~

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- ~~—Both the City of Orlando and Orange County Communications Centers house fire communications, law enforcement communications and the emergency operations centers for the respective jurisdictions.~~
- ~~—A study would have to be conducted to determine if space in either facility would allow consolidation, whether or not there is capacity in phone, data and fiber lines to accommodate the communications traffic in and out of the center. If capacity were not adequate the cost to build out the current center or a new center would need to be determined.~~
- ~~—No savings in operational cost would be realized by either jurisdiction, as both facilities would still be housing law enforcement communications and emergency operations.~~
- ~~—No gain in efficiency or service would result from consolidation.~~

### ~~V.1.D.5 Fire-EMS Operations:~~

- ~~a. OFD and OCFRD experience a high demand for service.
  - ~~—In 2005 OFD responded to 47,537 calls for service. 39% Fire and 61% Medical.~~
  - ~~—OCFRD responded to 86,000 23% Fire and 77% Medical. (Source: City of Orlando CAD, RMS system, Orange County Side by side comparison)~~
  - ~~—A survey conducted by OFD in 2001 revealed that OFD:
    - ~~oIs experiencing a greater than 6% increase in service demand annually.~~
    - ~~oResponds to more HAZMAT alarms than other cities surveyed.~~
    - ~~oResponds to 172 EMS calls per 10,000 population, more calls per 10,000 population than Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, or Las Vegas, Nevada.~~
    - ~~oWhen adjusted for population, OFD has a significantly higher call frequency per fire station than other cities surveyed.~~~~
  - ~~—Comparison with the ICMA Fire and EMS Data set reveals similar findings.~~
  - ~~—Because the service demand in both jurisdictions is high and because neither jurisdiction has excess capacity, consolidation of services would not result in a reduction of salary expense or operational expense.~~
  - ~~—Since the citizens in either jurisdiction would realize no benefit by consolidation of fire-EMS services, it makes little sense to consolidate.~~~~

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~~b. Both agencies have signed joint response, automatic aide, mutual aide agreements, and memorandums of understanding with each other and with other neighboring agencies creating a regional response network, ensuring appropriate and timely response. (Source Public Records)~~

~~c. Each agency utilizes different standard operating procedures. These SOPs are different because they are based on specific needs of the community the agency serves. Considerations for the development and use of SOPs include: deployment strategies, response times, density of population operational/staffing environments, and distribution of call type (EMS vs fire). The service demand and deployment strategy in the county is different than in the more urban environment of the OFD service area. (Source: OFD SOP manual and Public Documents).~~

~~d. The current City-County jurisdictional boundary is jagged, islands and enclaves exist, creating fragmented service area, inefficient service delivery and increased response times. Cost inefficiencies are created because of overlapping response areas. (Source: City of Orlando GIS, Orange County Property Appraiser).~~

~~e. Both agencies are rated by the Insurance Services Organization, and assigned a Property Protection Rating based on that evaluation. Fire Insurance rates are based in part on a jurisdiction's Public Fire Protection Classification. Resident's and businesses located in jurisdictions with a lower (closer to 1) Public Fire Protection rating are likely to have lower insurance rates than residents or businesses located in jurisdictions located in jurisdictions with high (closer to 10) classifications. This rating is derived from a comprehensive study of a wide array of factors including, deployment strategy, response times, staffing, training and infrastructure such as water systems. The schedule measures the major elements of a [jurisdiction's] fire suppression system. These measurements are then developed into a Public Classification number on a relative scale from 1 to 10, with 10 representing less than the minimum recognized protection. The Schedule is a fire insurance rating tool, and is not intended to analyze all aspects of a comprehensive public fire protection program. It should not be used for purposes other than insurance rating. (Source ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule page 1)~~

~~—Orlando has a rating of 2, placing the City of Orlando in the top 1% nationally.~~

~~—Insurance costs increase an average of 10% from an ISO rating of 2 to a 4. (Source: actual insurance quotes from an independent insurer)~~

~~—Orange County has a split rating 4 / 9. (Source: Public Documents)~~

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~~f. The City of Orlando strictly uses national standards to set performance goals and measures such as NFPA 1710 (deployment standard) and the ISO. Orlando also benchmarks against other like cities through participation in ICMA. (Source: OFD records)~~

~~g. The OFD provides advanced life support from every frontline unit 24/7. (Source: City of Orlando documents)~~

