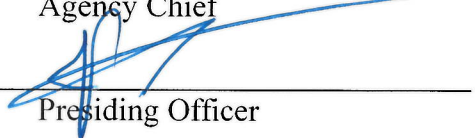# TEXAS COMMISSION ON FIRE PROTECTION

AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR

FISCAL YEARS 2023 -2027

BY

Commission Members	Dates of Term	Hometown
J. P. Steelman, Presiding Officer	2017-2023	Longview
Chris Cantu	2021-2027	Round Rock
David Coatney	2021-2027	College Station
Sue De Villez	2019-2025	Georgetown
Michael Glynn, Jr.	2021-2027	Roanoke
Paul Hamilton	2019-2025	Amarillo
Mike Jones, Asst. Presiding Officer	2017-2023	Burleson
Clyde Loll	2021-2027	Huntsville
Bob Morgan	2017-2023	Ft. Worth
Mala Sharma	2017-2023	Houston
Tim Smith	2021-2027	Lubbock
Kelly Vandygriff	2019-2025	Abernathy
Russell (Rusty) Wilson	2019-2025	Mesquite

Submitted June 1, 2022

Signed: _____
Agency Chief

Approved: _____
Presiding Officer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. STRATEGIC PLAN

II. SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULES

I. STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION AND FUNCTIONS

The mission of the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) is to aid in the protection of lives and property of Texas citizens through the development and enforcement of recognized professional standards for individuals and fire service organizations.

TCFP is committed to operating in accordance with the highest standards of ethics, accountability, efficiency, and integrity. The organization is also committed to administering its statutory duties in a fair, just, and equitable manner. The responsibility for providing protection from fire and other hazards is a cooperative effort involving TCFP, other state agencies, local governments, fire service organizations, and even the citizens of this state. As such, the Texas Commission on Fire Protection places great value in its relationships with its fire protection partners and neighbors.

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection accomplishes its mission primarily by ensuring and monitoring the safety, training, and credentialing of Texas firefighters and other fire protection personnel. The agency fulfills most of its responsibilities via four "core" functional areas: compliance, testing, certification, and injury reporting. Lastly, TCFP maintains an extensive fire protection resource library and makes these resources available to any organization or individual conducting training, doing research, or simply wishing to gain knowledge in a particular area.

- The Compliance Division of the agency performs inspections of regulated entities to ensure that the organizations are following the rules adopted by the commission. These rules require that fire departments and other associated organizations: provide their personnel with approved protective equipment; ensure that personnel are trained and credentialed with respect to their assigned duties; provide for ongoing training to personnel in their areas of responsibility; and adopt certain procedures and practices to ensure personnel safety.

- The commission's Training and Testing Division approves courses taught by fire training providers throughout the state and administers state certification exams covering a number of different disciplines. These disciplines include various types of firefighting, apparatus operations, fire inspection/code enforcement, fire investigation, hazardous materials, incident management and other areas of expertise.

- The Certification Division performs all the necessary checks to ensure that those applying for state fire certifications have met the requirements to be credentialed in a particular discipline and issues those credentials to qualified persons. Certification personnel also perform audits of continuing education records and manage the annual certification renewal process for all TCFP-regulated departments and individuals.

- The Injury Report Program is the fourth functional area which involves the gathering of data related to fire personnel injuries, analyzing the data, and publishing the results annually with recommendations. All regulated entities are required to report injuries sustained by their personnel. The agency has administered the program since 2010, and valuable information is now available to fire departments regarding injuries sustained by fire protection personnel statewide.

- The Ernest A. Emerson Fire Protection Resource Library contains over 2,500 print resources and nearly 2,000 audio/visual resources, all available to the fire protection community and the general public for checkout or viewing at the library. The agency's librarian regularly conducts research on behalf of committees, fire departments, and individuals, and helps to maintain the agency's social media presence.

Overarching all activities at the Texas Commission on Fire Protection is the commitment to adopt the most current technology possible to deliver services and oversight. The information technology team continuously works to design and develop new features to the commission's online presence. Online features that have been developed or are in development include submission of various documents and applications, testing, payments for TCFP fees and injury reporting. The goal is to provide a platform that continues to meet the demands of today's fire service and agency employees.

Concurrent with technology development efforts is a dedication to ensuring the security of the data managed by TCFP. Attempted intrusions and attacks on the data infrastructure represent a continuing and growing challenge, not just to our organization but to all of state government. The agency works closely with the state's Department of Information Resources to receive valuable support, guidance, and oversight to agency IT operations.

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection is honored to play a role in the always-evolving Texas fire service. As we move toward the future, we will not forget the great heritage and history forged by the community of which we are a part. It has at its core a servant's heart, made up of those who have pledged to stand, sometimes at a heavy price, in harm's way to protect our citizens. We are proud to stand with them, and pledge as well to help them do their jobs better and more safely, and ultimately fulfill their calling to those who depend upon them.

AGENCY GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

AGENCY OPERATIONAL GOAL AND ACTION PLAN

Goal:
Convert agency's monolithic data management system and user interface to a microservices architecture to address maintenance challenges, improve agility and improve scalability. Thereby leading to high quality, robust features, and reduced downtime for both customers and agency staff.

Action Plan:
Pursue development activities and transition efforts to gradually convert existing data management system to a new microservice architecture for both back- and front-end components; complete deployment of service modules by the end of fiscal year 2025, and update all modules to improve performance, availability and usability as needed.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL

1. Design and development back-end services, drawing from user input and stakeholders' feedback to determine the features desired in microservice module.

2. Design and develop user interfaces, drawing from user input and feedback to determine desired features.

3. Thoroughly test each feature before deployment to production.

HOW GOAL OR ACTION ITEMS SUPPORTS STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES

1. *Accountable to tax/fee payers of Texas.*

   The improved, microservice architecture based, data management system will be more efficient, effective, and user-oriented than the previous system. The system is consistent with the statewide goal to implement technological solutions to serve Texas citizens.

2. *Maximum results with minimum waste of taxpayer funds.*

   All development efforts are being accomplished with existing agency staff. Increased efficiency and convenience of the new system will make the most of taxpayer funds.

3. *Effective in fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures, and implementing plans to continuously improve.*

   The new system will allow stakeholders to manage all agency business in a more efficient manner. Functions such as testing, document submittals, renewal, and management of personal information will be a part of the system. Performance measure totals will be obtainable for reporting purposes. The architecture of the new system will make agency services more available and more scalable.

4. *Providing excellent customer service.*

   The new system requires faster integration and delivery of features, thereby enhancing the ability of the agency to deliver better-quality services to its customers.

5. *Transparent actions apparent to Texans.*

   The agency has received (and will continue to collect) targeted customer feedback regarding system features and functionality. These feedbacks will inform design and development choices and efforts.

AGENCY OPERATIONAL GOAL AND ACTION PLAN

Goal:
Refine and maintain a microservice system for administering state examinations via an online process.

Action Plan:
Continue programming efforts that will improve delivery of online exams. Refine established agreements with computer-based testing centers throughout the state to be used by examinees for testing. Launch updated online testing application during fiscal year 2025.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL

1. Complete functional testing of the of the microservice system by April 2025 to ensure that the system is able to deliver online exams as designed.

2. Continue establishing agreements with testing centers to expand availability to as much of the state as possible. Continue the process through fiscal year 2027, as necessary.

3. Include final testing of online scheduling and payment modules for exams in functional tests above.

4. Expand updated online testing for all disciplines by the end of fiscal year 2025.

5. Ensure that the system for administering hard-copy exams is preserved and functional as well.

HOW GOAL OR ACTION ITEMS SUPPORTS STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES

1. *Accountable to tax/fee payers of Texas.*
   Online testing is consistent with the statewide goal of implementing technological solutions to serve Texas citizens.

2. *Maximum results with minimum waste of taxpayer funds.*
   The updated online testing system will be more efficient and cost effective than previous and onsite versions. Onsite exams will remain an option for examinees, but an improved web-based exam will engender a significant reduction in usage.

3. *Effective in fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures, and implementing plans to continuously improve.*
   The updated testing system will be an improvement in terms of effectiveness in fulfilling the agency's testing function. It will improve gathering of testing statistics and performance measure data.

4. *Providing excellent customer service.*
   Although customers will still be required to go to a testing center to take an exam, results from their test will be available to them quickly, which will expedite and simplify the individual's ability to obtain certification.

