

**PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS: A SECOND EVALUATION OF THE
CONSOLIDATION OF THE CITY OF MERCER ISLAND'S DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
SAFETY**

FIRE SERVICE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

In the author's previous applied research project (ARP), the literary research indicated a national pattern of neglect concerning the fire service in Public Safety consolidated organizations. The author's applied research project indicated that in several ways Mercer Island's Public Safety Department experienced a similar fate.

The problem is that no definitive evaluation of this fire service neglect has been conducted regarding Mercer Island's Department of Public Safety. A recommendation of the author's previous ARP included examining how Mercer Island's Fire Service has been neglected. The intent of this research project was to examine the impact of consolidation on the fire service.

Both evaluative research, through the use of a survey and a questionnaire, and descriptive methods were used to answer the following questions:

- Are there methods available to compare traditional and non-traditional fire department structures, and determine the success or failures of consolidation efforts?
- What aspects of the Mercer Island Fire Division have been impacted negatively as a result of consolidation?
- What aspects of the Mercer Island Fire Division have been impacted positively as a result of consolidation?
- What results has consolidation had on service delivery to the Mercer Island Community?

The literature review was unable to locate a singular analysis method or process for the purpose of consolidated and non-consolidated organizational comparisons. The literature review was able to identify both negative and positive impacts of consolidation upon the fire service. Primarily the impact to the fire service appears to be negative, but several cases were found where consolidation has had positive consequences. In conjunction with the impacts of consolidation, research also found several effects to service delivery as a result of consolidation. Some of these were minor, and some had greater significance.

The surveys, interviews and questionnaires indicated that consolidation efforts have had both positive and negative impacts to the fire service. Some of these impacts remain internal, while others affect service delivery. The results of Mercer Island's consolidation are similar to the national trends.

The recommendations include conducting an independent analysis of the consolidated Department at Mercer Island, specifically looking at those items identified in the report. The Mercer Island City Council should then meet to analyze the findings. Additionally, as responsible stewards to the community, The Mercer Island Department of Public Safety should request a reassessment of its ISO rating immediately. Finally, there should be movement nationally to establish common methods of measurement to assist in comparative analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

In the Executive Fire Officer course, *Fire Service Financial Management*, the course manual speaks to the impact of budget on emergency services provided to a community. The course manual includes a quotation from author A. K. Rosenhan's book, *Four Ways to Pay*, which asserts: "Without adequate funding, good financial planning and management for both the immediate and future expenditures, other efforts will have little effect." He is further quoted as saying, "Fires aren't put out with water, they are put out with dollars. It is not the gallons per minute put on the fire, but the dollars per year put into the fire department that do the job." It is noted that this statement applies to the delivery of emergency medical services as well (FEMA, 1996, p. 4-3).

In 1975 the City of Mercer Island began the process of administrative consolidation of its Police and Fire Departments. The reasons for this change were reportedly: 1) streamlining the Police and Fire Departments; 2) reducing costs; and 3) increasing career development opportunities for fire personnel (Deveny, 1986, p. 43; Tubbs, 2000, p. 29).

In 1986 a ten-year report on the consolidation effort was internally produced by the Public Safety Administration and presented to the Mercer Island City Council. This report was neither a formal evaluation of the consolidation process, nor an evaluation of the achievement of the original goals and objectives, nor did it contain an evaluation of the success of the institutionalization of consolidation. It was a report to the Council outlining the status of the organization, and a review of the ten-year history (Tubbs, 2000, pp. 50-80; Appendix A).

In February 2000 the author submitted an applied research project, as part of his course requirements for *Strategic Management of Change*. That applied research project evaluated the original goals of consolidation and the institutionalization of the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety. The results of that research indicated the success of the consolidation effort was most likely never fully realized, although since an evaluation of all of the original goals was never completed by the City of Mercer Island, it is difficult to measure definitively. Additionally, the research project indicated that institutionalization within the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety had not been achieved (Tubbs, 2000, pp. 28-34).

In the author's previous applied research project (ARP), the literary research indicated a national pattern of neglect towards the fire service in Public Safety consolidated organizations. The author's applied research project indicated that in several ways Mercer Island's Public Safety Department most likely experienced a similar fate (Tubbs, 2000, pp. 28-34).

The problem is that no definitive evaluation of this fire service neglect has been conducted regarding Mercer Island's Department of Public Safety. A recommendation of the author's previous ARP included an examination of how Mercer Island's Fire Service has been neglected (Tubbs, 2000, pp. 38-39).

The purpose of this applied research project is to continue studying the impact of consolidation of Mercer Island's Police and Fire Services, and to address the recommendation of the author's previous ARP by identifying and quantifying the impact of consolidation on the Mercer Island Fire Service. This applied research project will accomplish this by researching

methods to compare and measure Mercer Island's and other consolidated public safety organizations with fire departments that have a more traditional organizational structure, to quantify those comparisons and measurements, and to determine the relevance and value of those results. Both evaluative research, through the use of a survey and a questionnaire, and descriptive methods were used to answer the following questions:

- Are there methods available to compare traditional and non-traditional fire department structures, and determine the success or failure of consolidation efforts?
- What aspects of the Mercer Island Fire Division have been impacted negatively as a result of consolidation?
- What aspects of the Mercer Island Fire Division have been impacted positively as a result of consolidation?
- What results has consolidation had on service delivery to the Mercer Island Community?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The City of Mercer Island is primarily an affluent, residential community located in the middle of Lake Washington. Situated east of the City of Seattle and west of the City of Bellevue, Washington, the island is 6.2 square miles in size and has a population of about 21,500. The communities of Seattle and Bellevue are linked to Mercer Island via the Interstate 90 corridor (Appendix B).

The residential community of Mercer Island is comprised of 8,735 living units, with a median price for a single-family residence of \$797,000. In addition to the residential areas in this affluent community, Mercer Island is served by two small business centers that cater primarily to Island residents. Additionally the City of Mercer Island is well known for its excellent schools (Doyle, 2000; Harrell, 1997; Smith, 1999; Appendix B).

