



**Commission on
Fire Accreditation
International®**

Accreditation Report

**Iowa City Fire Department
410 East Washington Street
City of Iowa City, IA 52240
United States of America**

**This report was prepared on May 25, 2023
by the
Commission on Fire Accreditation International**

**This report represents the findings
of the peer assessment team that visited the
Iowa City Fire Department
on May 7 – 10, 2023**

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PREFACE

To the citizens and the governing body of the department: this report represents a thorough review of the organization to verify and validate how this department is executing its stated mission in accordance with universally accepted practices for a contemporary fire and emergency services organization. Quality improvement can only be initiated and realized by those agencies that challenge themselves through a comprehensive self-assessment. This report documents that this department is seeking organizational improvements and discovering elements of excellence. Please note that the recommendations by the peer assessment team are opportunities for improvement provided by professionals in the fire and emergency service industry.

To the department: This report communicates the outputs and outcomes of your dedication and commitment to quality improvement. Your self-assessment, community risk assessment/standards of cover, and strategic plan amount to years of work to understand your community, establish accountable goals, institute transparency, and factually comprehend what you did not know about your organization. The verification and validation of your department by a team of peers represents a major accomplishment. The recommendations in this report are opportunities to become better and stronger in your community. Finally, take this report and communicate to your community the areas you identified during your self-assessment that were outstanding and those that represent improvement opportunities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Iowa City Fire Department is a career organization with 64 uniformed personnel, staffing three engines, one quint, and one truck company at four fire stations. All fire suppression vehicles are staffed with three firefighters and equipped to provide basic life support (BLS) services. The department operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with a minimum of 16 personnel. The fire marshal is the only dedicated member to community risk reduction/public fire education. One full-time person is dedicated to fire training.

The city represents 25.28 square miles and is located on both sides of the Iowa River in the central portion of Johnson County, just 25 miles south of Cedar Rapids and approximately 55 miles west of Davenport and the Mississippi River. Iowa City was the second capital of the Iowa Territory and the first capital of the State of Iowa. The 2020 census indicated a population of 74,828 which was a 10.2 percent increase from the 2010 census.

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) has completed a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Iowa City Fire Department based upon the tenth edition of the accreditation model. The commission's goals are to promote organizational self-improvement and to award accreditation status in recognition of good performance. The peer assessment team's objectives were to verify and validate the department's self-assessment study, identify and make recommendations for improvement, issue a report of findings, and conclude if the department is eligible for an award of accreditation.

The peer assessment team followed CFAI processes, and the Iowa City Fire Department demonstrated that its self-study accreditation manual, community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC), and strategic plan met all core competencies and criteria. The peer assessment team

recommends accredited agency status for the Iowa City Fire Department from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

The peer assessment team observed a strong commitment by the department to the CFAI accreditation process and in particular to ensuring appropriate succession training for the accreditation manager position. The current accreditation manager has a support team and one of its members will be selected as their replacement. The fire chief has acted as a peer assessor for CFAI. These approaches ensure continuity, more direct access to quality improvement with similar organizations, and the engagement of a broader spectrum of the department.

The peer assessment team had meetings with the city manager, the finance director, the president of the firefighters' association, and several additional city department directors. Individually and collectively, they expressed a long-standing understanding in the process. There is clearly a commitment to continue to follow and support the implementation of identified opportunities for improvement. It can be anticipated that all representatives will be supporters and network participants as the full benefits of going through the self-assessment process are realized and built on in the future.

The peer assessment team identified opportunities for improvement that are provided below. These recommendations flowed from discussions, interviews, and a review of supplied documentation to support its self-assessment conclusions.

The following represents a synopsis of the recommendations that were made by the peer assessment team during the on-site visit. Additional details for each of these recommendations can be found in the Observations Section of this report. For each of the recommendations, the performance indicator from the model is provided, including notating if it is a core competency (CC).

Recommendations

Recommendations were developed from the evaluation of criterion, core competencies, and performance indicators.

1. It is recommended that the department, working with human resources, complete a staffing needs analysis to ensure there is adequate staffing to meet current and projected needs of the department. ([CC 1B.1](#))
2. It is recommended that the department conduct a staffing analysis of the fire prevention bureau to determine if staff is adequate to meet the current and projected goals and objectives of the prevention program. ([CC 5A.3](#))
3. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators. (This recommendation applies to the following performance indicators: [CC 5A.7](#), [CC 5B.4](#), [CC 5C.4](#), [CC 5D.9](#), [CC 5E.3](#), [CC 5F.9](#), [CC 5G.2](#), [CC 5H.3](#), [CC 8B.6](#), [CC 9B.13](#), and [CC 11B.6](#))
4. It is recommended that the department identify minimum qualification/certification requirements for public educators in accordance with applicable standards to ensure desired levels of training are met. ([CC 5B.2](#))