5. *Transparent actions apparent to Texans.*
   The updated system will provide convenience and direct benefits to Texans who use it.

AGENCY OPERATIONAL GOAL AND ACTION PLAN

Goal:
Securely migrate all TCFP file system and ancillary systems to the cloud. This will improve access to agency files from remote locations.

Action Plan:
Take all necessary steps, including security funding and technical expertise needed, to migrate current file systems to the cloud—beginning with a life and shift strategy of legacy systems.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL

1. Evaluate different cloud service offerings to find a good fit for the agency.

2. Perform cost-benefit analysis and secure funding.

3. Perform gap/redundancy analysis to determine what can/should remain, what needs to be changed, and where efforts need to be dedicated for implementation.

4. Identify operational risks and prepare to address migration challenges such as interoperability; data and application portability; data integrity and security; and business continuity.

5. Establish training requirements for recent technologies, tools, processes, governance, etc.

6. Complete "lift and shift" of current systems to cloud by December 2024.

HOW GOAL OR ACTION ITEMS SUPPORTS STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES

1. *Accountable to tax/fee payers of Texas.*
   This migration exercise represents another technology-based solution for agency operations and interaction with the agency's regulated community.

2. *Maximum results with minimum waste of taxpayer funds.*
   Agency systems will become more resilient and reduce cost incurred because of service downtime at current physical location.

3. *Effective in fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures, and implementing plans to continuously improve.*
   Migration to the cloud will lead to an improvement in service delivery as staff and applications will have improved access to needed files. Outages or disasters at current physical file server locations will have no negative impact to work

4. *Providing excellent customer service.*
   Once operational, the Texas fire service can be assured of a more reliable and available service from the agency.

5. *Transparent actions apparent to Texans.*
   The cloud-based system, eventually implements COCD, lends itself for fast feature update. This makes the agency become more responsive and open to solving the needs of Texans who rely on the agency.

AGENCY OPERATIONAL GOAL AND ACTION PLAN

Goal:

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) will continue to provide outstanding customer service to all fire protection personnel through new and existing certification processes. The ultimate goal is to better serve the citizens of Texas by enhancing the professionalism, knowledge, and expertise of the Texas fire service.

Action Plan:

TCFP personnel will modernize and amend the certification process(es) by collaborating with commissioners, advisory committee members and customers to continue establishing committees consisting of subject matter experts as needed to develop certification exam test banks, identify areas of need, and create verifiable and easy to read curricula.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL

1. Identify programs and processes that require modifications and modernization.

2. Reach out to TCFP personnel, commissioners, committee members and customers for concerns.

3. Continue to schedule and conduct ad hoc committee meetings as necessary to update test banks, curricula, and other pertinent information for training providers.

4. Assure that all aspects under the certification division umbrella is current.

5. Continue to identify additional certifications customers desire to enhance fire protection personnel careers and develop top notch curricula.

HOW GOAL OR ACTION ITEMS SUPPORTS STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES

1. Accountable to tax/fee payers of Texas.

By utilizing Texas subject matter experts throughout the fire service curricula, skill developments and testing processes it brings additional years of knowledge and experience which allows taxpayers to see the commitment and dedication to provide the excellent service.

2. Maximum results with minimum waste of taxpayer funds.

TCFP will utilize subject matter experts who volunteer their time and efforts to the process as well as agency team members. TCFP has modified processes for entities to pay certification fees online.

3. Effective in fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures, and implementing plans to continuously improve.

The modification and enhancement of the processes needed to approve certifications by ensuring that personnel have the current knowledge and skills necessary. Measuring success is a continuous process to assure the most effective means of teaching is conducted by continuing to schedule ad hoc committee meetings to update test banks, curricula, and other pertinent information for training providers. Plans shall be implemented for all aspects of the program assuring the agency remains current and can provide the best in service to its stakeholders and communities across the state.

4. Providing excellent customer service.

The agency strives to provide excellent customer service by employing highly trained personnel and continually striving to enhance its public image.

5. Transparent actions apparent to Texans.

The agency is fully committed to being transparent by utilizing all forms of communication with the needs of Texans being its top priority.

AGENCY OPERATIONAL GOAL AND ACTION PLAN

Goal:
Establish and maintain an agency workforce that reflects the mission, functions, and workload demands of the agency.

Action Plan:
Perform a comprehensive assessment of the agency's workforce following the completion of the data management system transition, and adjust personnel classifications, assignments, and workloads, as necessary.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL

1. Complete the transition of the agency data management system by the end of fiscal year 2025. (Some smaller projects may remain, but most of the transition will have occurred).

2. Monitor agency workflow and personnel duties for 90 to 180 days to assess how changes in the new data system impact job duties and responsibilities.

3. Perform a review of the position classifications of personnel versus job responsibilities to determine any changes that should occur.

4. Revise job classifications as needed based upon the assessment.

5. Move FTE positions within the agency as necessary to the appropriate functional sections, with particular priority being given to compliance activities.

HOW GOAL OR ACTION ITEMS SUPPORTS STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES

1. *Accountable to tax/fee payers of Texas.*
   The goal ensures that agency personnel resources are utilized effectively and with the greatest possible benefit to Texas citizens.

2. *Maximum results with minimum waste of taxpayer funds.*
   Assessment and adjustment of the organization's staff so as to best fit the agency's mission demonstrates a commitment to prudent utilization of taxpayer funds.

3. *Effective in fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures, and implementing plans to continuously improve.*
   The goal is intended to ensure that the agency is well positioned to fulfill its functions, with a commitment to improvement.

4. *Providing excellent customer service.*
   The agency takes customer service very seriously. Any adjustments made to agency staff would be accomplished in such a way as to both preserve current service, and address improvements wherever necessary.

5. *Transparent actions apparent to Texans.*
   Citizens can easily view the agency's organization, members, classifications, and responsibilities.

REDUNDANCIES AND IMPEDIMENTS

Identified Statute

General Appropriations Act for the 2024-2025 Biennium
Article V: Public Safety and Criminal Justice, Commission on Fire Protection

Reason for Impediment

A continuing budgetary challenge for the commission rests in a contingency rider attached to the agency's budget. The General Appropriations Act requires the agency to generate revenues that will cover the amount appropriated for its operations. However, the Act also calls for the agency to generate an additional $1,500,000 in revenue over and above its appropriation responsibility. Furthermore, the Act directs that in the event actual and/or projected revenue collections are insufficient to cover the total required (including the rider amount), the Legislative Budget Board may direct the Comptroller of Public Accounts to reduce the agency's appropriation to an amount expected to be available above the $1,500,000.

This obviously places tremendous pressure on the commission's limited budget and revenue-generating responsibility. Furthermore, the rider forces the commission to pass on its impact to all regulated entities and individuals statewide through unnecessarily high fees. The most common complaints expressed by the members of the Texas Fire Service are that the fees are too high while the services provided are less than adequate.

Commission Recommendation and Benefit

It is the recommendation of the commission to continue its self-funded status, increase the appropriated amount to cover the agencies exceptional request and remove the $1.5 million dollar rider. This would allow the agency to reduce fees charged to its regulated community while enhancing the services provided by the agency through improved operations and fee reductions.

Identified Statute

General Appropriations Act for the 2024-25 Biennium
Article V: Public Safety and Criminal Justice, Commission on Fire Protection

Reason for Impediment

Another budgetary challenge for the commission rests in the 5% budget reduction imposed during the previous biennium. TCFP is a small agency therefore this reduction equals $188,000.00. Due to previous reductions, our only option to accomplish this most recent reduction was the elimination of two FTEs.

This obviously places tremendous pressure on the commission's remaining staff because the agency mission and responsibilities did not change. The agency continues to qualify, test, and certify more fire protection personnel each year as the number of regulated entities continue to increase. This results in more certification renewals annually while the certification curriculum continues to change and improve, requiring constant revisions and updates.

Commission Recommendation and Benefit

It is the recommendation of the commission to continue its self-funded status and increase the appropriated amount to cover two additional FTEs. This would allow the agency to keep up with the demands placed on it. Customer service is compromised by the fact the agency is simply unable to keep up with the daily demands. This is a recurring complaint expressed by the Texas Fire Service. The increase in staffing would enable the agency to ensure adequate educational standards for fire protection personnel while enhancing revenue.