Mercer Island was incorporated on July 18, 1960. The City of Mercer Island is a noncharter code city (Appendix C). The City operates a Council/Manager form of government. There are seven sitting members on the Council who are elected in non-partisan elections to serve a four-year term. The Council members elect a fellow council member to a two-year term as Mayor. The City Council appoints a City Manager to administer city policies. In addition to the City Council, several Boards and Commissions assist the City Council in the formulation and governance of the City. An administratively consolidated Department of Public Safety delivers Police and Fire Services to the Mercer Island Community. The Department is managed by a Director of Public Safety whose position is appointed by the City Manager, and approved by the City Council (Appendix B).

Initially the City of Mercer Island fulfilled its responsibility of providing Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services to the community through separate organizational structures--that is, a separate police and fire department (Deveny, 1986, p. 43; Tubbs, 2000, pp. 6-8).

In 1975 the structure of the Police and Fire Departments began its journey of change. In June of 1974, the City of Mercer Island hired a new Police Chief. Arriving from Sacramento, California, the new Police Chief brought 10 years experience. One year later, the City of Mercer Island hired a new City Manager. The new City Manager had come to Mercer Island with over 20 years experience in four separate communities. In the fall of 1975, Mercer Island's Fire Chief left the City of Mercer Island, leaving the position vacant (Deveny, personal communication, September 10, 1999; Appendix A).

According to Deveny (1999) the City of Mercer Island was experiencing financial difficulty when the new City Manager arrived. The Council was looking to achieve several specific goals. They included a reduction of costs, an increase in efficiency among city departments, and the creation of new sources of revenue. In pursuit of these goals, the City Manager was additionally directed to streamline city departments. The streamlining process began in 1975. In the fall of 1975, the City Manager approached the Chief of Police and asked him to consider reorganizing the Fire and Police Departments (Deveny, personal communication, September 10, 1999; Appendix A).

During this same time, the Fire Department was in need of a Fire Chief. The City Manager inquired of the firefighters as to what they were looking for in a new Fire Chief. The firefighters responded that they wanted a Chief like the Mercer Island Police Department. The firefighters were very impressed with the quality of the Police Chief and were seeking someone of similar caliber (Tubbs, 2000, p. 7).

As the Fire Department was in need of a new Chief, and the City Manager had already discussed a new organizational structure with Chief Deveny, they approached the labor groups of the Police and Fire Departments with the idea of creating a Department of Public Safety. Both labor groups expressed concerns with the new concept; however, they also expressed a willingness to look at this new idea. A planning process was implemented. All participants were reportedly included. At the completion of the discussions between the participants, a proposed Department of Public Safety structure was created to present to the Mercer Island City Council for consideration (Deveny, personal communication, September 10, 1999).

In November of 1975, the Mercer Island City Council formally adopted the new Public Safety structure. The Council then directed the City Manager to design and implement an administrative plan to combine the management functions of the Police and Fire Services (Deveny, personal communication, September 10, 1999; Tubbs, 2000, pp. 6-8; Appendix A).

Mercer Island's Police and Fire Services have been provided through a consolidated Department of Public Safety since late 1975. In a report produced for the Mercer Island City Council, the Director of Public Safety presented a history of the consolidated Department in 1986. It included an introduction and historical narrative, a 10-year report of crime, fire and EMS data, and opinions of the staff (Tubbs, 2000, pp. 50-80; Appendix A). However, no formal review of the original goals or objectives was included in this report, nor has one ever been conducted (Deveny, personal communication, September 10, 1999; Tubbs, 2000, pp. 35-38; Appendix A).

Since 1986, no further formal reporting of the consolidation effort has been produced. In February of 2000, the author submitted an Applied Research Project (ARP) to the National Fire Academy, as part of the academic requirements for the Executive Fire Officer Program. This report is titled: *Public Safety Departments: An Evaluation of the Consolidation of the City of Mercer Island's Department of Public Safety*. The results of the Applied Research Project included a partial analysis of the success and failure of the consolidation process within the City of Mercer Island. It included an identification of the original goals and objectives for consolidation, and an evaluation of the institutionalization of the consolidation effort. The ARP identified that the City of Mercer Island had never defined whether the original goals for consolidation had been attained, or if institutionalization had been achieved. It also found that the City of Mercer Island's consolidation effort appeared to follow a national pattern of neglect towards the fire service. One of the recommendations of the ARP included an examining how Mercer Island's Fire Division has suffered as a result of the consolidation. Finally, the ARP laid the foundation for further examination of the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety (Tubbs, 2000, pp. 38-39).

This applied research project is a follow-up of the recommendations from the author's previous ARP, *Public Safety Departments: An Evaluation of the Consolidation of the City of Mercer Island's Department of Public Safety*.

This research project was completed as required by the National Fire Academy's Operational Policies and Procedures--Applied Research Guidelines manual. Evaluating and measuring the effects of the consolidation process at Mercer Island relates to Units IV, V, VI, and VII of the Student Manual for *Fire Service Financial Management*. Unit IV addresses the role and importance of budget planning. In Unit V, the importance of forecasting is discussed. Included in this unit are the basics of interpreting statistics, and the values and liabilities of such processes. Further study of analysis and methods is provided in Unit VI. Finally in Unit VII, information regarding revenue sources is provided for the student. These four chapters provided the author with an additional foundation for conducting the research topic. These four units relate to this topic and the research questions by suggesting the importance of proper budgeting and analysis in order to provide communities with the most efficient services possible.

It was anticipated that the findings of this report would become the basis for quality and change management within the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety. Furthermore this report was completed to add to the body of knowledge available for other agencies wishing to evaluate the consolidation process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

For the literature review, most of the resources regarding consolidation were obtained from the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center (LRC). Other sources included the Internet and local library resources.