5. It is recommended that the department review and update the city's domestic preparedness documentation. ([CC 5D.1](#))
6. It is recommended that the department conduct a facility space planning assessment. ([6B.1](#))
7. It is recommended that the department work with fleet services to conduct a workforce analysis of certified emergency vehicle technicians within the fleet services department. ([6D.3](#))
8. It is recommended that the department work with the city's Human Resource Department to ensure policies, practices, and procedures are formally reviewed annually and updated as needed. ([7A.3](#))
9. It is recommended that a formal documented succession plan is adopted and implemented that outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for each collateral duty position in the department. ([7D.6](#))
10. It is recommended that the department identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for aviation rescue and fire fighting and incorporate the topic into the annual specialized training curricula. ([CC 8A.1](#))
11. It is recommended that the department conduct a workforce analysis of fire administration and support functions. ([9C.1](#))
12. It is recommended that the department work with the Johnson County emergency communications center to identify enhancements to the computer aided dispatch software for situational awareness for both responding firefighters and command officers. ([CC 9D.1](#))
13. It is recommended that the department reevaluate processes associated with exposure reporting as part of its health and safety program. ([11A.10](#))
14. It is recommended that the department update written directives and practices associated with the assignment and utilization of an incident safety officer. ([11A.11](#))

The department demonstrated its acute desire to immediately implement plans to address opportunities for improvement. The best example was the need to schedule additional interviews for the team to be able to verify and validate items that were brought up during interviews.

The department responded to a total of 9,039 emergencies in 2022 including: 163 fire calls (1.8 percent); 5,076 emergency medical service (EMS) calls (56.2 percent); and 3,800 miscellaneous calls (42.0 percent). Servicing these calls in 2022 resulted in a total of 10,703-unit movements.

In 2017, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) visited the city to rate its public protection classification. The outcome of the visit was a public protection classification of 2.

OBSERVATIONS

Category 1 — Governance and Administration

The governing body and/or agency manager is legally established to provide general policies to guide the agency, approved programs and services, and appropriated financial resources. The City of Iowa City governing body is a council/manager form of government and is directed by the Code of Iowa – Chapter 364.16 *Municipal Fire Protection* to provide protection of life and property against fire. The Code of Iowa along with City Code – Title 7 Fire Code, Chapters 7-1-1 to 7-5-2 provides for the Iowa City Fire Department the direction to provide the required services to the citizens and visitors. The governing body, through the city manager reviews all services, programs, and staffing on a regular basis and more wholistically during the budgetary process.

The organizational structure aligns with or supports the agency’s mission, purposes, goals, strategies and objectives. The department is organized into four divisions: administration, operations, training, and prevention. The department has General Policy No. GP-130.04 *Organizational Structure of the Fire Department* which contains the organizational chart for the department and City of Iowa City. The organizational chart shows the relationship between the city and the department. The department staff has several collateral assignments to accomplish needed tasks which has created numerous activities being placed on hold until other more pressing items are completed. It is recommended that the department, working with human resources, complete a staffing needs analysis to ensure there is adequate staffing to meet current and projected needs of the department.

Category 2 — Assessment and Planning

The agency collects and analyzes data specific to the distinct characteristics of its legally defined service area(s) and applies the findings to organizational services and services development. Iowa City has a comprehensive plan that collects information on various demographics within the city. This information is utilized by the Iowa City Fire Department in the development of the Community Risk Assessment – Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC). This information along with information collected by the City of Iowa City Department of Neighborhood and Development Services publishes a yearly community profile that includes the following information: population, labor force, property valuation, and housing. This information is included in the department’s CRA-SOC. The city utilizes the Code of Iowa – Chapter 357B *Fire Districts*, which outlines the procedures for the establishment of fire districts and then the city utilizes City Code, Title 1, Chapter 9, Section 1-9-3 *Election Precincts* to establish the geographic boundaries for the city. The city has 10 planning districts and then the department has established 16 risk management zones based on the census tracts, which provides invaluable information. With these 16 risk management zones the department has developed a well-established CRA-SOC.

The agency identifies and assesses the nature and magnitude of all hazards and risks within its jurisdiction. Risk categorization and deployment impact consider factors such as cultural, economic, historical and environmental values, as well as operational characteristics. The Iowa City Fire Department has identified, adopted, and documented a well-established methodology to categorize and classify all hazards and risks throughout the community and put them into the 16 risk management zones. The department has utilized the occupancy vulnerability assessment profile and Heron’s Formula in the development of the risk categorization for each program area.

The agency identifies and documents the nature and magnitude of the service and deployment demands within its jurisdiction. Based on risk categorization and service impact considerations, the agency's deployment practices are consistent with jurisdictional expectations and with industry research. Efficiency and effectiveness are documented through quality response measurements that consider overall response, consistency, reliability, resiliency and outcomes throughout all service areas. The agency develops procedures, practices and programs to appropriately guide its resource deployment.

The department has divided the city into 4 response districts and has further divided those into 16 risk management zones. The department has completed a comprehensive risk analysis for each of the risk management zones and utilizes this information to establish response strategies based on the risks/hazard and critical task analysis completed for each program area.

The agency has assessed and provided evidence that its current deployment methods for emergency services appropriately address the risk in its service area. Its response strategy has evolved to ensure that its deployment practices have maintained and/or made continuous improvements in the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of its operations, notwithstanding any external influences beyond its control. The agency has identified the impacts of these external influences and communicates them to the authority having jurisdiction.