Identified Statute

General Appropriations Act for the 2024-25 Biennium
Article V: Public Safety and Criminal Justice, Commission on Fire Protection

Reason for Impediment

Another continuing challenge for the commission rests in employee retention. The agency has experienced a 65% turnover rate during the 19-20 and 21-22 biennia due to increased workload and limited ability to enhance salaries. This obviously places tremendous pressure on the commission's ability to meet its performance measures while generating the mandated revenue.

Commission Recommendation and Benefit

It is the recommendation of the commission to provide additional appropriations to provide FTEs with a 5% salary increase. This would help with employee retention while enabling the agency to improve customer service.

Identified Statute

General Appropriations Act for the 2024-25 Biennium
Article V: Public Safety and Criminal Justice, Commission on Fire Protection

Reason for Impediment

A continuing budgetary challenge for the commission rests in a continual demand to keep up with technology. The agency was directed during the 2011 Sunset review process, to develop and maintain an adequate system for conducting agency business through a computer based medium. There was no appropriation provided for this enhancement. The recommendation was partially accomplished by 2017 but the agency continues to struggle with system maintenance and upgrades due to the lack of appropriations.

This obviously places tremendous pressure on the commission's limited budget and revenue-generating responsibility. A common complaint expressed by the members of the Texas Fire Service is that the web site and on-line system is less than adequate and difficult to navigate. The agency's Information Technology staff works constantly to make needed improvements, but these are limited due to a lack of available funds.

Commission Recommendation and Benefit

It is the recommendation of the commission to continue its self-funded status and increase the appropriated amount to cover the required technology enhancements. This would allow the agency to enhance the services provided by the agency through improved operations and fee reductions.

Identified Statute

General Appropriations Act for the 2024-25 Biennium
Article V: Public Safety and Criminal Justice, Commission on Fire Protection

Reason for Impediment

Another impediment is the lack of state-owned vehicles for use when conducting state business. The agency is responsible for compliance enforcement of over 983 regulated entities. The agency employees eight compliance officers assigned to conduct inspections across the state. Annually, these compliance officers travel weekly, covering more than 30,000 miles per year and are required to rent vehicles for the required travel. In addition, TCFP is responsible for compliance enforcement, training facility audits, certification exam delivery, injury investigations and educational deliveries. The process of renting and returning these vehicles weekly result in lost time and money.

Commission Recommendation and Benefit
It is the recommendation of the commission to provide the agency with a fleet of ten vehicles to enable staff to conduct the needed travel for compliance inspections, exams, training facility audits, injury investigations and educational deliveries across the state. These vehicles need to be adequate for carrying multiple FTEs and the assigned equipment.

II. SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULES

Schedule A: BUDGET STRUCTURE

As Adopted in the FY2022-2023 General Appropriations Act

A. GOAL: EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE
   Assist local governments and other entities in their fire protection educational and planning efforts.

   a. **OBJECTIVE** – Provide fire protection information, educational materials, and research opportunities to fire departments and other organizations.

   b. **STRATEGY** – Provide fire safety information and educational programs. Acquire, develop, and maintain training resources and information on all aspects of fire protection in the agency fire protection library, and make the resources and information available upon request. Gather, analyze, and report on fire service injury data annually in an effort to help reduce fire protection personnel injuries statewide. Develop and maintain other educational outreach efforts via social media, participation at conferences, and other avenues as possible.

B. GOAL: FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARDS

   Enforce statutes and rules regarding fire service education, credentialing, training facilities, and protective equipment.

   a. **OBJECTIVE** – Promote and develop training, credentialing, and safety standards for fire service personnel and entities under the agency's jurisdiction and implement the resulting requirements through the core functional programs of the agency.

   b. **STRATEGY** – Certify and regulate fire departments and personnel. Test and certify personnel pursuant to adopted standards and perform inspections of regulated fire protection entities to ensure compliance with rules adopted by the agency and prescribed by statute.

Output Measures	2022	2023
Number of Inspections of Regulated Entities	1,120	1,120
Number of Examinations Administered	18,000	18,000
Efficiency Measures		
Average Cost Per Inspection of Regulated Facilities	450	475
Explanatory Measures		
Percent of Fire Protection Individuals Who Pass the Certification Exam	90%	90%
Number of Individuals Certified	35,000	37,000
Number of Training Providers Certified	260	260

C. GOAL: INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION
   Provide indirect administrative services to the agency.

   a. **OBJECTIVE** – Ensure the provision of efficient and effective administrative services to agency operations and do so at the best value to the citizens of the state.

   b. **STRATEGY** – Review operations on a regular periodic basis to ensure that indirect administrative resources are being utilized to the fullest potential, that they continue to provide adequate support to agency programs, and that the services are consistent with the size and scope of the agency's mission.

SCHEDULE B: PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEFINITIONS

KEY MEASURES

Output Measure: Number of Inspections of Regulated Entities

Definition
The total number of inspections conducted during the reporting period.

Data Limitations
Since the data source is the commission's data management system, the accuracy of the count of inspection is dependent upon data entry.

Source/Collection of Data
Agency inspectors input records of inspection activities into the agency's data management system. The system is queried at the end of the reporting period to obtain the total number of inspections performed.

Method of Calculation
Total number of inspections of regulated entities conducted within the reporting period is obtained from the commission's data management system.

Purpose/Importance
This measure reflects the quantity of work performed by the commission's compliance section. The commission is required by statute to conduct biennial inspections of regulated entities. Additional inspections include unannounced inspections of training programs in progress, inspections conducted following reports of possible rule violations, and risk-based inspections.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

Output Measure: Number of Examinations Administered

Definition
The number of examinations administered during the reporting period.

Data Limitations
Since the data source is the commission's data management system, the accuracy of the count of examinations administered is dependent upon data entry and appropriate querying of the system.

Source/Collection of Data
The source of data is the agency's data management system, which tracks all examinations administered by the agency. Some data is collected automatically by the system as examinations are completed, while some is input by testing staff.

Method of Calculation
Each written examination is counted. The measure records the total number of examinations administered by the agency for fire service certification purposes. A skill performance evaluation is also conducted for most disciplines by training providers during ongoing courses, and this evaluation is part of the certification testing process. It is not counted separately from the written examination.

Purpose/Importance
This measure shows the number of examinations administered for both mandatory state certifications and voluntary certifications. Curriculum and test development and maintenance, examination purchase, test administration, grading, and notification costs are directly related to this measure and represent a major cost element for the agency. The testing process determines the knowledge and skills of fire protection personnel to ensure they can effectively do their jobs.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

Efficiency Measure: Average Cost Per Inspection of Regulated Facilities

Definition
The average cost incurred by the agency for inspecting regulated entities.

Data Limitations
Accuracy of average cost per inspection is dependent on correct data entry of inspection related costs and the number of inspections.

Source/Collection of Data
Costs for the reporting period related to inspections are obtained from the financial services section of the agency. Costs used to perform the calculation include salaries of inspection personnel (including 25% of compliance manager's salary); travel costs directly related to inspections and inspection-related meetings with regulated entities; supplies; document review and handling; and notifications. Indirect costs are excluded. The total number of inspections for the reporting period is obtained from the agency's internal data management system, as input by inspection personnel. The total includes statutorily mandated biennial inspections; inspections of training programs in progress; inspections resulting from reports of possible rule violations; and risk-based inspections.

Method of Calculation
Total cost related to inspection activities for the reporting period (numerator) is divided by the total number of inspections conducted during the same period (denominator) to determine the average cost.

Purpose/Importance
This measure is intended to assess how cost-effectively the agency conducts inspections.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

Explanatory Measure: Examination Pass Rate

Definition
The percent of individuals to whom an examination was administered during the reporting period who received a passing score.

Data Limitations
Since the data source is the commission's data management system, the accuracy of the count of passing examinations is dependent upon data entry and appropriate querying of the system.

Source/Collection of Data
The source of data is the agency's data management system. The testing program is responsible for inputting examination information into the data management system.

Method of Calculation
The total number of individuals who passed the examination from the agency data management system (numerator) is divided by the total number of individuals examined (denominator) and then multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage. Persons taking an examination multiple times are counted each time they take the exam.