There is a tremendous amount of material available regarding consolidation. This information does not only address Police and Fire consolidations, but includes other types of mergers as well. Because of the volume of material available and the scope of this applied research project, a narrow focus was chosen to address the topic of consolidation as defined in the Introduction; this research analyzed the consolidation of Police and Fire Departments only.

There are five commonly accepted types of Public Safety organizational models. They are: 1) Full Consolidation; 2) Administrative Consolidation; 3) Selected Geographic Consolidation; 4) Functional Consolidation; and 5) Partial Consolidation (Krall, 1989, pp. 6-8; Murphy, 1993, pp. 3-4; Rule, 1989 p. 29).

Rule (1989) notes that there are numerous reasons for considering consolidation. Typically the motivations for consolidation are: 1) cost, 2) ego, 3) efficiency. He acknowledges that other dynamics can become the basis for consolidation, such as a recognition of the crime problem compared with a trend of fewer fires and fire related deaths in this country (Rule, 1989, pp. 29-30).

The findings of Krall, Murphy, and Rule (1989, 1993, and 1989) influenced this project by illustrating that there are numerous models of agency structures, with each jurisdiction choosing a model that meets its organizational goals and objectives for consolidation. It also illustrates the numerous reasons consolidations are made: not all are for economic purposes.

Methods of Comparison

In the 17th edition of the *Fire Protection Handbook*, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) addresses the importance of data analysis. It accuses the fire service of not capitalizing on the volumes of data it collects. Furthermore it underscores the importance of learning how to properly analyze this information: "Data analysis involves determining what the data are really showing relative to the community or the project supported by the data" (NFPA, 1991, p. 10-16).

The article proceeds to provide a basic template for the collection and analysis of data. The template includes the following four steps:

- 1) Identify the type and sources of data needed to define the problem further, and assess the feasibility and costs of the study, 2) Develop a mechanism or procedure for collecting the data, 3) Collect and analyze the data, 4) Terminate the special study (NFPA, 1991, p. 10-16).

The findings of the NFPA influenced this project by illustrating the importance of utilizing a proper analysis model for the volumes of data the fire service collects, and by providing a template to analyze the data it collects. Furthermore, it stresses the value of proper data analysis utilizing captured information in order to improve the services that fire agencies provide.

The research did locate an equation for agencies considering the consolidation process--in other words, a means to measure prior to consolidation and during the consolidation process. The ICMA's MIS report (1991) provides a methodology for agencies considering consolidation, to compare existing costs and services against a consolidation model for their organization. The example utilized in this report analyzes the existing separate services, identifying areas of duplication and waste. It then identifies potential barriers and methods to overcome them. And finally, methods to implement a consolidation are identified (Chelst & Matarese, 1991, pp. 2-18).

The findings of Chelst & Matarese (1991) influenced this project by providing a method of analyzing existing services and identifying the potential savings and increases in efficiency, relative to consolidation.

The research also located a mathematical analysis model for evaluating the process of consolidation. It describes and measures the movement of an organization through stages of transition to a consolidated organization. It does not, however, measure a traditional organizational structure against a non-traditional structure (Carlson, 1992, p. 6).

This affected the research by identifying a method to measure the transition process of an organization evolving to a different structure. Although it was a method to measure the transition process, it was not a method to measure a traditional organizational structure against a non-traditional structure.

The research located a methodology which measures the productivity of a fire service agency (Redman, 1994). In his Applied Research Project, Redman (1994) identifies the importance of establishing a method to quantify productivity. He notes that many organizations have simply used the call volume of a particular station as the sole basis for measuring productivity. Furthermore, he notes that this does not quantify the numerous activities and work assignments performed by shift personnel. His recommendations include implementing a reporting system that quantifies these activities and work assignments (Redman, 1994, pp. 3-11, 18-20).

This affected the research by suggesting a means to provide a measurement of a traditional organizational structure against a non-traditional structure. Quantifiable workloads could be used as a comparison to evaluate differences and similarities between the two structure types.

In her paper Obadal (1998) researched the deconsolidation process of the Eugene Department of Public Safety. The research did not include any information regarding how the community arrived at the decision to de-consolidate, or any method of analysis in comparing organizational structures (Obadal, 1998, pp. 13-20).

This affected the research by again illustrating the difficulty in locating a method of analyzing consolidated and non-consolidated organizations.

Hamilton (1991) and Rule (1989) addressed a de-consolidation effort that occurred in Durham, North Carolina in 1985. Their research discussed the issues that brought about the de-

consolidation, and that quantification and analysis was conducted by an outside consulting agency. There was no indication, however, of the method used for the analysis or measurements that were utilized (Hamilton, 1991, pp. 7-9; Rule, 1989, pp. 32-36).

This affected the research by noting that de-consolidations take place as a result of an organizational analysis. It indicated that there are methods used to quantify the differences between organizational structures and the effects on service delivery. However, it did not provide any detail of the process of analysis and illustrated the difficulty in locating a method in which the comparisons between consolidated and de-consolidated organizations can be made.

In summary, the research was unable to locate a specific equation for comparison of agencies that utilize a Public Safety organizational model, and those that use a more traditional structure of separate organizations. The research did locate several different analysis systems that looked at organizations from different perspectives. These included methods of analysis to implement prior to consolidation, during consolidation, and even after consolidation. One even included a method to quantify work productivity, thereby providing a method to assist in the comparison of organizational structures.

These findings influenced this project by providing several ways to measure an organization and its productivity, but they also illustrated the difficulty in locating a specific equation or methodology that is the basis of data analysis when comparing consolidated departments with more traditional fire service organizational structures. The author was unable to locate such a methodology or equation that would allow for the measurement of consolidated departments against traditional department structures. The NFPA's *Fire Protection Handbook* (NFPA, 1991) did provide a broad format for conducting an analytical comparison of consolidated and non-consolidated organizations (NFPA, 1991, p. 10-16).