~~h. The OFD has transport capable rescues, however does not transport for many reasons some of which include; high call volume and impact on operational strategy. The OCFRD transports in parts of the county. Both agencies partner with private transport companies to insure transport is available to all residents.~~

~~i. Economies of scale are already being realized through like purchasing contracts at the local and state level.~~

~~j. Consolidation of the fire departments would result in a change of the City's ISO classification and likely result in an increase in insurance rates for City of Orlando residents and commercial property owners.~~

~~k. Both agencies operate under different labor agreements and different pension plans. To combine the departments, pension plans would have to be transitioned from one plan to the other, or employees would have to be bought out of their existing plans, costing new unfunded money. Labor agreements would have to be honored creating different terms and conditions of employment within one agency.~~

~~l. Consolidation of 911 Communication Centers would not result in a cost savings or improved service to all of the citizens impacted by the consolidation.~~

~~—Calls, Radio Transmissions and alarms dispatched are primarily (98.6%) mutually exclusive of each other, (not mutual aid). (Source: OFD Printrac CAD database)~~

~~—Each center is co-located with law enforcement for their jurisdiction. This provides enhanced operations across the public safety arena.~~

~~—The City of Orlando also houses the control center for traffic engineering which allows them to better coordinate traffic flow in the area of emergencies.~~

~~—Each center currently uses different computer aided dispatch systems, mapping systems, and record management systems. This would make consolidation of these centers very costly, new Computer Aided~~

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- ~~Dispatch and Records management systems could cost in excess of three Million dollars.~~
- ~~The entire region works on 800 MHz radio systems, are all interoperable.~~
- ~~Current Joint response and mutual aid works well. Both centers could benefit from enhanced interconnectivity to speed information transfers and call processing times for joint response and automatic aid calls.~~
- ~~Both centers are intricately involved with the daily tactical operations of their respective departments. These operations are much different based on deployment strategies that include response times, type of units dispatched based on the nature of the call, and population density.~~

### ~~APPENDIX V.1.E, ORANGE COUNTY 2005 FIRE/RESCUE SERVICES IMPACT FEE UPDATE STUDY, to the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report~~

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~~(Received from Donna Easton, Administrative Assistant to Deputy Chief Fitzgerald, Orange County Fire Rescue Department, 2:13 p.m. March 10, 2006, in an e-mail, Subject: Fire Rescue Impact Fees)~~

~~NEED TO ADD REPORT which is an Adobe Document that doesn't convert to Word~~

~~—Additional Documentation Submitted by the Orange County Fire  
Rescue Department (County Fire Department) ..... Appendix E  
Additional Documentation Submitted by the  
City of Orlando Fire Department..... Appendix F  
Orange County 2005 Fire/Rescue Services Impact Fee Update Study.....Appendix G~~

## **V.1 DRAFT Fire and Emergency Services Committee Report**

### **FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT**

#### **Members**

The Fire and Emergency Services Committee consisted of the following individuals:

- Jimmy Goff, Chairman
- Don Ammerman
- Cari Coats
- Carolyn Fennell
- Jim Kallinger
- Frances Pignone
- Kathy Putnam

#### **Meeting Schedule and Presenters**

The Fire and Emergency Services Committee (the “Committee”) held its first meeting on August 22, 2005 and met on fourteen separate occasions, concluding its deliberations on March 21, 2006. A follow-up meeting was held on April 6, 2006 to further discuss committee’s recommendations. A chart compiling the Committee’s schedule of meetings and the presenters is attached as Appendix A.

#### **Side-By-Side Comparisons**

Two detailed Side-By-Side Comparisons of the data presented and considered by the Committee are attached as Appendixes B and C. Appendix B contains a side-by-side comparison of the Orange County Fire Rescue Department and the City of Orlando Fire Department. Appendix C contains a comparison of the two department’s 911 Centers. The data cited in the Side-by-Side Comparisons is information provided by either Orange County or the City of Orlando and is not based on any independent calculations or studies prepared by the Committee.

#### **Findings of Fact**

The following findings of fact were determined by the Committee to be of significance and are the basis for their conclusions and recommendations:

Fire/Emergency Fact #1 The Orange County Fire Rescue Department (hereinafter referred to as the “County Fire Department”), the fourth largest Fire Department in Florida (based on personnel), responds to more than 86,000 calls per year. (See Appendix E for additional information on the County Fire Department.) The Orlando

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Fire Department answered 47,537 calls in 2005. (See Appendix F for additional information on the Orlando Fire Department.)

