

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Signal Division (Communications)

BACKGROUND

The mission of the Tampa Fire Department is to “save lives and protect the property of the citizens of Tampa...” Services provided by the Fire Department include fire suppression and emergency medical services. Citizens may request emergency assistance via the 911 phone system. The responsibility for the receipt and processing of all fire/medical calls and the dispatch of the appropriate department vehicles to support the incident, lies with the Communications Section.

SCOPE

The audit period includes emergency calls which occurred between 1/1/94 and 6/30/95.

PLANNING

1. Prepare and send an entrance letter to the Fire Chief and Communications Chief.
2. Begin in-house review, which includes the examination of :
 - a. prior audit reports,
 - b. Mission and Management Statement,
 - c. Annual Budget,
 - d. Procedures Manual,
 - e. Organizational Chart,
 - f. relevant state and local statutes.
3. Schedule and hold an entrance conference with the Fire Chief and Communications Chief. Obtain the name of the primary department contact person and arrange for workspace as needed.
4. Begin preliminary survey portion of the field work by interviewing appropriate staff members. Document the interviews with narratives in the file.
5. Review and document the internal control system. Conduct several transaction walk-throughs. Revise documentation as necessary.
6. Prepare preliminary survey memo and risk analysis. Discuss with the Audit Supervisor, including suggested audit objectives and testing procedures.
7. Prepare the audit program and include a time budget for completion of each step. Index the work file and turn in for review.
8. Clear review notes and revise the audit program as necessary.

OBJECTIVE # 1

Determine if emergency calls are being responded to in a timely manner according to established guidelines.

1. Obtain a printout of the last several months log of emergency calls noting time received, time dispatched and arrival time.

2. Compare above with the departmental guidelines and national guidelines.
3. Spend time observing employees taking call and dispatching emergency vehicles.
4. Summarize and conclude.

OBJECTIVE # 2

Determine if fire engines and rescue units are responding to emergencies promptly (within departmental guidelines for response times).

1. Determine the number of alarms which have occurred from Jan. 1, 1994 through June 30, 1995.
2. Select a random sample of 50 emergency calls. Determine if response times met those stated in departmental guidelines. Calculate an average response time for engine companies and rescue units.
3. Determine if exceptions noted during tests were reviewed by management to discover cause. Was corrective action taken by management?
4. Review claims filed against the city for slow response times. Determine if a trend exists.
5. Summarize and conclude.

WRAP-UP

1. Complete and organize the working papers.
2. Prepare a preliminary draft of the audit report and turn in to the Audit Supervisor for review.
3. Clear review notes and make changes as appropriate.
4. Send a copy of the draft report to the Fire and Communications Chief for written responses.
5. Schedule an exit conference, if necessary.
6. Incorporate auditee's responses into the final report and send to the printer.