Purpose/Importance
The measure shows the rate at which those examined passed. This is an important step in the certification process and a low pass rate may represent unnecessarily restrictive certification requirements, effectiveness of training entities and instructors, or inadequate preparation by testing applicants. The measure also helps validate the reliability and effectiveness of the agency's examinations.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

Explanatory Measure: Number of Individuals Certified

Definition
Total number of individuals certified at the end of the reporting period. This measure reflects the number of individuals certified and renewed as fire protection personnel on an annual basis, including paid fire protection personnel, volunteer fire protection personnel, fire protection personnel instructors, and individuals certified without regard to their employment status.

Data Limitations
The accuracy of the count of individuals certified is dependent upon data entry by certification staff and appropriate querying of the data system.

Source/Collection of Data
Agency staff is responsible for evaluation and data entry of some applications submitted by individuals for certification. The data system also allows individuals to apply for and receive many certifications via the agency's online portal. The system is queried at the end of the reporting period to obtain the total number of individuals holding one or more active certification(s).

Method of Calculation
The total unduplicated number of individuals certified is obtained from the data management system at the end of the reporting period. An individual who holds more than one certification is counted only once. This measure records the number of fire protection personnel, volunteers, state/federal personnel, and individuals certified by the agency.

Purpose/Importance
The measure shows the total number of individuals currently certified, which indicates the size of one of the agency's primary constituencies. Current statute requires all paid fire protection personnel in Texas to be certified according to the duties to which they are appointed. The statute also allows volunteer personnel, state/federal personnel, and individuals regardless of employment status to participate in the state certification program on a voluntary basis.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

Explanatory Measure: Number of Training Providers Certified

Definition
The number of training providers certified by the agency at the end of the reporting period. This measure reflects the growth or decline in the number of training providers certified to meet the state's minimum standards for training fire service and other emergency personnel.

Data Limitations
The accuracy of the count of training facilities certified is dependent upon data entry by agency staff and appropriate querying of the data system.

Source/Collection of Data
Agency staff is responsible for evaluation and data entry of applications submitted by training providers for certification. The agency's data management system is queried at the end of the reporting period to obtain the total number of facilities with one or more active certifications.

Method of Calculation
The unduplicated list of training providers with one or more active certifications is counted. A training provider that holds more than one certification is counted only once. The measure records the number of training providers certified and renewed by the agency.

Purpose/Importance
The measure reflects the number of facilities approved to deliver various training programs leading to certification for individuals. In most cases, commission rules require individuals to complete training with one of these facilities in order to qualify for state certification testing. The measure also directly relates to the workload of the agency's compliance section. For example, it impacts the amount of time and travel required of agency personnel to perform inspections of the facilities. The measure does not reflect the total number of training certifications issued by the agency, but rather the number of providers for which the agency is responsible to provide oversight.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

NON-KEY MEASURES

Outcome Measure: Number of Inspected Regulated Entities with Uncorrected Violations

Definition
The total number of entities at the end of the reporting period that have incurred an uncorrected violation of statute or commission rules within the reporting period. Uncorrected violations are those which cannot be corrected on the spot, or during a compliance inspection; follow-up by agency personnel is required to verify compliance.

Data Limitations
The number of violations found during an inspection of an entity can be based to some degree on the judgement of professional staff. A degree of subjectivity is inherent, but the measure can offer reliable information regarding the program's effectiveness. The accuracy of the count is dependent on data entry by staff into the commission's data management system.

Source/Collection of Data
Collected by staff and input by compliance program personnel. The source of data is the commission's data management system.

Method of Calculation
The measure is a count of the total number of entities that have incurred an uncorrected violation during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance
Certifying and inspecting entities helps ensure that fire protection organizations meet legal standards for professional education and practice, which is a primary agency goal. This measure is important because it indicates how effective the agency's activities are in deterring violations, or in facilitating immediate corrections when they are found. The measure also reflects the overall workload of the agency's compliance section.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

Output Measure: Number of New Certifications Issued to Individuals

Definition
The number of new certificates issued to previously uncertified individuals, and to individuals already certified in a different discipline or level during the reporting period.

Data Limitations
The accuracy of the count of new certifications is dependent upon data entry by certification staff and appropriate querying of the data system.

Source/Collection of Data
Agency staff is responsible for evaluation, data entry, and approval of some applications. If approved and the necessary fee has been submitted, the system will issue a certification. The data system also allows individuals to apply for and receive certifications via the agency's online portal. The system is queried following the end of the reporting period for the total number of active certifications with an issue date during the reporting period.

Method of Calculation
This measure counts the total number of certifications issued to individuals during the reporting period, regardless of when the application was originally received. Certifications issued prior to or following the reporting period are not counted. The total may include certifications issued to persons who were previously certified, but whose certificate has expired, and they were required to meet the criteria of a new applicant.

Purpose/Importance
A successful certification structure must ensure that legal standards for professional education and practice are met prior to certification. This measure is a primary workload indicator which is intended to show the number of uncertified persons, or persons certified in a different discipline or level, who were documented to have successfully met all certification criteria established by statute and rule as verified by the agency during the reporting period.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

Output Measure: Number of Certifications Renewed (Individuals)

Definition
The number of certified individuals who held certificates previously and renewed their certificates during the current reporting period.

Data Limitations
The accuracy of the count of individuals whose certifications are renewed is dependent upon data entry by certification staff, accurate data system operations, and appropriate querying of the system.

Source/Collection of Data
Agency staff is responsible for evaluation and data entry of some renewal applications submitted by mail. Individuals can also renew their certifications online via the agency's renewal portal. The data system is queried following the reporting period to obtain the total.

Method of Calculation
The measure counts the total number of individuals whose certification has been renewed. The measure is calculated by querying the agency database to produce the total number of individuals whose certifications were renewed during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance
Certification renewal is intended to ensure that persons who want to continue to practice in their respective professions satisfy current requirements established by statute and rule for professional education and practice.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

SCHEDULE C: HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS PLAN

State Agency Progress Report

(Source: Texas Government Code, Title 10, Subtitle D, Section 2161.124)

HUB Report Procurement Categories	Fiscal 2020		Fiscal 2021		Fiscal 2022
	Agency-Specific	% of Dollars Spent	Agency-Specific	% of Dollars Spent	Agency-Specific
Heavy construction other than building contracts	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Building construction, including general contractors and operative builder's	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Special trade construction projects	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Professional services contracts	23.70%	N/A*	23.70%	N/A*	23.70%
Other services contracts	26.00%	20.50%	26.00%	9.90%	26.00%
Commodities contracts	21.10%	50.90%	21.10%	36.00%	21.10%

*No expenditures made within Category

Reporting Provisions

Purchasing Mission

The agency seeks to purchase goods and services from Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) whenever possible. The agency obtains vendors primarily from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS) Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL).

Objectives

The agency's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program objectives are to:

- Identify American minority- and women-owned businesses.
- Encourage participation in the competitive bid process.
- Make an impact on the economy.

HUB Subcontracting Program

The Texas Legislature requires state agencies to make a good faith effort to give HUBs part of the total contract value of all contracts. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection has adopted the State's expenditure goals as its own.

Before the agency solicits bids, proposals, offers or other applicable expressions of interest for contract documents of $100,000 or more, the agency shall determine whether subcontracting opportunities are probable under the contract.

If subcontracting opportunities are probable, the agency's invitation for bids or other purchase solicitation documents for construction, professional services, other services, and commodities with an expected value of $100,000 or more shall state that probability and require a HUB Subcontracting Plan.

Quality Service and HUB Goals

TCFP's HUB program seeks to provide quality service and results to agency users while meeting legislative HUB contract goals. The agency reviews all contracts and vendors to ensure quality work and to try to maintain as many HUB vendors as possible. All contracts are bid at a 2:1 ratio of HUB vendors versus non-HUB vendors to maintain the opportunity to meet HUB objectives and contract goals.

Commission percentages in comparison to state goals:

According to Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS), the following information has been provided to help track the expenditures and utilize it as a bench marking tool to meet or exceed the HUB utilization in each of the categories.

TCFP has consistently met or surpassed its goal of utilizing HUB vendors. For the fiscal years 2019 and 2020, the agency had purchases from HUB vendors equaling 40.21 and 39.47 percent, respectively. Fiscal year 2021 had challenges with term contract vendors who held HUB certifications.