*Fire/Emergency Fact #2* The County Fire Department has established itself as a modern and efficient provider of public safety services across a complex urban, suburban and rural area, which includes significant residential, industrial, military, tourism, and higher educational facilities. The County Fire Department has contracted with the cities of Oakland, Orlando for the Lake Nona area, Maitland, Ocoee, Winter Garden, Edgewood, Belle Isle, and Eatonville to provide dispatch and/or fire service. Due to its size, financial strength, and governance, the County Fire Department is able to provide many sophisticated services beyond firefighting. In addition to EMS transport, fire inspections, and public education activities, the Department also operates a series of technical rescue teams, an aero-medical transport program, bicycle rescue teams and many other activities. (Source: Barry Luke, Division Chief, Fire Communications, County Fire Department).

*Fire/Emergency Fact #3* The County Fire Department operating budget is derived exclusively from a Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) created in 1981. This budget is unique because the County Fire Department receives no funds from Orange County's general funds. All expenditures including personnel services, apparatus purchase, equipment, and other support expenses are spent from this fund. The County Fire Department also receives funding from Fire/Rescue Impact Fees that are used for new construction and growth related capital expenditures. See Appendix G.

*Fire/Emergency Fact #4* Both Orange County and the City of Orlando have 911 Communication Centers that receive emergency calls for both law enforcement and Fire/Emergency services. Orange County has the Orange County 911 Communications Center (County Communications Center), a consolidated center that also serves the cities of Winter Garden, Maitland, and Ocoee. This contractual relationship has proven to be successful for the County Fire Department and the cities by providing seamless dispatch and response of the closest units regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. The City of Orlando has the Orlando Operations Center. Both Centers share their facilities with law enforcement. Approximately 80% of 911 calls coming into the Centers are for law enforcement. (Source: Barry Luke, Division Chief, Fire Communications, County Fire Department).

*Fire/Emergency Fact #5* On an average day, Orange County Fire Rescue receives 270 to 280 emergency calls. The performance standard for operators is that the calls must be answered within 10 seconds, 90% of the time. Then, the operators who receive the calls have 60 seconds to dispatch the Fire responders; the average call process time is 46 seconds. (Source: Barry Luke, Division Chief, Fire Communications, County Fire Department).

*Fire/Emergency Fact #6* Computers are relied upon at both the County Communications Center and the Orlando Operations Center to determine what vehicles are available for calls, the best vehicle to dispatch, and the best route to the scene.

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Each Center currently uses different computer-aided dispatch, mapping and record management systems. Consolidation of these centers would be costly. Estimates for a new integrated computer-aided dispatch and records management system could cost in excess of \$3 million.

Fire/Emergency Fact #7 Both Orange County and Orlando operate extremely busy and very professional 911 Centers, with highly trained professional management and staff. Both 911 Centers work at full capacity in a high-pressure environment. Due to the inherent stress of the job duties, there are always a number of unfilled positions. Table 1 below compares the workload of both centers. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, Orlando Fire Department).

**Table 1**

<b><u>2005 COMMUNICATIONS CENTERS WORKLOAD</u></b>		
<b><u>ACTION</u></b>	<b><u>CITY OF ORLANDO</u></b>	<b><u>ORANGE COUNTY</u></b>
<u>Phone calls received</u>	<u>212,719</u>	<u>335,674</u>
<u>Radio transmissions handled</u>	<u>800,000</u>	<u>Not tracked</u>
<u>Emergency Incident responses</u>	<u>47,537</u>	<u>86,000</u>
<u>Total Unit* Responses</u>	<u>86,016</u>	<u>183,000</u>

\* Unit = one vehicle

Fire/Emergency Fact #8 Each jurisdiction has reported that in 2005, 45% of all 911 calls originated from cell phones. This is a significant fact because cell phone calls are not always linked to the Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) location of the call that appears on the Call Center's computer. This situation creates difficulties in matching the call to the Enhanced 9-1-1 System, so additional time is needed to determine the location of the caller. Further problems are created when the caller is in transit and is no longer at the incident location. Dispatchers must expend additional time to determine the location of the emergency rather than the location of the caller. It is expected that this problem will worsen as more residents elect to use cell phones instead of having landline phones installed in their homes. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, Orlando Fire Department).