The department has Rules and Regulations, General Policy 160.05 - *Policy and Data Review* which prescribes methods to review data and ensure documents are current and accurate. The department identifies gaps in response as an all-hazard organization; when gaps are identified the department develops performance improvement plans to look for ways towards continuous improvement in providing services to the citizens and visitors.

Category 3 — Goals and Objectives

The mission, vision and values of the agency are incorporated into a strategic plan. Once a strategic plan is in place and resources are available, the strategic plan provides direction, determines initiatives, and guides the goals and objectives of the agency. The Iowa City Fire Department has implemented a community driven strategic plan that was developed and approved in 2021. The plan is a three-year plan that articulates the department's mission, vision, and values that were instrumental in the development of the plan. The department has developed a tracking spreadsheet that assists with the implementation and tracking of each goal and objective.

The strategic plan defines the agency's general goals and S.M.A.R.T. objectives, directs its activities in a manner consistent with its mission and is appropriate for the community it serves. The department has a three-year strategic plan that has goals, objectives, and measures which are reported and then inserted into the city's budget planning book. The plan has objectives that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound which are specific to each goal that has been developed and align with the department's six strategic initiatives.

The agency uses a management process to implement its goals and objectives. The department has Iowa City Fire Departments General Policy 170.01 - *Accreditation Administrative Procedures* that directs the tracking process as it relates to the strategic plan. The department has assigned the appropriate staff member the responsibility to be the lead for the development, implementation, and completion of the goals and objectives based on specific assignments within the department.

Processes are in place to measure and evaluate progress toward completion of goals and objectives and overall plan performance. The goals and objectives are re-examined and modified periodically. The department has implemented the 2021 – 2023 strategic plan tracking spreadsheet. The tracking spreadsheet has been instrumental in allowing all administration staff to stay abreast with the progress of all goals and objectives. The department reviews progress of the strategic plan in January, September, and at the spring and summer planning meetings. The process utilized has been extremely beneficial to ensure appropriate progress is being made to keep the department moving forward.

Category 4 — Financial Resources

Agency planning involves broad staff and community participation in financial planning and resource allocation. The agency’s financial planning and budget process reflects sound strategic planning and a commitment to its stated goals and objectives. The agency prepares a balanced budget, which adequately maintains level of service and personnel resources.

The City of Iowa City finance department provides a financial planning manual to each division to assist in the development of the annual budget. The fire department takes this planning manual and works with each program manager in the development of individual program budgets that are reviewed internally and then forwarded for inclusion into the overall city budget. The fire department utilizes a two-year financial planning process; year one is the annual budget which meets the state requirements and year two is utilized as a planning tool for projections for the next year.

Agency financial management demonstrates sound budgeting and control, proper recording, reporting and auditing. The peer assessment team confirmed that the city is in receipt of the most currently available Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (certificates) from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada for its Budget and their Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The department has submitted its most recent GFOA certificates as prima facie compliance with this criterion.

Appropriately allocated financial resources support the organizational mission, stated long-term plan, goals and objectives and also maintain the quality of programs and services. The City of Iowa City budget process is developed based on anticipated revenues to meet the adopted levels of service for the fire department. All department programs, maintenance costs, and programs are funded based on the current and projected revenue levels. The City of Iowa City produces a three- year financial plan that anticipates funds available, taking into account long-term debt payments.

Category 5 — Community Risk Reduction Program

Criterion 5A – Prevention Program

The agency operates an adequate, effective and efficient program as identified in the community risk assessment and standards of cover. The approach is comprehensive and includes both prevention and mitigation strategies such as life safety, hazard risk reduction, plan review, code compliance, and the detection, reporting and control of fire and non-fire risks.

The fire prevention bureau is a decentralized component of the fire department. The fire marshal is the bureau’s only 40-hour-week position. The fire marshal oversees three collateral-duty shift inspectors to conduct the majority of the day-to-day code enforcement duties. Shift inspectors

complete the higher-risk inspections while company-level inspections are conducted at lower-risk occupancies. The strain on resources resulted in the lowering of the level of service provided by the fire prevention bureau. More specifically low hazard occupancies were changed from a two-year to a three-year inspection cycle. Although violations are required to be corrected within 30 days, compliance re-inspections are sporadic due to the additional nature of collateral duties for company officers. It is recommended that the department conduct a staffing analysis of the fire prevention bureau to determine if staff is adequate to meet the current and projected goals and objectives of the prevention program.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the prevention program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Criterion 5B – Public Education Program

A public education program is in place and directed toward reducing community risks in a manner consistent with the agency's mission and as identified within the community risk assessment and standards of cover. The fire marshal oversees the public education program that is cross-staffed with nine personnel who in addition to their operations responsibilities, serve as public educators. The team consists of a mix of firefighters and company officers, and are assigned to Fire Station 4, which is the designated public education specialty station. The team administers a risk-based approach to deliver public education to the community. The bidding system in place ensures team members are engaged in the program that delivers the fire prevention week program to 13 schools, an annual emergency services camp, a safety village, and proactive smoke alarm blitzes regularly. Although overtime is utilized, the resource-limited education program struggles to meet program demands.