Total Expenditures/HUB Expenditures	Fiscal2019	Fiscal2020	Fiscal2021
Total Expenditures	64,102.00	58,638.00	84,696.00
HUB Expenditures	25,777.00	23,142.00	21,488.00
Total Percentage of Expenditures - HUB	40.21%	39.47%	25.37%

In past the agency has surpassed its goals in professional services and commodities contracts. The agency fell below goals in Other Services Contracts for 2020 and 2021 due to utilizing more vendors within Term Contracts in 2020 and 2021 versus 2019.

Types of Contracts	State Goals	Fiscal 2019	Fiscal 2020	Fiscal 2021
Heavy construction other than building contracts *	11.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A
All building construction, including general contractors and operative builder's contracts *	21.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A
All special trade construction contracts *	32.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Professional services contracts**	23.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A
All other services contracts	26.0%	27.29%	20.53%	9.89%
Commodities contracts	21.1%	44.79%	50.93%	35.96%

We have included a breakout to include the HUB versus Term Contracts to show the difference in the percentages for 2019 versus 2020 and 2021.

Totals Include Term Contracts for all Other Services Contracts	Fiscal 2017	Fiscal 2018	Fiscal 2019
Total All Other Services Contracts	27.440.73	22,261.05	42,278.05
HUB Term Contracts	4,571.53	4,540.00	3,402.00
HUB Percentage including Term Contracts	16.66%	20.39%	8.05%

Assessment

The numbers show that TCFP has maintained significant HUB participation in purchasing and contracting in the past three years. The agency has demonstrated its compliance with Texas Government Code §2161.123 and its good faith efforts to meet HUB goals for purchasing and contracting required under the statute.

SCHEDULE F: AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection Workforce Plan provides an overview of agency staffing information. In addition to meeting its mission and goals, the agency has successfully provided high-quality service with a highly trained and skilled staff. The agency has been able to work smarter and leverage technology to address a significant increase in the demand on the Texas Fire Service while navigating staff turnover due to salary restrictions and retiring staff. The Workforce Plan forecasts staffing goals, workforce skills, demographics and trends required to continue to ensure the high standard of agency operations and services.

OVERVIEW

The agency currently employs 27, full-time individuals. To continuously meet our high standards of performance, most staff members are required to work multiple job functions. The Commission has seen a significant increase in workload in the last 5 years. This is due to an increasing population with a rising need of fire services throughout the state. Advances in internal technology and staff training has allowed the agency to provide quality customer service to its stakeholders with moderate changes in staffing. Recent developments related to the pandemic and budget cuts had the agency implement additional measures with telework provisions and a review of the agency operations. The current strategic goal is aligned to support the agency workforce, including training, communications, agency environment, and succession and retention planning.

CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The following charts reflect the agency's workforce as of August 2021. The agency's workforce comprises 26% females and 74% males. The agency's staff consists of 74% aged 40 years or higher while 52% are aged 50 or more. About 42% of employees have less than five year's agency service. This warrants training programs to ensure our employees maintain professional growth and development.

Gender	Age	Length of Agency Service
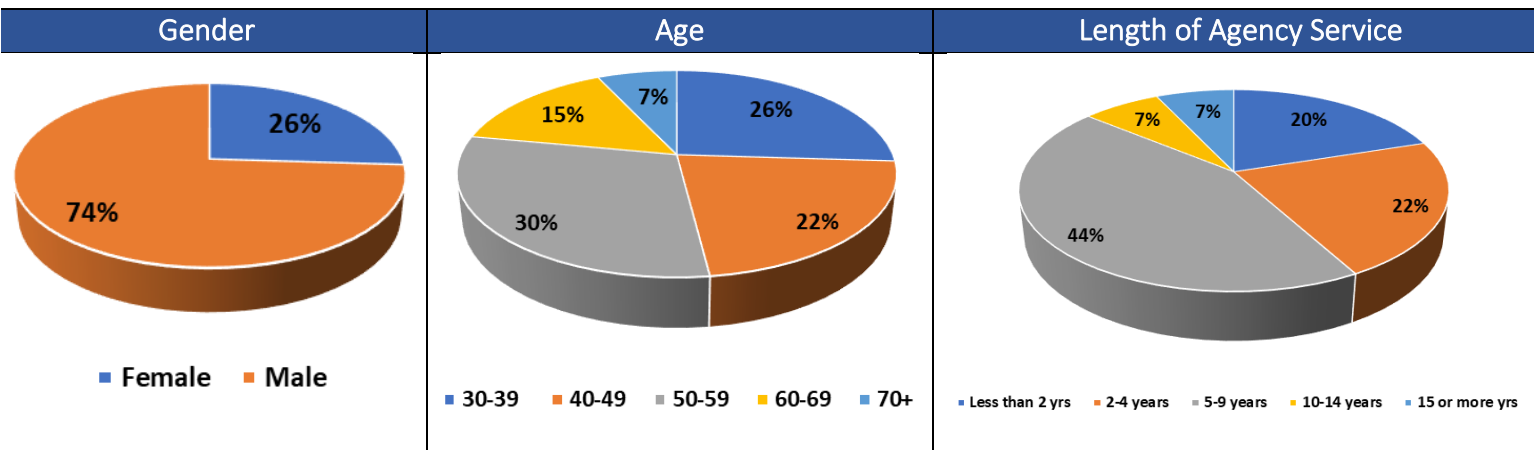
A total of 29 full-time positions are allowed by legislative rule. Due to budget restraints, only 27 of these positions are filled. Using EEO definitions, currently there are: officials and administrators—1; professionals—9; para-professional—16 and technicians—2. Fire Service experience and expertise is crucial to the agency's Compliance Division therefore it is vital that the agency employs professional fire fighters to cover fire departments' compliance inspections. Due to increasing demand of fire service throughout the state, the agency added an extra region. In return the need for Firefighter professionals increased from 6 to 7 to achieve performance measures. Also, with ever-changing population and needs of the Texas fire service, the agency recently hired an individual with a master's degree in Education with a concentration in Adult Education and Training, to oversee and maintain present and future curriculum opportunities for stakeholders. The ethnic distribution of the staff is 63% White, 30% Hispanic, and 7% Black.

Job Classification	Ethnic Breakdown
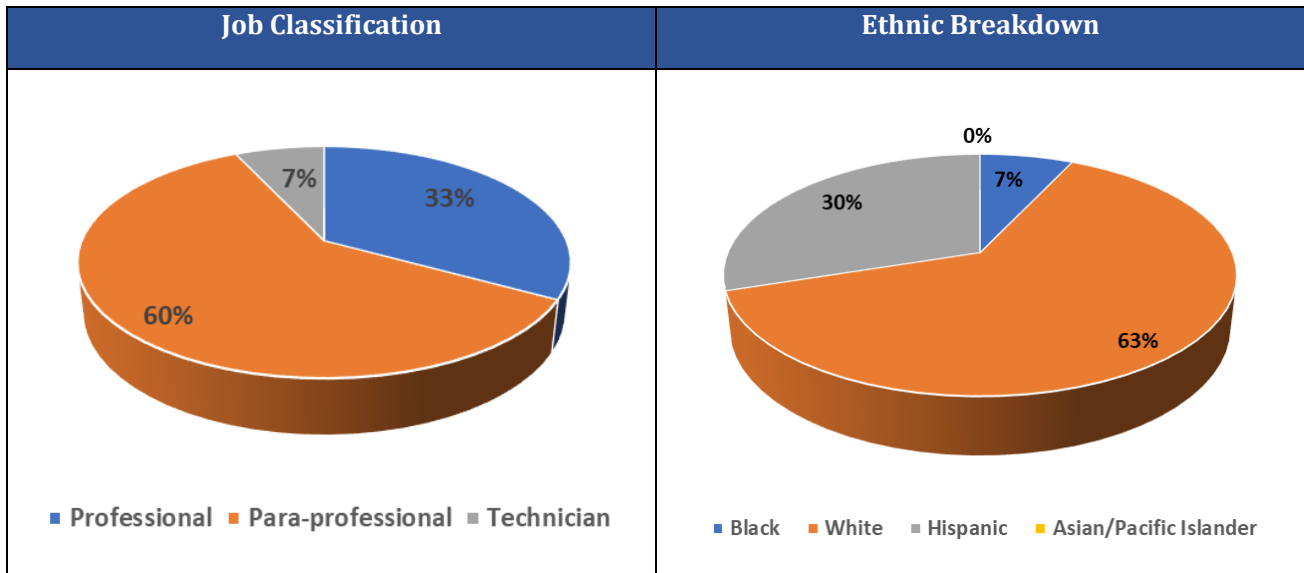
Employee Turnover

For fiscal year 2021, workforce demographics show that on average agency employees had 7 years with the agency. To address turnover the agency is focusing on employee retention, succession planning, and performance improvement issues. The two-year average turnover rate is nearly 14%.