Negative Impacts to the Fire Service

The research was able to locate several examples of negative impacts to the fire service. Hamilton (1991) and Rule (1989) cited several negative consequences of a consolidation effort in Durham, North Carolina. Durham was able to maintain a functional public safety organization for 14 years, beginning in January 1971. It was a full consolidation type of organization. However, Durham then de-consolidated in June 1985, as a result of a study by an outside management consulting firm. Their findings included the following negative impacts to the fire service: 1) lack of career development, 2) inefficient scheduling, 3) non-utilization of departmental resources, 4) low departmental effectiveness, 5) lack of fire service representation in management levels and decision making processes--too heavy with law enforcement personnel, 6) high attrition within the ranks of fire personnel, and 7) lack of adequate training due to time constraints (Hamilton, 1991, p. 8; Rule, 1989, pp. 32-36).

In Kalamazoo, Michigan, Rule (1989) noted several adverse results from their organizational structure. He found that: 1) training suffered due to workload levels, 2) employee burnout occurred due to increased workloads and job stressors, and 3) it was difficult for Public Safety Officers to keep up with changing firefighter methods (Rule, 1989, p. 37). It was

interesting to note that Kalamazoo continues to be a consolidated organization despite these issues.

The findings of Rule influenced this project by illustrating some of the negative impacts that consolidation has had within other municipalities. It appears that some of these issues may remain internal, thereby concealing the impacts from the community. It also illustrated that not all adverse effects result in a move to de-consolidate.

In his research paper, Patterson (1991) noted a unique phenomenon within consolidated organizations. Patterson found that in almost all instances, the Public Safety Director comes from a law enforcement background. It is rare to find a Public Safety Director from the fire service (Patterson, 1991, p. 5).

Patterson also cautions those considering consolidation of the potential negative impact on the municipality's ISO rating. He notes that this reduction in rating can occur as a result of: 1) loss of training for fire service personnel, 2) lack of fire inspections, 3) lack of hydrant testing, and 4) lack of code enforcement and pre-fire planning (Patterson, 1991, pp. 9-10).

It was interesting that Patterson also noted,

One man cannot serve two masters. Does the Public Safety Officer answer to one supervisor while serving in traditional police functions and another supervisor when he/she performs fire related activities? If this is the case, how would this person be evaluated in their performance? If they performed well as a police officer and poorly as a firefighter, is this person a good or poor employee? (Patterson, 1991, p. 12).

In Public Safety organizations that have a Public Safety Director and a Deputy Chief for each of the main functional areas, Patterson (1991) proposes that this may be an unnecessary layer of management (Patterson, 1991, p. 13).

The findings of Patterson influenced this research by illustrating several of the negative, or potentially negative, impacts to the fire service that occur as a result of consolidation. They include: 1) most Directors of Public Safety originate from the law enforcement discipline and very few Directors originate from the fire service, 2) a community's ISO rating can be reduced as a result of the impacts of consolidation, 3) a dual role employee is challenged by serving two masters, and 4) consolidation may provide an unnecessary layer of management (Patterson, 1991, p. 9-13).

In summary, the research indicates that some fire agencies have experienced negative impacts to their organizations as a result of consolidation, and that consolidation was not in the best interest of the fire service industry, or ultimately the communities they serve. The research provided concrete examples of the impacts of consolidation. These impacts provide a template or pattern by which comparative analysis can be made.

Positive Impacts to the Fire Service

As with any story, there are generally two sides to view. The research was able to locate some organizations that believe their consolidation effort resulted in positive impacts to the fire service. For example, Sunnyvale, California believes its consolidation contributed to its ISO rating of Class 3. Boasting one of the lowest crime rates of a city its size, Sunnyvale believes its system is serving them well (Rule, 1989, p. 38).

Rule (1989) implies some positive impacts to the fire service as a result of a consolidation, within the City of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Although consolidation has produced some challenges, he notes that the consolidated organization initially allowed individuals to cross train. This new training opportunity had a positive impact on employees by infusing them with new knowledge, thereby reducing burnout (Rule, 1989, p. 37).

The findings of Rule influenced this research by illustrating that increasing challenges and knowledge can have a positive impact on individuals, resulting in a positive impact to the fire service.

The fire service can realize positive results from consolidation, as noted by Korf (1979). In his article he reported several benefits of consolidation: 1) administrative refinement--that is, a reduction of duplication of staff, services, and equipment, 2) authority--that is a single line of command, 3) efficiency--in regards to service delivery, and 4) increased morale by providing more career opportunities (Korf, 1979, p. 30).

In summary, the research noted several positive impacts identified as a result of consolidation. It was more difficult to locate positive impacts to the fire service from consolidation than it was to locate negative impacts. Some of these impacts appear to be open to interpretation, and some appear to be measurable.

Service Delivery

In his article Morrison (1996) cautions organizations considering consolidation. One of the driving goals for considering consolidation is cost reduction. He notes that this can be accomplished by reducing fire service expenditures. For example, there can be the temptation to reduce expenses incurred by fire service training and vehicle maintenance. Often these decisions are made without a consideration of the true associated risks. Morrison notes that a dismal failure of service delivery will likely occur at the first major fire (Morrison, 1996, pp. 42-43).

The findings of Morrison influenced this research by illustrating the severe impact to fire service delivery that can occur as a result of decisions made by organization. It is further noted that this is a tangible, even measurable result.

Hamilton (1991) notes that an outside evaluation of the consolidation effort in Durham, North Carolina found no change to services delivered as a result of consolidation. Additionally he found that there had most likely not been any savings as a result of consolidation. But he also

notes that quantitatively measuring these service levels is difficult because there are currently no acceptable measures of performance (Hamilton, 1991, pp. 8-10).

The findings of Hamilton influenced this project by illustrating that Durham, North Carolina is an example of an agency that saw no change in service delivery, nor reduction in costs, as a result of consolidation. It also provided evidence of the difficulty of conducting organizational comparative analysis due to a lack of nationally accepted performance indicators.