The department is intentional on assigning members to the public education team. Team members regularly attend training and conferences to bring back knowledge and skills to improve the program. A every other year process is utilized in which members can bid for a spot at the public education station. Although potential team members are required to obtain certification as a car seat technician, there are no other certification requirements for public educators. It is recommended that the department identify minimum qualification/certification requirements for public educators in accordance with applicable standards to ensure desired levels of training are met.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the public education program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Criterion 5C – Fire Investigation, Origin and Cause Program

The agency operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward origin and cause investigation and subsequent classification of fires, explosions, and other emergency situations that endanger life or property to drive community risk reduction activities. The department established the fire investigation team (FIT) to use the scientific method to investigate the origin and cause of fires. The team consists of the fire marshal, the three dual-role shift inspectors/investigators, and others in

the department that have obtained the required credentials. The team relies heavily on local law enforcement partners and the State Fire Marshal's office to meet program goals and service level objectives. The team relies on off-duty staff to respond when a trained investigator is not on-duty.

An overhaul of department policy is underway to ensure consensus standard practices are formally documented and communicated to all members. All FIT team members are trained in accordance with department policy and state certification requirements. Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the fire investigation program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Criterion 5D – Domestic Preparedness Program

The agency operates an all-hazards preparedness program that includes a coordinated multiagency response plan designed to provide the community preparedness and resiliency in response to terrorist threats or attacks, major disasters, and other large-scale emergencies occurring at or in the immediate area. The department takes an all-hazards approach and participates in forming of the Iowa City emergency operations plan. The Iowa City emergency operations plan aligns with and complements the Johnson County Multi-Hazard Disaster Plan. The all-hazards preparedness program addresses and is inclusive of both humans caused, natural disasters, and other potential calamities within Iowa City and Johnson County. The Johnson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency conducts threat and hazard identification and risk assessment (THIRA) on an annual basis. Johnson County Emergency Management is responsible for emergency management within the county while the fire chief is responsible for emergency management within Iowa City. The City of Iowa City has a continuity of operations plan (COOP), airport plan, and Johnson County Emergency Operations Plan which have all been tested and used during several historical flood events. A collaborative partnership exists between Johnson County Emergency Management, the City of Iowa City, and the University of Iowa to mitigate risk associated with the established THIRA as flood mitigation has been a considerable focus after the 2008 flooding which was a 100-year flood event. The City of Iowa City emergency plan is outdated and needs to be updated. It is recommended that the department review and update the city's domestic preparedness documentation.

Johnson County Emergency Management has activated the emergency operations center (EOC) for a number of significant emergencies. This includes 3 major flood events over the past 20 years and also most recently, a number of EF-1 and EF-2 tornadoes which broke out within the state of Iowa and some of which were in Johnson County. Johnson County has a robust complement of apparatus and equipment strategically positioned through Johnson County to provide support if required. The Johnson County Emergency Management primary EOC is a state-of-the-art facility which is located with the Joint Emergency Communications Center.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the domestic preparedness program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Criterion 5E – Fire Suppression Program

The agency operates an adequate, effective, efficient and safe fire suppression program directed toward controlling and/or extinguishing fires to protect the community from injury or death and reduce property loss. The Iowa City Fire Department has a well-established fire suppression program with appropriate resources to meet the demands placed on the system. The department uses fire apparatus and personnel distributed throughout the city to respond to calls for emergency services designed to minimize risk and provide the maximum protection possible with the resources provided. All department apparatus arrives in a timely manner with sufficient equipment, supplies, and personnel to provide adequate protection. The department utilizes the incident command system on all responses and during training activities. An after-action review is completed after every major event and all members are able to provide input into what was observed. The department provides fire suppression for the University of Iowa, which has a limited number of personnel available 24-hours daily to provide technical support to responding units. Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the fire suppression program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represents the department’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

2018-2022 Moderate Risk Fire Suppression Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	8:31	6:24	02:07
		n=95		
ERF	Urban	12:43	10:24	02:19
		n=76		

2018-2022 High Risk Fire Suppression Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	7:18	6:24	00:54
		n=76		
ERF	Urban	13:23	10:24	02:59
		31		

Criterion 5F – Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program

The agency operates an EMS program with a designated level of out-of-hospital emergency medical care that protects the community from injury or death. The Iowa City Fire Department responds to emergency medical incidents and has categorized that risk into high, moderate, and low. The

department state certifies suppression personnel who provide emergency medical technician (EMT) Basic medical interventions. EMS transport program is operated by Johnson County Emergency Medical Services with medical oversight being provided by a medical director. The department has a service level agreement in place with Johnson County EMS which establishes response criteria. The two departments work collaboratively in an attempt to improve patient outcomes. Johnson County Ambulance Service provides advanced life support (ALS) medical services to Iowa City and the entirety of the county. The department provides Johnson County EMS with a bay at Fire Station 4 which serves as an alternate and advantageous deployment location. Annual state recertification is maintained, and training is provided regularly via the office of the medical director.