Fire/Emergency Fact #9 Sometimes multiple 911 Centers are notified of the same accident with multiple responses initiated by the relevant Dispatch Centers. (Source: T.J. Lyon, Division Chief, Fire Operations, County Fire Department).

Fire/Emergency Fact #10 An Orange County 911 Coordinator collects updated information from all jurisdictions and provides all ten 911 communications centers within Orange County with weekly updates about new subdivisions and other relevant changes to maps. This coordination is crucial to ensure correct and prompt response by all fire departments.

Fire/Emergency Fact #11 Each communications center houses the Emergency Operations Center for their respective jurisdictions. During state of emergencies, such as hurricanes, this has proven to be an effective way to manage these events and the

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increased demand for emergency services. Both Centers serve as an automatic back up to the other. If a catastrophic interruption occurs, calls seamlessly transfer to the other center for processing and dispatch. This has happened twice in the last two years. Evidence was presented to the Committee that redundancy in regard to the County Communications Center and the Orlando Operations Center is a good policy, given the likelihood of hurricanes and other natural or man-made disasters. The question is how to best achieve that redundancy at the lowest cost to taxpayers. The ability of the personnel from the temporarily inoperative Center to safely and quickly relocate to the other Center is also a consideration in this matter.

*Fire/Emergency Fact #12* Emergency services share common radio channels. All emergency service providers are utilizing the 800 mega-hertz radio system. The radios used in this frequency band are programmable and contain channels for all emergency service providers in the area. This allows one agency to talk to another agency directly. There are also multiple statewide mutual aid channels available for use when agencies from outside the region provide assistance. This technology makes radio communications nearly seamless from one jurisdiction to another. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, Orlando Fire Department).

*Fire/Emergency Fact #13* In 2005, the County Fire Department provided assistance to the Orlando Fire Department on 1,363 occasions. Those incidents resulted in the County Fire Department committing 17,001 minutes to City of Orlando residents. This resulted in an average of 11.01 minutes for each County unit committed to each call. The Orlando Fire Department assisted the County Fire Department on 603 occasions. The Orlando Fire Department was committed to unincorporated Orange County residents for 19,128 minutes. The City units committed approximately 19.26 minutes for each call to County residents.

*Fire/Emergency Fact #14* The County Fire Department provides medical transportation for designated areas. It believes that this continuity of care provides a higher level of emergency medical services. Additionally, as a result of providing medical transportation services, the County Fire Department has generated revenue over the past 5 years in excess of \$16 million with an average collection rate of 66% of net billable. All of the collected revenues are utilized to continually improve pre-hospital emergency care service.

Both Orange County and the City of Orlando use private transport companies to ensure transport is available to all residents. The City of Orlando uses Rural Metro to provide transport service for City residents and has accepted the response standards specified in Orange County's contract with Rural Metro. When Rural Metro cannot transport, the Orlando Fire Department provides the service. The Orlando Fire Department has transport capable rescues, but has made a policy decision to use Rural Metro for a number of stated reasons including high call volume and the impact on overall operational strategy. The reasoning for the transport decision by each jurisdiction is in Appendix D - Rescue Transport Costs. (Source: Jim Reynolds, Deputy Chief, Orlando Fire Department).

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Fire/Emergency Fact #15 The Orange County Emergency Medical Services Medical Director provides standing orders that direct that patients be taken to the nearest facility. An exception to this directive can occur if the patient is in stable condition and requests an alternate facility. (Source: Roger Duryea, General Manager, Rural Metro Ambulance).

Fire/Emergency Fact #16 People transported by EMS transportation make up 15% of the emergency room visits in Orange County. (Source: Dr. George Ralls, Orange County Emergency Medical Services Medical Director).

Fire/Emergency Fact #17 Orange County government has established a clinic system, the Primary Care Access Network (PCAN), to provide health care services to uninsured residents. Twenty-One percent (21%) of Orange County residents have no health insurance. This system appears to have helped to provide primary care in lieu of hospital emergency rooms. (Source: Pete Clarke, Deputy Director, and Randy Lewis, Senior Program Manager, Health and Family Services Department, Orange County).