Retirement Eligibility

According to agency projections, an estimated 30% of agency employees will be eligible to retire between the fiscal years 2021 and 2026. The agency is implementing a career ladder program and is working on a retention and succession program. This will also address overall staffing and workload issues too with the potential change.

Critical Workforce Skills
The Texas Commission on Fire Protection values its human capital as its most important asset. Commission employees possess highly desirable skill sets which are critical to accomplishing the mission of the agency. These skills include written and oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, expertise related to fire service standards, technical skills related to state systems, and information technology skills.

FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE: DEMAND ANALYSIS

Expected Workforce Changes

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection will experience many of the workforce changes seen across the country impacted by an aging population. The agency expects that these factors may shrink the pool of qualified employees requiring greater recruiting efforts and more job skills training for new and current employees. Due to the consistent increase in population of Texas, the agency also expects continued growth in testing, certifications, and overall need for the Texas Fire Service which would greatly impact the agency's ability to deliver on its mission with current staffing levels.

To mitigate the shrinkage of qualified candidates and to meet current recruiting trends, the agency has executed a new telecommute policy. Studies have shown that employees are looking for a flexible work schedule and a better work/life balance. The agency will benefit from lower staff turnover. Statistics show that 46% of the employers with a telecommuting policy, even well before COVID, report that it directly impacts the

reduction in attrition in the workplace. The costs involved with attrition are significant. To accommodate this new policy, the agency will need to shift from desktop computers to laptops for our current situation dictates that the employee must use their personal computers in order to work from home.

Future Workforce Skills Needed

To meet increased demands, the agency will use employee teams to boost productivity through streamlined processes and increased use of automation. Communication and interpersonal skills will be critical to the team approach. Technical and critical thinking skills will be necessary for balancing priorities and finding more innovative ways to meet productive demands. In addition to the competencies listed before, additional skills will be essential for future positions:

- Process analysis and improvement.
- Project management.
- Performance management.
- Strategic planning.
- Business process creation and revision.

Key to maintaining a motivated, vibrant, and professional workforce is the development of a comprehensive personnel development plan. This plan will be comprised of:

- A cross-training program to address the changing needs of the agency.
- A professional improvement component targeting work skills and workplace enhancements.
- Educational and skills training.
- Overall employee performance improvement.
- Creating a career trajectory plan for each staff member.

In the case of employees who must have and maintain certifications issued by the agency to perform their assigned duties, continuing education will be included in this plan and will be compliant with rules and regulations the agency enforces on its stakeholders. The plan will also address other continuing education requirements of non-certified personnel.

The plan will become a part of the agency's Employee Guide. Participation will be available to all employees. Funding for this plan will be included in the biennial budget process.

Anticipated Impact on Workforce

Due to the increase in statewide population and decrease in budget, the agency has reclassified and reassigned some positions within the organization following the implementation of technology and productivity improvements adopted by the agency over the last couple of years. The agency will continue to monitor these shifts in the organization for efficacy.

To better prepare its workforce for both anticipated and unexpected changes, the agency recently implemented an employee succession plan wherein personnel learn to perform the duties of their co-workers in the same work group and general classification. In addition to cross-training employees, the agency plans to adapt a career ladder plan to sustain customer service with the anticipated retirements within the next 5-6 years. The goal of this plan is to provide a smooth transition and continuation of essential agency functions when an employee's service is interrupted, regardless of the reason. Cross-training of personnel will expand across agency sections as the workload and position classifications allow. This will provide even more organizational flexibility in the agency and more professional development opportunities for employees. This plan is especially important considering the small workforce utilized by the agency, where the loss of a single key employee can have a significant impact on productivity and work quality.

Additional employees will likely be needed in the future to address the demand placed on the agency due to population growth. This will enhance professionalism and the ability to meet the needs of the communities the fire service protects. With population growth, the demand on the fire service will certainly result in more personnel being added to existing fire departments, and in the creation of new entities regulated by the commission. The fire service also continues to aggressively press ahead to advance the education, training, and expertise of its personnel. As such, it is incumbent upon the commission to help lead in this trend by offering as many credentialing opportunities as possible.

Finally, some changes occurring in the recent past through legislative action have contributed to the workload of the agency. Until now, the agency has been able to absorb the increased work with existing staff. However, with any new legislative action that increases the workload, consideration must be given to increasing the number of FTEs appropriated for the agency's mission.

Critical Functions That Must Be Performed to Achieve the Strategic Plan

All current functions of the agency are critical to achievement of the strategic plan. As business processes are redesigned, the agency expects essential job functions to change or shift in importance for some positions. As discussed in other areas of this plan, as the agency matures, adapts, and grows to meet the demands of the stakeholders, the overall needs of the agency will lead to adjustments in the workforce and functional groups. Through partnerships with other state agencies and stakeholders, the agency will continue to realign its structure to reflect expanding and expected needs resulting from greater levels of cooperation.

Gap Analysis

Current employees do not lack the skills necessary to perform their essential job functions. However, as the agency redesigns business processes and loses employees through attrition, some positions could change significantly, requiring targeted recruiting and/or skills training.

Strategy Development

To meet workforce needs brought about by increased customer demands, business process redesigns, and employee attrition, the agency will:

- Ensure its organizational structure reflects efficient use of its personnel resources.

- Update position descriptions as necessary.

- Provide individualized job skills training that targets essential job functions.

- Provide individualized professional training to meet anticipated skill requirements.

- Utilize a rigorous recruiting and selection process to fill vacant or newly created positions with highly qualified candidates.

- Involve employees in the design and improvement of business processes.

- Increase employee satisfaction and performance through ethical, fair, and performance-oriented employment practices.

- Strategy survey – annual customer satisfaction – increase respondents.

2022 CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY
REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

Texas Commission on Fire Protection

Table of Contents

Identification of Customers

For the purpose of the commission's 2022 Customer Service Survey, the following groups reflect customers served by strategies in the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Goal A: Education & Assistance

Strategy A.1.1: FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION. Fire Safety Information & Educational Programs

CUSTOMER: Fire departments (chiefs, training officers and other officers, fire protection personnel), schools and universities, state agencies, industries, local governments, businesses, training academies, general public.

SERVICE PROVIDED: Acquire, develop and maintain current and historical information on fire protection and provide training aids and fire protection information to fire departments and other entities. Collect and analyze injury data from fire departments and develop recommendations to help reduce the number of fire fighter injuries. Attend and make presentations at conferences hosted by fire service stakeholder groups; staff exhibit booths at conferences; host regional meetings throughout the state; provide instruction on field examinations, and on commission rules and regulations.

Goal B: Fire Department Standards

Strategy B.1.1: CERTIFY AND REGULATE FIRE SERVICE. Certify and Regulate Fire Departments and Personnel.

CUSTOMER: Fire departments and local governments.

SERVICE PROVIDED: Certify and regulate fire departments and fire service personnel according to standards adopted by the agency and as prescribed by statute. Regulate paid fire protection personnel, fire departments and training facilities. Perform biennial inspections of fire departments, local government agencies providing fire protection, and institutions or facilities conducting training for fire protection personnel or recruits. Establish minimum curriculum requirements for basic certification as fire protection personnel. Establish minimum requirements and evaluation of courses for higher levels certification by fire protection personnel. Enforce safety standards.

Survey Development

The TCFP developed a survey to measure statutorily required customer service quality elements. The agency conducted the 2022 survey online from February 1 through March 31, 2022.

To randomly select customers, the agency displayed a link to the survey on its public web pages as well as the "FIDO" login page so that it could be seen by any of our customers who were logging in to their TCFP account. The agency also published a link to the survey on its Facebook page, made the survey link available on staff email signatures, and sent email blasts to customers promoting the survey.

The TCFP's customer service survey categorized the service elements into three major groups, as follows:

Customer interactions with TCFP
The survey asked customers to describe how and why they contact us.