The department and Johnson County EMS upstaff for both planned and unplanned events where demand for medical service increases. Johnson County EMS has recently modified their deployment model based upon the availability and reliability of advanced life support in the city of Coralville. Johnson County EMS will be adding an additional ALS unit in July 2023 in addition to the introduction of a community paramedicine model which is anticipated in 2023.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the emergency medical services program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represents the department’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

2018-2022 Moderate Risk EMS Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	7:39	6:00	01:39
		n=6,909		
ERF	Urban	8:18	6:00	02:18
		n=2		

Criterion 5G – Technical Rescue Program

The agency operates an adequate, effective, efficient and safe technical rescue program directed toward rescuing the community from any life-endangering causes (e.g., structural collapse, vehicle accidents, swift water or submersion, confined space, cave-in, trench collapse). The department uses the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1670: *Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents*. The department operates one full-time heavy rescue out of Fire Station 1. The department responds with a heavy rescue, a battalion chief, and an engine as part of the technical rescue program. Vehicle extrication can be done by any of the engines and the heavy rescue is dispatched when the event warrants. There are 18 department members trained on the technical rescue team. Team members attend training multiple times per year and all department members are trained to an operations level and receive annual refresher training. Departmental

training is done nine times per year; training for this modality is done by department instructors. The department is the only technical rescue company in the metro area and can be dispatched for mutual aid to surrounding communities for assistance. There are two department members on the State of Iowa’s Urban Search and Rescue team.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the technical rescue program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represents the agency’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

2018-2022 Moderate Risk Tech Rescue Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	7:58	6:24	01:34
		n=40		
ERF	Urban	13:00	10:24	02:36
		n=14		

Criterion 5H – Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Program

The agency operates an adequate, effective, efficient and safe hazardous materials program directed toward protecting the community from the hazards associated with the uncontrolled releases of hazardous and toxic materials. The Iowa City Fire Department has resources available to provide response to all levels of hazardous materials incidents. The department has all members trained as hazardous materials technicians. The department houses the Johnson County Hazmat response team equipment. The department has 17 members that are part of the county response team.

The department has a well-established Hazmat team which operates under the guidance of the department's operational guidelines. All department apparatus is equipped to provide initial response actions for all Hazmat incidents until the remainder of the resources arrive on-scene. The department has equipment and supplies in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of the community, while providing for the safety of the responders. Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the hazardous materials program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represents the department’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

2018-2022 Moderate Risk Hazmat Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	8:55	6:24	02:31
		n=101		
ERF	Urban	12:40	10:24	02:16
		n=33		

Category 6 — Physical Resources

Development and use of physical resources are consistent with the agency’s established plans. A systematic and planned approach to the future development of facilities is in place. The department has a total of four fire stations within Iowa City with one fire station providing a single bay deployment position for Johnson County Emergency Medical Services. In 2012 the City of Iowa City conducted a comprehensive facility needs assessment. The outcomes of the assessment prioritized facility need in a corporate context and identified a number of fire station upgrades along with the planning and development of a fire training facility and fire station. There are current plans, funding, and staffing provisions in place for a new fire station in 2027. The department has demonstrated that it has been able to plan for the current and future needs of the community and organization. Recent fire station development has focused on functionality with an interest in sustainability and longevity as fire stations two and four have been built and maintained to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design’s gold standard. The department and city consider response times as part of the fire station facility planning process. The city works collaboratively with the department for facility planning, occupancy, and maintenance.

The agency designs, maintains and manages fixed facility resources that meet the agency’s goals and objectives. The department operates four fire stations with plans to build and occupy Fire station 5 in 2027. The stations are positioned in the community to deliver services based upon the needs of the community, and services provided by the department. The department works collaboratively with the City of Iowa City facilities department regarding facility design. The addition of Fire Station 5 is expected to assist with the improvement of service delivery metrics in a community that is growing both laterally and vertically with population intensification. Facility maintenance is comanaged with the City of Iowa City facilities department. While the facilities department manages larger station improvement projects, the department has the ability to address immediate facility needs by engaging third party contractors as required. Less urgent repairs or maintenance needs are either managed in-house or through consultation with facilities. The department has strategically leveraged space at all fire stations. The facilities department is initiating a city facility space needs assessment in 2023. The department’s facilities are organized and clean, with existing space being maximized in the department’s legacy fire stations. Stations which have been in need of updating, have been prioritized and completed in accordance with the conclusion of the 2012 facility needs assessment which is outdated in meeting the needs of the department today. It is recommended that the department conduct a facility space planning assessment.

Apparatus resources are designed, purchased and maintained to adequately meet the agency's goals and objectives. The department's current fleet of frontline and reserve apparatus support the operational and functional needs of the organization. The reserve fleet, strategically located at each station, ensure the continuity of operations when apparatus are taken out-of-service for various reasons. The department has a planned apparatus replacement cycle which has positioned the department well for current and future needs. This is evidenced through proactive planning based upon current delivery timelines in the apparatus manufacturing industry. The fire apparatus are compliant with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and were recently sole sourced for the purposes of standardization, cooperative purchasing, and parts inventory.