Fire/Emergency Fact #18 "Wall Time" is a term used to describe the time a vehicle and crew have to wait at a hospital emergency room (ER) until the patient is accepted by the hospital and is a problem faced nationwide by all emergency transporters.

- o Dr. George Ralls, Orange County EMS Medical Director, said that "wall time" is a national problem. He opined that volume isn't the problem. According to Dr. Ralls, there is a tremendous need in this community for unscheduled care and walk-in ER patients shouldn't be blamed for the "wall time" problem, as these low acuity patients are seen quickly. The fixed costs related to these patients are there anyway. The problem of "wall time" is not primarily related to the number of patients coming to the emergency rooms for health care; but instead may be attributable to the amount of time it takes for a patient before he or she can be admitted to an ER bed, and, if necessary, eventually moved to an appropriate hospital ward. During certain times of the year hospitals are busier, but this may not justify adding beds only to accommodate this periodic influx of patients.
- o Dr. Todd Husty, EMS Director for Seminole County, Maitland, and Winter Park, has addressed the "wall time" problem by defining it as a hospital "internal disaster" (disaster defined as need outstripping supply) so that the hospital can take actions that usually it wouldn't, and by setting a 15 minute goal for EMS personnel transferring a transported patient to emergency room (ER) care, and a 45 minute maximum rule. The approach has reduced instances of wall time to 2-4% of Seminole County transports.
- o Of the 450,000 patients seen at Orange County emergency rooms in 2005, 76,000 were EMS transported, while the rest were walk-ins. Of the transported patients, 50% were admitted to a hospital. 20% to 30% of the walk-ins were admitted. The 911-call volume for Orange County is substantially greater than

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that of Seminole County because Orange County has more residents and also 35,000,000 visitors per year. In addition, there is an increase in the number of patients treated because of the specialized types of hospital services provided in Orange County. (Source: Dr. George Ralls, Orange County Medical Director).

- o Orange County Fire Rescue Communications monitors emergency room availability and patients are transported in accordance with established protocols. (Source: Dr. George Ralls, Orange County Medical Director).

Fire/Emergency Fact #19 The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) provides what data must be collected, stored and searchable and kept in fire communications system records. System records can be the most costly part of migrating to a new software application because the records in the present system must be moved to the new software. Migration of records from one software application to the other requires the building of intricate programming "scripts". These scripts create a cross walk from one application to the other so that data contained in each report field are properly migrated from the old application to the new application. Such a crosswalk is also required for all occupancy data so even if you wanted to leave your incident data in the old application archive, you would still have to migrate huge stores of data from the occupancy files to the new software. All users of the software would have to be trained and become proficient so that incident or inspection data is accurately captured. The cost of purchasing a new software application is not large (less than \$500,000) but the cost of migration can be very expensive when the labor and scripting costs are added. A clear and compelling business benefit must be present in order to justify the decision to migrate from one application to another. (Source: Kathy Miller, Deputy Chief, Orlando Fire Department).

Fire/Emergency Fact #20 Both the City of Orlando and Orange County are rated by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO), which is an independent protection rating organization that is used to set insurance rates nationally. The ISO does not conduct self-assessments/peer reviews. It only collects data on and analyzes the fire suppression service capability of a community. Their analysis is based on criteria such as: fire alarms (how well the agency receives alarms and dispatches its resources); the number of engine companies (distribution); and, water supply (whether the community has a sufficient water supply, etc.). The ISO rating is derived from a comprehensive study of a wide array of factors including deployment strategy, response times, staffing, training and infrastructure. The ratings are on a 1-10 scale with a rating of 1 being the best.

- o The City of Orlando has an ISO rating of 2.
- o Orange County's ISO rating is split 4/9. This score reflects the diverse urban, suburban, and rural service areas that the County Fire Department protects. Essentially, ISO only classifies a community's ability to fight fire; this service accounts for only about 2% of the County Fire Department's annual emergency responses. A comprehensive public fire protection program includes many aspects of which the ISO rating, a fire insurance rating tool, is but just one of

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those factors. The County Fire Department is satisfied with the 4/9 rating and realizes it is an appropriate balance between available funds and fire service delivery.