Service quality
The survey asked customers to rate their satisfaction with the agency on a variety of dimensions related to timeliness, knowledge, professionalism and courtesy, friendliness, and quality of service. They were also able to give us feedback about the general daily operations of our agency.

Additional comments
The survey asked customers for additional suggestions for improvement in both general terms and for specific agency functions.

Survey response analysis

Key findings – overall

1. The TCFP achieved an above average *Overall Customer Service Rating* of 78.5%. (according to question #10 of the survey, and assuming an "average" rating is 70%.)
2. The TCFP had 475 people take our survey during the 2022 period, which was slightly higher than the 467 responses we received with the 2020 survey.
3. The overall trend in satisfaction between the 2022 survey and the 2020 survey is slightly less (down from 80.2% in 2020).
4. Improvement is still needed in telephone communications and in the functionality of our website and online services.

In the analysis that follows, the figure *percentage of satisfied customers* for each question is determined by:
1. Adding the number of respondents who chose a rating of "satisfied" or "very satisfied" and getting a total.
2. Taking that total, then dividing by the "net total number of respondents" (i.e. the total number of respondents for that question less those who chose to answer "N/A" or "comments").

Survey Questions

Customer Interactions with TCFP

(Q. 1)
To begin, we asked our customers if they had interacted with the Texas Commission on Fire Protection in the past two years. 92% said yes, 8% (32 respondents) said no. Selecting the "No" response effectively ended the survey for those respondents.

(Q. 2)
We then asked customers what was the purpose of their interaction(s) with TCFP. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one option.

Answer options	Response count	Percent of customers
Certification	352	83.4%
Training/testing	266	63.0%
Compliance	175	41.5%
FIDO	236	55.9%
Injury Reporting	81	19.2%
Library Resources	8	1.9%
Attended a meeting	69	16.4%

Facebook	36	8.5%
Curriculum	60	14.2%
Other	24	5.7%

Service Quality

The focus of this year's survey was to gain a better understanding of the quality of the services we provide. The survey sought to measure our customers' perceptions of our timeliness, knowledge, professionalism and courtesy, friendliness, and quality of service as a whole.

The answer choice that received the highest number of responses (not including N/A responses) has been highlighted.

(Q. 3)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's facilities, including your ability to access the agency, the office location, signs, and cleanliness?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	94	23.3%
Satisfied	108	26.8%
Neutral	48	11.9%
Unsatisfied	17	4.2%
Very unsatisfied	9	2.2%
N/A – not applicable	98	24.3%
Comments	29	7.2%

(73.2% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 4)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's staff, including employee courtesy, friendliness, and knowledgeability, and whether staff members adequately identify themselves to customers by name, including the use of name plates or tags for accountability?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	150	38.3%
Satisfied	108	27.6%
Neutral	43	11.0%
Unsatisfied	18	4.6%
Very unsatisfied	15	3.8%
N/A – not applicable	29	7.4%
Comments	29	7.4%

(77.2% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 5)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's communications, including toll-free telephone access, the average time you spend on hold, call transfers, access to a live person, letters, electronic mail, and any applicable text messaging or mobile applications?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	113	29.4%
Satisfied	119	30.9%
Neutral	63	16.4%
Unsatisfied	22	5.7%
Very unsatisfied	18	4.7%
N/A – not applicable	26	6.8%
Comments	24	6.2%

(69.3% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 6)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's internet site, including the ease of use of the site, mobile access to the site, information on the location of the site and the agency, and information accessible through the site such as a listing of services and programs and whom to contact for further information or to complain?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	115	30.3%
Satisfied	147	38.8%
Neutral	48	12.7%
Unsatisfied	23	6.1%
Very unsatisfied	17	4.5%
N/A – not applicable	1	0.3%
Comments	28	7.4%

(74.9% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 7)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's complaint handling process, including whether it is easy to file a complaint and whether responses are timely?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	52	13.9%
Satisfied	56	15.0%
Neutral	52	13.9%
Unsatisfied	6	1.6%
Very unsatisfied	11	2.9%
N/A – Not Applicable	191	51.1%
Comments	6	1.6%

(61.0% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 8)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's ability to timely serve you, including the amount of time you wait for service in person?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers

Very satisfied	98	26.5%
Satisfied	120	32.4%
Neutral	39	10.5%
Unsatisfied	19	5.1%
Very unsatisfied	12	3.2%
N/A – Not Applicable	69	18.7%
Comments	13	3.5%

(75.7% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 9)
"How satisfied are you with TCFP's brochures or other printed information, including the accuracy of that information?"

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	61	16.5%
Satisfied	98	26.5%
Neutral	72	19.5%
Unsatisfied	5	1.4%
Very unsatisfied	5	1.4%
N/A – Not Applicable	118	31.9%
Comments	11	3.0%

(66.0% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

(Q. 10)
"Please rate your overall satisfaction with the Texas Commission on Fire Protection."

Answer choices	Response count	Percent of customers
Very satisfied	125	33.8%
Satisfied	149	40.3%
Neutral	43	11.6%
Unsatisfied	20	5.4%
Very unsatisfied	12	3.2%
N/A – Not Applicable	0	0.0%
Comments	21	5.7%

(78.5% of the customers who gave a rating were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

Analysis of the Findings

Changes that would improve the survey process

- Remove the comment boxes from each of the questions where we are asking for a rating, and allow respondents to leave comments at the end of the survey. This will result in more customers leaving actual ratings that will improve the accuracy of the findings.
- Continue to seek new ways to promote the survey to increase customer engagement.

Summary findings regarding the quality of service provided

- Customer service over the telephone needs to be improved.
- Customers are much happier with our improved compliance inspection process.
- The user experience with our FIDO on-line system continues to improve, but some still find it difficult and/or confusing. We must keep striving to make it more user-friendly with better functionality.
- Customers are finding it difficult to locate information on our website.
- Customers are experiencing inconsistency in how questions are answered by different agency staff members.
- Customers want more instruction from us on how to use our on-line systems

Improvements in progress and/or being considered

- We continue to improve our FIDO on-line system with the goal of making it more user-friendly with better functionality.
- Division Chiefs will continue to conduct staff training to improve customer service over the phone.
- We will continue to solicit input and ideas from staff and customers on new ways to improve the customer experience when using our website. All ideas will be given thoughtful consideration by agency staff.
- Standard operating procedures are being created to help reduce the inconsistency in how customers' questions are answered by staff.
- Instructional opportunities on how to use and navigate our on-line systems are being created and provided to customers.

Performance Measure Information

Customer Service Performance Measures	FY 2022 Performance
Outcome: Percent of surveyed customer respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services received	79%
Output: Total customers surveyed	92,000
Output: Response rate	0.4%
Output: Total customers served	35,146
Efficiency: Cost per customer surveyed	$0.04
Explanatory: Total customers identified	50,000
Explanatory: Total customer groups inventoried	6

Customer service performance measure definitions

Outcome: Percentage of surveyed customer respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services received = 79%

Definition: The total number of agency survey respondents indicating that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the agency, divided by the total number of agency survey respondents. This measure is based solely on responses to question 10 of the survey which asked respondents to, "Please rate your overall satisfaction with the Texas Commission on Fire Protection." Of the 349 respondents who left a rating for this question, 274 indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the agency. This results in 79% of respondents expressing overall satisfaction with services received.

Source/Collection of Data: Surveys were made available from the beginning of February 2022 through the end of March 2022, totaling two months of availability. Links to the survey were posted on the TCFP website, on TCFP's Facebook page, and in staff email signatures. We also reached out to community partners to ask for assistance in publicizing the survey in their newsletters and at their gatherings. And we sent email blasts to all individuals in our database asking them to take our survey.

Output: Total customers surveyed = 92,000

Definition: The number of customers who receive access to surveys regarding agency services. This number includes all customers who receive surveys in person or by phone, mail, email, web, or any other means.

Source: According to our email blast application, the survey link was emailed to approximately 92,000 individuals.

Output: Response Rate = 0.4%

Definition: The percentage of total customers surveyed who completed the survey.

Source: We had 475 customers access our survey, with 84% of those customers actually completing it. That would be 399 customers who completed the survey. 399 out of 92,000 equals a 0.4% response rate.

Output: Total customers served = 35, 146

Definition: Total number of customers receiving services through the agency's programs.

Source: For this number we took the total number of individuals with active certification in our database.