The inspection, testing, preventive maintenance, replacement schedule and emergency repair of all apparatus are well established and meet the emergency apparatus service and reliability needs. The department utilizes the services provided by the fleet service garage for its scheduled inspections, diagnoses, repairs, and preventative maintenance programming. The fleet service garage has one certified emergency vehicle technician (EVT) who also regularly attends apparatus manufacturer specific systems training. Other service garage mechanics are qualified to support with heavy apparatus inspections and repairs in accordance with their scope of work. Department personnel are able to submit service requests via e-mail and service requests are prioritized, placed in queue, and apparatus status updates are visible via SharePoint. The mechanical assets for critical city services are prioritized accordingly. The fleet service garage is equipped with a welding shop and also has the capability to manufacture some parts. A battalion chief serves as a liaison with the fleet service garage supervisor. The maintenance area is currently adequate to meet the needs of the department. Capital funding for the design, planning, and occupancy of a new maintenance facility in 2024 is anticipated to create a number of efficiencies. The current complement of one EVT leaves the department and fleet maintenance services vulnerable to deficiencies in the continuity of specialized apparatus and system repairs. It is recommended that the department work with fleet services to conduct a workforce analysis of certified emergency vehicle technicians within the fleet services department.

Equipment and supplies are adequate and designed to meet the agency's goals and objectives. The department fleet maintenance garage has adequate supplies of inventoried parts and consumables to support servicing and minor deficiencies. The standardization of apparatus fleet has enabled the fleet services garage to proactively inventory heavily used items. In addition, the fleet maintenance garage has the capacity to weld and manufacture some parts in-house. The department procures apparatus with a full complement of tools and equipment aligning with applicable NFPA standards. Frontline personnel maintain and regularly check the inventories of tools and equipment on each apparatus. The department maintains a number of operating accounts with support for the replacement of small tools and equipment as required. A combination of frontline personnel, specially trained department personnel, and third-party companies support the maintenance of equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Safety equipment is adequate and designed to meet agency goals and objectives. The department has invested in providing necessary personnel protective equipment (PPE) to protect personnel from occupational hazards. PPE is issued on a frequency and in quantities that serves as a redundancy, such as primary PPE being contaminated or required to be removed from service for repairs. The department issues structural firefighting gear replacement on a five-year cycle. In addition, the department issued two advanced textile flashover hoods. Specialized safety equipment is in inventory and available to those qualified and certified to provide specialized services. The department has

facilities which are equipped to support departmental hygiene programming including residential washing machines and structural firefighting gear extractors. Written directives are in place to provide guidance and direction to personnel regarding decontamination and hygiene. The department's safety equipment is appropriately life cycled. The department's equipment meets or exceeds NFPA standards and is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. The department has adequate facilities and properly trained personnel to maintain and repair equipment associated within the respiratory protection program. The department appropriately budgets for the replacement and acquisition of PPE.

Category 7 — Human Resources

General human resources administration practices are in place and are consistent with local, state/provincial and federal statutory and regulatory requirements. A small team of highly motivated individuals administer the human resource (HR) functions of the City of Iowa City. The team is led by the human resources administrator who has been in the position for 15 years. The administrator and her staff work closely with the fire department and its command staff. An organization-wide position study is underway to evaluate the position classifications and compensation of not just the HR department, but the city as a whole. Policies are reviewed annually. A collective bargaining agreement is in place that dictates many of the personnel functions of the department. Policies are established to direct the HR practices for the 644 city employees. A major overhaul of those policies was completed in 2018 and the most recent review occurred in 2021. It is recommended that the department work with the city's Human Resource Department to ensure policies, practices, and procedures are formally reviewed annually and updated as needed.

Systems are established to attract, select, retain and promote qualified personnel in accordance with applicable local, state/provincial and federal statutory requirements. The screening process for new applicants is robust. New applicants complete a written examination administered by the International Public Management Association of Human Resources. The department now uses the more inclusive *Cooper Physical Ability Test* for new applicants. The department maintains a partnership with the University of Iowa Hospital for physical exams. The contract between the City of Iowa City and the Iowa Association of Professional Firefighters Local 610 ensures transparent promotional processes. The Civil Service Commission is established in accordance with State statutes and ensures transparent recruitment and promotional practices.

Documented personnel policies and procedures are in place to guide both administrative and personnel behavior. Policies and procedures are maintained on a SharePoint site as well as uploaded to the department's records management system. The department reviews policies on a rotating basis each month. Policies discourage discriminatory harassment of any form. The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the City of Iowa City and Local 610 outlines the corrective action system to ensure fairness. The grievance procedures either through the CBA or the Civil Service Commission established a process for an unbiased third party to determine the outcome.

Human resources development and utilization is consistent with the agency's established mission, goals and objectives. Job titles and functions are transparent and clearly documented. Public safety has separate pay classifications from the City of Iowa City. Pay grades and levels are outlined in the collective bargaining agreement. A mentoring program ensures probationary and incumbent personnel are evaluated regularly to ensure career and professional development is occurring. The department has graduated eight members from the Executive Fire Officer Program and a number of command staff have obtained professional credentialing designations through the Commission on

Professional Credentialing. Succession planning is in place via a new driver training program, an in-house officer development program, along with various task books to develop aspiring officers in the department. There are a number of planned retirements scheduled over the next few years among key leaders in the department. It is recommended that a formal documented succession plan is adopted and implemented that outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for each collateral duty position in the department.

A system and practices for providing employee/member compensation are in place. City HR administers employee compensation in accordance with the CBA for Local 610 members. Administrative and Confidential employees follow a separate pay scale that is published on the city website. The City of Iowa City *Summary of Covered Services and Benefits* is applied to all employees regardless of status. These benefits are clearly communicated to all employees during orientation and annually during open enrollment.