- o The ISO has recently partnered with the Commission of Fire Service Accreditation International (CFAI) to enhance its ability to rate fire departments. The CFAI provides a comprehensive system of fire and emergency service evaluation that helps local governments determine their risks and fire safety needs, evaluate the performance of the organizations involved, and provide a method for continuous improvement. The self-assessment process covers 10 categories that address all aspects of fire service. Within these categories are performance indicators and core competencies to which the agency must show effectiveness. The County Fire Department is currently seeking accreditation and will file a formal application this year.

The Orlando Fire Department is also seeking Accreditation through this process. By obtaining accreditation, the Orlando Fire Department will have validated its business processes as well as its deployment strategy, via the ISO's public protection rating, and its performance, by meeting nationally accepted fire service performance standards found in Section 1710 of the National Fire Protection Association Code ("NFPA 1710"). The Orlando Fire Department is committed to providing high quality cost effective service through constant review of its business processes. (Source: Kathy Miler, Deputy chief, Orlando Fire Department).

Fire/Emergency Fact #21 The current City-County jurisdictional boundary is jagged. Islands and enclaves exist creating a fragmented service area, inefficient service delivery and increased response times. Cost inefficiencies are created because of overlapping response areas. (Source: City of Orlando GIS, Orange County Property Appraiser).

Fire/Emergency Fact #22 Economies of scale are already being realized through like purchasing contracts at the local and state level.

Fire/Emergency Fact #23 Both the County Fire Department and the Orlando Fire Department have programs in place that have resulted in similar success in the hiring and promotion of minorities and women. There is not a statistically significant difference in the relevant percentages of minorities and women in their respective workforces. The Orlando Fire Department pointed out that their numbers went down somewhat as a result of the recent retirement of a number of minority and female personnel, to include a number in supervisory positions.

## Conclusions

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Based upon testimony received by the Committee members during its various meetings, the Committee by a majority vote adopted the five conclusions that follow at their meeting held on March 21, 2006:

Fire/Emergency Conclusion #1 Both the Orange County Fire Rescue Department and the City of Orlando Fire Department are well run, professional organizations that handle very large volumes of emergency responses.

Fire/Emergency Conclusion #2 The County Fire Department and the City Fire Department have joint response, automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, and Memorandums of Understanding with each other.

Fire/Emergency Conclusion #3 "Wall time" is an issue for patient transporters within Orange County.

Fire/Emergency Conclusion #4 911 Communication Centers redundancy is good policy.

Fire/Emergency Conclusion #5 The present fire and emergency services boundaries between Orange County and the City of Orlando cause inefficiencies such as the duplication of the delivery of emergency services, as well as both agencies responding to the same calls.

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### **Recommendations**

Consolidation of the Orange County Fire Rescue Department and City of Orlando Fire Department was studied for efficiencies in service delivery, economies of scale, opportunities for enhanced intergovernmental cooperation and other related issues. The Committee recommends that the Study Commission adopt the following recommendations for further consideration by both the County and the City:

#### **FIRE/EMERGENCY RECOMMENDATION #1**

That Orange County and the City of Orlando should develop a fire service boundary agreement that rounds off jurisdictional boundaries to clearly establish service delivery areas for both agencies.

#### **FIRE/EMERGENCY RECOMMENDATION #2**

That the 911 Communications Centers of Orange County and the City of Orlando not be consolidated, but that Orange County and the City of Orlando acquire technology improvements to allow interoperability, thus speeding up emergency call response times and the availability of units and maintaining current redundancy.

#### **FIRE/EMERGENCY RECOMMENDATION #3**

That Orange County and the City of Orlando planning for land use, new developments, etc., should include fire and emergency services representatives and should include joint planning for emergency service provision, for example, planning future locations for fire stations, especially in areas that are underserved.

#### **FIRE/EMERGENCY RECOMMENDATION #4**

That the Fire Rescue Administrations from both Orange County and the City of Orlando address the potential of joint purchasing of fire and emergency vehicles and equipment, establishing common radio terminology, improving accountability practices, and coordinating emergency response resources and command procedures, based on the National Incident Management System and Section 1561 of the National Fire Protection Association Code (NFPA 1561) - Emergency Services Incident Management System.

#### **FIRE/EMERGENCY RECOMMENDATION #5**

That, because the Committee found that neither efficiencies in service delivery nor economies of scale would result from consolidation of services, and because bigger is not necessarily better, neither the Orange County and the City of Orlando Fire Departments nor their services be consolidated.