Efficiency: Cost per customer surveyed = $0.04

Definition: Total costs for the agency to administer customer surveys divided by the total number of customers surveyed.

Collection of Data: Cost was determined by estimating 80 hours of one staff member's time who was devoted to creating and administering the survey, plus one hour of time for the entire agency staff, plus the cost of the online survey tool, plus one hour of time for the entire agency staff.

Method of Calculation: Cost per customer surveyed was calculated by dividing the total cost by the total customers surveyed.

Explanatory: Total customers identified = 92,000

Definition: The total population of customers in all unique customer groups.

Method of calculation: The total number of customers within our stakeholder groups (i.e. fire service administration, fire protection personnel, fire prevention personnel, individual certificate holders, training facility administrators, and training facility personnel).

Explanatory: Total Customer Groups Inventoried = 6

Definition: The total number of unique customer groups identified for each agency program. Customer groups served by more than one agency program should be counted only once.

Method of calculation: The total number of stakeholder groups, to include fire service administration, fire protection personnel, fire prevention personnel, individual certificate holders, training facility administrators, and training facility personnel.

2022 CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY
RESPONSE PLAN

Texas Commission on Fire Protection

The Customer Service Survey

TCFP's Customer Service Survey was open for customers to submit feedback for two months, from February 1, 2022 through March 31, 2022. During that period of time, 475 customers started the survey. Some completed the entire thing, others completed only a portion of the questions. Customers were allowed to complete as many questions as they wanted and could skip questions at will. Participants were allowed to remain anonymous.

Overall, we received quite a few compliments throughout the survey. Many customers were pleased with:

- improvements in the FIDO system
- the new method of conducting compliance inspections of fire departments
- TCFP's services in general
- interactions with staff, many mentioned by name

The complaints we received were numerous, which is to be expected from any survey. More often than not, people are motivated to take a survey to give negative feedback over positive feedback, and this survey was no exception. We plan to use all the criticism and negative feedback as we work to improve our offering of services for the Texas fire service.

Main Areas of Complaints

The following table lists the areas of our agency for which we received the most complaints.

Area of the Agency	Number of Complaints	Examples of Complaints
Customer Service/ Phones	57	No one answers the phone, don't return calls in a timely manner; personnel are rude, unprofessional, unfriendly, don't return phone calls, quote rules rather than explaining them in plain language
General Agency Issues	55	Not enough email updates, need more notice of changes; fees are too high and too numerous; want ID card for retired ffs showing certs and years of service; parking is difficult; wish meetings could be on Zoom; wish we had more staff; wish we would offer professional wallet cards
Certification Division	28	A & B list courses difficult to find; too many books on reference lists; not recognizing training from certain providers; hazmat ops is beyond what a new firefighter needs to know; difficulty understanding what is needed to transfer to TX from another state; can't carry over years of service from another state
Website	20	Difficult to navigate, confusing language, no phone directory for staff, change the photos

FIDO	19	Difficult to navigate, not user friendly; TPA process lacks good instructions and lacks feedback on whether you're doing it correctly; no training on how to use FIDO
Testing Division	15	Only two days' notice given when scheduling exams; instructions on how to challenge tests is not accessible; want to take Structure exam online; need instruction on how to do TPAs
Total Complaints	**194**	

Improvements Made Since the 2020 Survey

Many improvements have been made to agency operations since the 2020 customer service survey, including:

- A new Incident Commander certification
- Online testing – more online testing sites available in more areas of the state and the Basic Firefighter certification exam is now available on-line either in sections or in full.
- Agency re-organization to improve efficiency of operations
- Injury Reporting – several webinars were given by staff on the subject of injury reporting, and a video recording of the webinar is now available on our website; also, a comprehensive, written how-to guide was produced and is available for downloading from our website. These two resources have greatly improved the availability of clear instructions for customers who are new to injury reporting.
- Our Agency Chief has done a number of Facebook Live videos to share important information about commission news so customers are getting more, and more timely, updates from us.
- TCFP has started offering "regional meetings" where several members of the management team and compliance officers travel to all regions of the state to meet with local fire department and training facility personnel. The purpose of these meetings is to answer questions, listen to concerns, gather feedback and ideas from customers on how to improve our operations, and to offer the opportunity to connect with our staff personally to see how we can better assist our customers.
- The agency purchased and started using an online software application that gives us the ability to send 40,000 emails at once.

2022 Survey – TCFP's Response Plan

Improvements we've already made

Inspection process. Compliance inspections are now scheduled with the heads of department (HODs) to ensure advanced notice so that the HOD is available to meet with the Inspector. The inspection begins with an e-mail request for electronic documents which gives the Inspector time to review the

department's documentation for compliance before meeting with them in person, and to be prepared to discuss and offer suggestions on ways to make improvements.

Managing phone calls. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, TCFP staff now typically work from home most of the time. To address the complaints about unanswered calls, we have started using Google Phone which ties the staff members' division contact number to their computer. When a call is received on that line, it displays the caller's number. If the call cannot be answered at the time it is received, the system records the call back number and allows the staff member to play back the voicemail so they can then return the call and offer assistance.

Contact information. A common complaint was that it is difficult to find contact information for anyone at TCFP. We have recently improved our website to provide a general e-mail address and phone number for each division. We also list the e-mail addresses for the Agency Chief and Deputy Chief. The agency policy requires calls and/or e-mails to be returned within one business day.

Offering all certification exams on-line. Another common complaint was that while most exams are available on-line, the Basic Firefighter exam was not. Effective April 1 of this year, this exam is now offered on-line. Individuals may choose to take each section or the entire exam at once as long as they are at a registered testing center.

High fees. A common concern has been the amount of each fee collected by TCFP. While the legislature placed a demand on the agency to be self-funded, resulting in significant fee increases back in 2011, we have offered some relief in the renewal fee area. Effective May 2022, the certification renewal fee was reduced by $15, bringing it down to $60 annually.

Improvements we've begun addressing

Document uploading. A common complaint has been that it is difficult to upload documents to FIDO. We are working to improve this by shifting our computer system to a cloud-based system. This will allow for adequate storage of documents. This will be an ongoing project.

Testing. There have been many complaints regarding the testing system. In July 2022, we will take this system off-line for three weeks to perform updates. We hope to remove out of date information and update areas which have not been properly maintained in recent years.

Reciprocity. In 2021 we began working to streamline the record review process. The goal is to offer clear direction on how/what to submit for a review that is intended to expedite the reciprocity process.

Haz-Mat exam issues. During 2021, staff began working with our Curriculum & Testing committee to evaluate and address issues regarding both hazardous materials awareness and operations exam concerns.

Communications. The most common complaint we received is that we do not provide adequate information regarding rule changes, meetings and new certifications. Since we started using the new mass e-mail system, we discovered that many local government IT systems block mass e-mails because they appear to be "spam." This will require local governments to update their whitelists to allow TCFP emails through their firewalls, and we've been addressing this issue at regional meetings and other communications with fire departments.

Another improvement in this area is that we now post regular announcements and updates via Facebook and the web site. This will remain an on-going project. Additionally, we've initiated a program of "regional meetings." Each year TCFP leadership travels the state, visiting each TCFP region at least twice in a year. The goal is to meet members of the fire departments we regulate in person so we can answer questions, listen to concerns, and receive valuable input from our stakeholders. Finally, we've also started attending all conferences to have a member of our staff available for discussions anytime.

A & B Lists. We began updating and adding new courses to both lists during 2021. Within the next month or so, we hope to have the revised lists posted on the Web Site.

Improvements we plan to address

Phone etiquette. A common complaint is how rude and unprofessional our staff is perceived to be when speaking on the phone. We have had several staff changes recently and all staff will be receiving customer service training to hopefully resolve this concern.

Web site and FIDO user-friendliness. We continue to identify new ways to enhance the usefulness and ease of using FIDO and navigating the web site.

TPA classes. We hope to develop a short but in-depth class on how to create and manage Training Prior Approvals (TPAs). We have received some interest in this area so we are working on this during 2022-23.

Exam Notices. This is an area that we need to work on. Ideally, with all exams being offered on-line now, the need for this change will be minimal. We are assessing the best way to accomplish this.

Brochures. TCFP currently does not have an informational brochure to make available during conferences, classes and/or meetings. We intend to request additional state funding that will enable us to develop and print these brochures for the coming years.