Category 8 — Training and Competency

A training program is established to support the agency's needs. The agency provides access to and guidance on educational programs that increase advancement potential and support the agency's needs. The Iowa City Fire Department training program is consistent with its mission statement and meets its organizational needs. The training division goals and objectives for training are noted in the FY2021-2023 Strategic Plan. The department has a program in place that includes the development of personnel through policy and training opportunities. The training division and training committee develop a one-year detailed department training schedule and a three-year long-range training forecast annually. The training plans include fire suppression, rescue/special operations, hazmat, and emergency medical services (EMS). EMS conducts monthly hands-on competency training and has a two-year long-range plan in order to synchronize with EMS recertifications.

The training officer is a lieutenant that is given a captain's salary range. The training officer is overseen by a battalion chief. The department performs multi-company training twice per month in addition to quarterly training and doing competency training at the operations level which all members must complete. The training division maintains an individual training record for each department member. The training records are maintained according to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1401: *Recommended Practice for Fire Service Training Reports and Records*. Individual training records are maintained in a web-based records management system. The training division accomplishes all required training mandated by federal and state agencies on an annual basis. The department has an annual air management exercise which allows members to gain knowledge of how much they are physically able to do while on air through a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

The department uses the quarterly training committee meetings and the annual spring and summer planning meetings to review training and identify training needs. While a critical task analysis has been completed to address the risk associated with aviation rescue and fire fighting, the department does not train regularly on the subject. It is recommended that the department identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for aviation rescue and fire fighting and incorporate the topic into the annual specialized training curricula.

Training and education programs are provided to support the agency's needs. The department conducts a ten-week recruit training academy in which it trains new members the skills they will need to become a firefighter. Each recruit once successful completing the training academy will be

certified as a Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 level with hazardous materials training certified by the State of Iowa. After graduation each recruit will then have one year to complete emergency medical technician (EMT) training and driver/operator certification. EMT training is directed by state standards as well as local medical direction standards. The department feels strongly about the EMS service they provide to the community and goes beyond what the State of Iowa recommends as a minimum. Officer development opportunities are given to those in preparation for promotion. Firefighters can take a weeklong class in order to test for a lieutenant position.

The battalion chief in charge of training, with assistance from the training officer, conducts an annual program appraisal of the training program each December. They met with the deputy chief to review this document before submitting the report to the training committee at their January meeting. Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the training and competency program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Printed and nonprinted training and education resources, library materials, media equipment, facilities and staff are available in adequate quantity, relevancy and diversity, and are current. The department has media equipment, which they use to communicate between the four stations when they need too video conference. Training resources are available in sufficient quantity and are diverse, relevant, and up to date.

The department has a standalone training center. This facility allows multiple training and educational opportunities. Classroom space at the training facility is limited, however the training tower and live burn facility is adequate for educating department members and other departments in many modalities. The department maintains equipment and supplies dedicated for training purposes. The training officer facilitates program delivery and coordinates scheduling. The department uses internal and external subject matter experts as instruction personnel to meet department training needs including a library of reference and training materials that are current and support the training program. A full complement of International Fire Service Training Association manuals, Fire Engineering handbook, and other fire service-related publications are kept at all stations. Additional training materials are available electronically in the records management system.

Category 9 — Essential Resources

Criterion 9A – Water Supply

The water supply resources are reliable and capable of distributing adequate volumes of water and pressures to all areas of the department's responsibility. All areas meet fire flow requirements in accordance with applicable fire flow criteria. The water supply resources have multiple redundant water supply sources, including deep wells and the Iowa River. The University of Iowa has its own water supply system and can be used as a water supply resource as well as the city being used as a backup for the University. Water is pumped throughout the city by the city's water plant using multiple large pumps, removing the need for any elevated water towers. These pumps are supported by their own independent backup power supply systems. The water supply sources for both the University system and the municipal system are monitored and flow tests are conducted on a regular basis. During the most recent Insurance Services Office site study evaluated and graded the water

supply system with more than a 90 percent point rating for the system, however this evaluation was over 5 years ago.

Criterion 9B – Communication Systems

The public and the agency have an adequate, effective and efficient emergency communications system. The system is reliable and able to meet the demands of major operations, including command and control within fire/rescue services during emergency operations, and meets the needs of other public safety agencies.

The services provided by the Joint Emergency Communications Center (JECC) meet the needs of the department and provide dispatch services to other police, fire, and emergency medical services in Johnson County. Any service level concerns are addressed independently or via the user advisory committee. Efforts are made to align all Johnson County fire service standard operating guidelines to support all operations and assist the communications center in operational procedures. The communications center has minimum staffing, provisions for upstaffing, and cross train telecommunications staff to support call taking and dispatching for police, fire, and emergency medical service (EMS). JECC has the necessary agreement in place with Cedar Rapids should dispatch services need to be routed to the back-up center. In addition, provisions are in place which support the continuity of operations at the primary site through infrastructure redundancy solutions. The JECC, which serves as the public service answering point (PSAP), has the necessary infrastructure, technology, and equipment to meet the current and future needs of the JECC. The JECC has invested in technologies which support their client base and has involved system partners in such continuous improvement projects. The computer aided dispatch system interfaces with the department's station alerting and apparatus mobile data terminals. Provisions are in place to contribute to technologies, actions, and activities which lend themselves to improved response and call handling times. JECC recently hired two additional supervisors who have assisted in the expansion of its quality assurance programming, training, and retention challenges.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the communications system program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.