In summary, the research had some difficulty locating information relating to service delivery impacts. In the few examples found, it was noted that service delivery could vary from little or no change to severe consequences, as a result of consolidation. Some of these consequences, or even benefits, are measurable and others are not. It also noted the difficulty in quantifying service levels, thereby making it difficult to analyze efficiencies and inefficiencies.

PROCEDURES

Definition of Terms

1. Noncharter code City--This means a City that does not operate under a charter, as established by the State of Washington under Article 11, section 10 of the State Constitution, but rather a City that is incorporated and operates under a set of codes established in Title 35A RCW of the State of Washington.
2. Functional Consolidation--combines administrative functions and a limited amount of operational functions.
3. Partial Consolidation--an advanced stage of Functional Consolidation that is characterized by increased amalgamation of operational functions.
3. Full Consolidation--achieved by combining all administrative and operational activities into one department.
4. Administrative Consolidation--occurs when operational functions are maintained separately, but administrative functions are merged.
5. Selected Geographical Consolidation--occurs when fire and police services are performed together within a certain geographical area.
6. De-consolidation--the term used to describe the act of separating a combined or consolidated Department of Public Safety.
7. Division Head--An individual assigned to lead a Division within the City of Mercer Island. For example, Fire Division Commander is considered a Division Head.

8. Director--refers to the Chief Operating Officer of a Department. For example in a consolidated department, the Director is the Chief Operating Officer of the Police, Administrative, and Fire Divisions, which are a part of the Department of Public Safety.
9. LEOFF Retirement System--refers to **Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters Retirement System**. This program is managed by the state of Washington and collects retirement contributions from full-time firefighters, police officers and municipalities, and invests and manages those contributions. The earnings are then dispersed as outlined by State Law.
10. MS Access[®]--refers to the software program **Access 97[®]**, a relational database program developed by the Microsoft Corporation.
11. MS Word[®]--refers to the software program **MS Word 97[®]**, a word processing program developed by the Microsoft Corporation.
12. Query--refers to the process of programming a question in a database, for the purposes of soliciting an answer.
13. Union--refers to Mercer Island Professional Firefighters Association, IAFF Local #1762.
14. ISO rating--refers to the Insurance Services Office and a classification they award a community, based on fire service factors. It becomes the basis for insurance premiums.
15. Non-consolidated--refers to an organization that is not consolidated. For example, a traditional fire department structure would be a non-consolidated organization.
16. King County Zone One--refers to the King County Fire Resources Plan. A multi-jurisdictional agreement that formalizes the sharing of fire resources with a strike team and task force concept. Mercer Island is a member of Zone One.
17. Auxiliary Personnel--refers to firefighting personnel within the Mercer Island Fire Division, who are part-time employees. This group originally was a volunteer supplement, but is now compensated for their responses to alarms.

Literature Review

The primary source of research material was the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center (LRC). While all the material came from the LRC, it came during two separate research periods.

During the author's previous research project, the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy was contacted and information regarding the topic of Public Safety was requested. A literary list, in the form of a 17-page document, was forwarded to the author. The author utilized this document to compile a list of applied research projects (ARP's) and periodicals to request from the LRC for his research. The author requested these documents utilizing the Interlibrary Loan Program, (ILL). For this research project, the author reviewed the previous research material and found that several of the ARP's and articles were pertinent to this project, and as a result were utilized as research material for this paper. This was the material from the first research period.

The second set of research materials was received after the author conducted a search of the National Fire Academy Library Resource Center's archives on the Internet. This search was more refined, specifically looking for consolidated organizations and methods of measurement or quantification of services. From this search a new list of relevant ARP's was compiled. The author requested these documents utilizing the Interlibrary Loan Program. These documents, in the form of Executive Fire Officer (EFO) papers and magazine articles, were the additional basis for the literature review of this ARP.

Two additional documents that were utilized for the literature review were produced by the City of Mercer Island. The first titled: *Ten Year Public Safety Report*, and the second titled: *1999-2000 Biennial Budget* were created and published internally within the City of Mercer Island. Because they were not published externally, they are included in part in Appendix A and B respectively.

In the *Ten Year Public Safety Report* (Appendix A), the original document was 40 double-sided pages in length. Twenty-two double-sided pages contained statistical data in the form of charts based on call volumes and specifics of the Mercer Island community. On December 2, 1999 the author contacted Mr. Charles Burkell, Program Chair for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. The purpose of the communication was to seek counsel in regards to excluding part of the report, due to its size. This communication was made during the research of the author's previous ARP. The author was advised that element(s) that were not directly related to the research could be excluded. The author accepted and implemented Mr. Burkell's advice; the 22 double-sided statistical pages have been excluded in Appendix A. This same advice was applied to the use of information from the *1999-2000 Biennial Budget* report for this ARP. Only that section from which information was drawn, has been included (Appendix B). Future researchers seeking either document can obtain the complete reports by contacting the author of this research paper or the City of Mercer Island.

Interviews & Questionnaires

Three letters were sent to solicit specific information. A letter was sent to Ruth Obadal of the Eugene (OR) Fire Department. Ms. Obadal's organization de-consolidated in 1997, and she submitted an Applied Research Project (ARP) to the National Fire Academy in January of 1998. The author utilized this ARP during the literary research and determined that further information was desired regarding their de-consolidation process. The author produced a letter with a series of 15 questions (Appendix D). The purpose of the letter was to ascertain specifics

about Eugene's de-consolidation process and experience. Her response to the author was via email and is found in Appendix E.