Criterion 9C – Administrative Support Services and Office Systems

Administrative support services and general office systems are in place with adequate staff to efficiently and effectively conduct and manage the agency's administrative functions such as organizational planning and assessment, resource coordination, record keeping, reporting, business communications, public interaction and purchasing. Administrative support services and office systems are primarily organized and coordinated by the deputy fire chief, which has placed a significant amount of coordination issues with all the additional responsibilities placed on the position with the loss of the administrative assistant position in 2013. The deputy chief has had to prioritize many of these tasks and determine which one is most important at the time, thus causing additional responsibilities to be shifted to other chief officers. In addition, a battalion chief also assists with supporting the deputy fire chief with administrative responsibilities. The City of Iowa City provides a level of support when city department processes or functions are changing. In particular, all department leads are advised and engaged in the annual budget process and provided

with advanced notice. Records management and fire department analytics is the responsibility of the deputy fire chief as a delegation of administrative tasks by the fire chief. It is recommended that the department conduct a workforce analysis of Fire Administration and support functions.

Criterion 9D – Information Technology

Information technology resources are in place with adequate staff to efficiently and effectively conduct and manage the agency's information technology functions, such as hardware and software implementation and maintenance and data analysis. A battalion chief is assigned the collateral duty of managing web-based applications and serves as a liaison with the city information technology (IT) department. The city IT department has a robust cybersecurity policy that includes multi-factor authentication as well as internal and external penetration testing. The hardware and software systems support the administrative and operational functions of the department. The CAD system is problematic and unreliable. The system does not meet the basic needs of the department. It is recommended that the department work with the Johnson County emergency communications center to identify enhancements to the CAD software for situational awareness for both responding firefighters and command officers.

Category 10 — External Systems Relationships

The agency's operations and planning efforts include relationships with external agencies and operational systems that affect or may influence its mission, operations and/or cost effectiveness. The Iowa City Fire Department has developed relationships with internal city and external agencies that directly support the department's mission, operations, and cost effectiveness. Coralville Fire Department (CFD) is an example of an external relationship that benefits both the City of Iowa City and Coralville. The department is a full-time all hazards department while Coralville Fire Department is a mostly combination department. CFD will send an engine company with as many as four people on it to an automatic aid call.

The agency maintains current agreements with those external agencies which support the identified programs. The department has strong internal and external relationships and agreements exist with many city departments and outside agencies such agreements. Though some informal agreements do exist, many of these relationships are maintained by formal mutual aid agreements or memorandum of understanding.

Category 11 — Health and Safety

The agency's occupational health, safety and risk management programs protect the organization and personnel from unnecessary injuries, loss, and liability. The deputy fire chief works closely with a battalion chief overseeing the employer's administrative responsibilities associated with the department's health, safety, and risk management programs. In addition, the city has a health and safety specialist who offers department support. The occupational safety specialist works with each division in identifying occupational health and safety risks and assists with the implementation of risk management programs. The city has a risk manager appointed who reports directly to the finance department.

The department collects and maintains accident and injury records. Practices are in place to assign an incident safety officer for high risks incidents when department resources are depleted. It is

recommended that the department update written directives and practices associated with the assignment and utilization of an incident safety officer.

The department has written directives and processes in place for the purposes of near miss reporting. The health and safety committee reviews accident and injury reports on a regular basis to determine if the incident was preventable and whether there are any trends which are required to be addressed. The department has several reporting systems in place and for hazardous materials incidents the department has exposure reporting processes in place, but this process needs to be expanded to all department activities. It is recommended that the department reevaluate processes associated with exposure reporting as part of its health and safety program.

Members of the department are able to identify and report unsafe conditions to their supervisor. The employer promptly addresses workplace issues and conducts annual facility audits which also address health and safety related concerns.

The agency has a wellness/fitness program for personnel. The agency specifies and communicates the provisions if employees/members do not comply with the wellness/fitness program. Upon hire, personnel joining the department are required to successfully complete a comprehensive medical evaluation. Thereafter, personnel are required to complete an annual physical. In addition, personnel undergo cardiac assessment, cancer screening, and behavioral health screening which is provided by the University of Iowa hospital and clinics. Annual physical fitness assessments are facilitated by a peer fitness trainer in the spring of each year. Personnel have access to physical fitness facilities and equipment at all four fire stations, along with city hall. Staff have time allotted to engage in physical fitness and wellness activities. A team of certified peer fitness trainers also support department personnel with achieving their personnel fitness and wellness goals. Processes are also in place to ensure personnel returning to active duty do not have any limitations or restrictions. The City of Iowa City also has an employee assistance program which provides resources and services to employees and family members. In addition, personnel have access to a critical incident stress management team in the event that a post incident stress management debriefing or defusing is necessary.

Although the department does not have ideal program appraisals, a formal documented program appraisal exists for the health and safety program. The department has a satisfactory process approved in department policy, so it is accomplished annually moving forward. It is recommended that the department further enhance its annual program appraisal development process to ensure they are utilized beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.