A second letter was sent to the Director of Retirement Systems for the State of Washington (Appendix F). The purpose of this letter was an inquiry regarding the inclusion of Public Safety Directors in the LEOFF retirement system. Previous State Law did not mention Public Safety Officers or Directors as eligible for membership into the LEOFF Retirement system. As this is a benefit that can be offered to individuals applying to a Director's position, it has an impact on the organization; therefore, current information was sought for purposes of this research project. The Assistant Director of Retirement Systems responded to the author's letter, clarifying the current state law regarding the inclusion of Public Safety Directors in the LEOFF retirement program (Appendix G).

The third letter was sent to Gary Brock, Assistant Vice-President of Property and Casualty for Safeco Insurance. The purpose of this letter was to inquire about the difference in insurance premiums for a typical Mercer Island home, and for an average Mercer Island commercial occupancy, as compared with different ISO ratings (Appendix H). In the letter to Mr. Brock (Appendix H), average residential and commercial occupancy sizes were provided. The averages supplied in the letter to Mr. Brock were provided to the author by the City of Mercer Island's Developmental Services Group (Mandery, personal communications, August 8, 2000). The author received a reply from Mr. Brock on October 9, 2000, and it is included as Appendix I.

In 1999 while conducting research for his previous ARP, the author arranged a personal interview with Director Jan Deveny of the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety. The interview was used to provide accurate detail concerning the consolidation process at Mercer Island. Director Deveny was an active participant during the consolidation and, due to his position, would be knowledgeable regarding many aspects of the change process. The interview conducted with Director Jan Deveny occurred on September 10, 1999 at his office. The author found that there were elements of that interview which pertained to this research project. Mr. Burkell, EFO Program Chair of the NFA, was contacted and his counsel sought in regards to the inclusion of this material. Mr. Burkell responded that it was acceptable to include this information in this ARP. The author implemented Mr. Burkell's advice.

An email communication between the author and Mercer Island's Police Division Commander Ron Elsoe occurred on August 21, 2000. The purpose of the email was to confirm the variety of programs and career opportunities available to Mercer Island's Law Enforcement Officers (Appendix J). The author received a reply from Chief Elsoe on August 21, 2000 (Appendix K).

A personal interview of Firefighter Stephen Lyons was conducted for this research project. The interview with firefighter Lyons occurred on August 10, 2000, at Mercer Island's Fire Station Number 91. The interview was recorded with his permission. The purpose of the interview was to solicit insight regarding the different organizational structures Mercer Island Fire has utilized. Firefighter Lyons had been present when the organization has been both a Fire Department and a Department of Public Safety. It was believed that this individual would offer a

unique perspective, as he is the last remaining active firefighter who has worked under both organizational structures. The questions and responses of that interview were summarized in a written document (Appendix L).

A questionnaire was sent to all Fire Division members. A summary of the questionnaire and firefighters' responses is included in Appendix M. Forty-six surveys were distributed to Mercer Island Firefighters. Ten were returned, with a 22 percent return rate. Of the 46 questionnaires distributed, 26 were provided to all fulltime fire personnel, and 20 were distributed to auxiliary personnel. The purpose of the questionnaire was to identify ways that the Fire Service on Mercer Island has been impacted as a result of consolidation.

The respondents returned the questionnaires to the author. The author summarized the responses of each individual and that summary is included in Appendix M.

Survey

A survey was designed and distributed for this project (Appendix N). The survey solicited quantifiable information to be used for the purposes of comparison. This survey was distributed to fire agencies within the state of Washington. These agencies were chosen for several reasons. The distribution represented: 1) 100 percent of comparable agencies used by the City of Mercer Island and Mercer Island Firefighters Union during labor negotiations, 2) 100 percent of the fire agencies within King County, 3) 100 percent of the Public Safety organizations within the state of Washington, 4) 100 percent of the fire agencies that border the City of Mercer Island, 5) 100 percent of the fire agencies within King County Zone 1. A total of 39 surveys were distributed. Nineteen surveys were returned to the author--equating to a 48 percent return.

A database was constructed by the author in MS Access[®], and the survey results were entered into the database program. From the stored data, the author produced queries and reports that would allow for the analysis of the data, in a comparable manner. The reports that were created in MS Access[®] were then imported into MS Word[®]. The author then corrected the formatting issues with the imported file. The reports can be found in the form of tables and are located in the Results section of this ARP.

In summary, the author noted that this ARP included numerous appendices and was concerned that it may be too many. As a result he contacted Mr. Chuck Burkell, Program Chair for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program, to inquire about this concern. Mr. Burkell acknowledged the concern, but responded that if they were relevant to the research they could be included. For purposes of future researchers, the author decided to include those pertinent items in the appendices.

Assumptions

The author, for purposes of this research, assumed that the responses given by those responding to the questionnaires and interviews were complete and honest. The author assumed

that individuals and organizations that responded to the various interviews and surveys did so with the goal of improving the level and quality of service they provide.

The survey was distributed to all fire departments located in King County, Washington, with a few others outside of King County. It is assumed by the author that not only is this a representative regional cross section of fire service agencies, but also that this may bring credibility to the comparisons made from the survey data for political and organizational leaders. It should be noted that all consolidated fire departments in the State of Washington were sent a survey.

The questionnaire distributed to Mercer Island Fire personnel was delivered to all 26 fulltime firefighters, and to all 20 auxiliary firefighters. Only one auxiliary firefighter responded. It is assumed that the remaining auxiliary personnel did not respond due to their lack of time in the organization and lack of exposure to the daily workings of the Department.

Finally, it was assumed by the author that although no formal method of analysis was found during the research, for the comparison of consolidated and de-consolidated organizations, the methods used by the author still provided quantifiable data that can accurately be used to answer the research questions.

Limitations

The author recognizes several limitations with this research. As with any ARP, time is a limitation placed on the EFO students. A six-month period allows limited time for a thorough analysis of this topic. Consolidation is an issue with a voluminous amount of reference information available to the researcher. It was this author's desire to be as complete as possible, despite the limitation. This was possible, in part, by focusing on one small part of the consolidation topic.

The author also recognizes that time and memory can be factors when asking people to recall information from 26 years ago. Mercer Island's consolidation process occurred in 1975. The interviews of Director Deveny and Firefighter Lyons potentially could have been affected by these factors.

The author also acknowledges that members within the Mercer Island Fire Division were asked to comment, in a questionnaire, regarding their perspective concerning the limitations of a consolidated organization. The author recognizes that many of these people have known no other type of department structure, thereby recognizing that their answers lack experience from both perspectives.

The author recognizes that the survey distributed to fire service agencies (Appendix N) itself is a limited tool. Great effort was extended to design a survey that would be simple and straightforward. However, the author found that in some cases, for certain organizations this would not be simple. For example, The Bellevue Fire Department operates on a two-year budget cycle and only reported its budget information as a total for the two years. For data comparison, the author was forced to divide those numbers in half in order to include it in the comparisons.

The author was unable to locate a specific equation for the comparison of consolidated departments. This made the comparison between consolidated and de-consolidated organizations challenging. The author has no formal data analysis background, and therefore utilized some basic comparison strategies. The author recognizes the inherent limitations with this method, and acknowledges the possibility of other variables affecting the data analysis.

The author also recognizes that Public Safety/consolidation remains a controversial topic that certain individuals or groups may have particular ownership of, and as a result may be unwilling or unable to fully participate in any form of contribution to this type of research. Therefore, their valuable insights and experiences are unfortunately left out of the equation.

RESULTS

The results for this applied research project were compiled utilizing four sources. The first source included letters mailed to various individuals and organizations. These letters solicited specific information (Appendix D; Appendix F; Appendix H).

The second source is an interview of a Mercer Island fire service member who was present during the consolidation process (Appendix L).

The third source includes the results of a survey (Appendix N) distributed to area fire agencies. This survey was distributed to fire agencies within the state of Washington. These agencies were chosen for several reasons. The distribution represented: 1) 100 percent of comparable agencies used by the City of Mercer Island and Mercer Island Firefighters Union during labor negotiations, 2) 100 percent of the fire agencies within King County, 3) 100 percent of the Public Safety organizations within the state of Washington, 4) 100 percent of the fire agencies that border the City of Mercer Island, 5) 100 percent of the fire agencies within King County Zone 1. A total of 39 surveys were distributed. A total of 19 were completed and returned. This equates to a return rate of 48 percent. The results were then entered into a database created by the author. Several calculations and tables were created from this data, and the database reports were exported to a word processing program.

Finally, the fourth source includes the results of a questionnaire distributed to Mercer Island Firefighters. The results of the questionnaire were summarized. The summary is included in Appendix M.

1. Are there methods available to compare traditional and non-traditional fire department structures, and determine the success or failures of consolidation efforts?

The author contacted Ruth Obadal of the Eugene Fire Department as a follow-up to her department's deconsolidation. Ms. Obadal was asked about the method or process utilized by her municipality, for the purposes of comparison between the structure types prior to deconsolidation. It was learned that Ms Obadal was unable to identify a comparison method, but noted that the change occurred most likely for political reasons (Appendix E).

2. What aspects of the Mercer Island Fire Division have been impacted negatively as a result of consolidation?

Lack of Career Opportunities

According to the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety Organizational chart (Appendix O) and through communications with Chief Ron Elsoe (Appendix J; Appendix K), the Mercer Island Police Division has several career opportunities available for its employees. All uniformed administrative positions within the Department of Public Safety are not available to fire employees. Some are not available because they are Police bargaining unit work, and those positions include: 1) Administrative Lieutenant, 2) Administrative Sergeant. Both of these positions are responsible for the administrative responsibilities of both the Police and Fire Divisions. Others are not available because they are law enforcement oriented positions. They include: 1) DARE Officer, 2) High-School Resource Officer, 3) Financial Investigations Officer, 4) Narcotics Investigator, 5) Marine Patrol Supervisor. It was noted that Police Division employees can also participate in: 1) the Bike Patrol program, 2) the Marine Patrol program, 3) the Eastside Narcotics Task Force, 4) the SWAT team, 5) the Dive Team, 6) the Range Officer, 7) the Violent Crimes Task Force--FBI.

In contrast, Fire Division employees have very limited career options. There are no uniformed administrative positions available other than part-time contractual work. They include: 1) Part-time Training Officer, 2) Part-time Assistant Training Officer, 3) Part-time Fire Marshal (a civilian currently fills this position). Programs available to fire personnel include: 1) the Dive Team, 2) FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Team. It should also be noted that the Police Division manages the joint Police and Fire dive team's budget (Appendix J; Appendix K).

The summary of the responses in the questionnaire to Mercer Island Firefighters (Appendix M) also noted the lack of career opportunities for fire personnel. Firefighters indicated their frustration with these positions being available only to the Police Division employees (Appendix M).

Budget

The questionnaire distributed to Mercer Island Firefighters (Appendix M) further indicated a belief that the Fire Division is under-funded. This manifests in: 1) a lack of adequate staffing and response schedules, 2) poor equipment replacement schedules, 3) lack of adequate training, 4) a general neglect of fire service needs (Appendix M).

The survey (Appendix N) sought to measure budget information to determine if there were differences between organizational types. A comparison measured the percentage of overall municipal budgets allocated for fire and EMS services. In other words, how much of a total municipal budget was allocated for fire and EMS delivery. The results in Table 1 revealed that a difference between the organizational types does exist. In a non-consolidated organization, the average percentage of a municipal budget that was allocated for fire and EMS services was 9.37 percent. In contrast, the average percentage of a municipal budget that was

allocated for fire and EMS services in consolidated organizations was 6.82 percent. Mercer Island was between those two results, with an average percentage of 7.92 percent of the municipal budget allocated for fire and EMS services.

Another budget comparison made between organizational structures related to the 1999 alarm volume and the 1999 fire budgets. Results were analyzed to determine if there were differences between organizational types, on a cost per call basis. Averages for consolidated organizations and averages for non-consolidated organizations were calculated. The results in Table 2 indicate a slightly lower cost per call for non-consolidated organizations. The average cost per call for consolidated organizations in 1999 was \$1526.30, versus the average cost per call of non-consolidated organizations was \$1382.29. The reason(s) for this difference when viewed with the fact that non-consolidated organizations have a higher percentage of a municipality's overall budget, as shown in Table 1, is not clear. Further research is needed.

Table 1.
Fire Budget versus Total City Budget

Average of agency type	Average of city budgets	Average of fire budgets	Fire percentage of city budget
All agencies	\$88,819,121.27	\$8,209,764.18	9.24%
DPS agencies	\$24,105,011.00	\$1,643,504.50	6.82%
Non-DPS agencies	\$103,200,034.67	\$9,668,933.00	9.37%
Mercer Island Fire	\$33,942,993.00	\$2,687,942.00	7.92%

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

Table 2.
1999 Cost per Call Comparison

Agency type	1999 call average	1999 fire budget average	1999 cost per call
Department of Public Safety	856	\$1,306,508.67	\$1,526.30
Non-Department of Public Safety	5516.38	\$7,625,226.38	\$1,382.29

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

Council Access & Fire Service Representation

In an interview with Mercer Island Firefighter Steve Lyons, one of the comments made concerning the failure of the current organizational structure related to council access. Firefighter Lyons noted that the current structure no longer allows a Fire Chief direct access to the Mercer Island City Council. He further noted that the current Director of Public Safety has a background in law enforcement, which he suggests affects his ability to effectively communicate the fire service message (Appendix L).

The responses from the questionnaire (Appendix M) indicated that other fire personnel would agree with Firefighter Lyons. Mercer Island Firefighters who responded to the questionnaire indicated a belief that the fire service voice does not have direct access to the council and fire service needs are therefore not properly assessed (Appendix M).

3. What aspects of the Mercer Island Fire Division have been impacted positively as a result of consolidation?

Fire Loss

The survey (Appendix N) analyzed differences between fire loss statistics based on organizational structures. The survey asked for fire loss statistics for the period of 1995 through 1999, showing each year separately. According to the results in Table 3, in each year there was less fire loss for consolidated organizations versus non-consolidated organizations. Over the five-year period, the total fire loss for consolidated organizations was \$1,621,062.50 versus the total fire loss for non-consolidated organizations of \$7,476,169.45. Mercer Island's total five-year fire loss was between the two organizational types, with a total loss of \$3,054,125.00.

Table 3.
A Comparison of Fire Loss

Average of agency type	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
All agencies	\$1,580,011.25	\$1,246,538.83	\$1,121,912.33	\$1,778,757.17	\$1,141,602.42
Non-DPS agencies	\$1,720,921.36	\$1,358,315.09	\$1,219,404.36	\$1,934,689.64	\$1,242,839.00
DPS agencies	\$193,500.00	\$356,000.00	\$63,875.00	\$86,537.50	\$921,150.00
Mercer Is. Fire	\$357,000.00	\$695,000.00	\$78,250.00	\$109,575.00	\$1,814,300.00

Average of agency type	Total
All agencies	\$6,868,821.80
Non-DPS agencies	\$7,476,169.45
DPS agencies	\$1,621,062.50
Mercer Island Fire	\$3,054,125.00

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

LEOFF membership

When the Director of Public Safety position was created on Mercer Island, Washington State law did not allow their participation in the LEOFF retirement program. Since that time, Washington State law has been amended by the State Legislature to include Directors and Public Safety Officers in the LEOFF Retirement Program (Appendix G).

Budget

The survey (Appendix N) analyzed other budget information as well. One measurement included the percentage of fire budgets allocated for training. In other words, what percentage of a fire organization's budget was allocated for training? The survey sought to determine if there was a difference in budget allocations between organizational types. The results indicate a surprising difference that has a positive impact on the fire service. In the State of Washington, consolidated organizations appear to spend a higher percentage of their overall fire budget on training, than do non-consolidated organizations. The results in Table 4 indicate that in non-consolidated organizations the average percentage of a fire budget allocated for training was 2.73 percent. In consolidated organizations, the average fire organization's budget allocated for training was much higher at 3.00 percent. Mercer Island Fire Division led the way with a fire organization's training budget of 3.56 percent. It is not clear, based on the survey results, why this difference exists.

Table 4.
Training Budget versus Total Fire Budget

Average of agency type	Average of fire budgets	Average of training budgets	Training percentage of fire budget
All agencies	\$6,846,400.33	\$203,862.44	2.98%
DPS agencies	\$1,306,508.67	\$35,700.00	2.73%
Non-DPS agencies	\$7,625,226.38	\$228,626.50	3.00%
Mercer Island Fire	\$2,687,942.00	\$95,600.00	3.56%

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

4. What results has this had on service delivery to the Mercer Island Community?

ISO Rating

The survey (Appendix N) requested ISO information from Departments as well. The purpose for this inquiry was to ascertain if there were differences in ISO ratings and last rating periods, based on organizational types. According to the research results in Table 5 there are differences, although the reasons are not clear. According to the results, the average rating for consolidated Departments within the survey group was a Class 7, with an average last rating period of 1986. In contrast, the average ISO rating for non-consolidated organizations was a Class 3, with an average last rating period of 1990. Mercer Island was last rated in 1978, and received a Class 5 rating from ISO.

The author sought to determine the impact of different ISO classifications within a community. A letter was drafted and sent to Mr. Gary Brock, Assistant Vice-President of Safeco Insurance Company (Appendix H). According to Gary Brock of Safeco Insurance (Appendix I), commercial occupancies are affected more than residential occupancies, as a result of a community's ISO rating. In his response, Mr. Brock noted that a review of residential insurance premiums would show very little difference between an ISO rating of Class 5 and a rating of Class 3. He further noted that the residential information is a result of a cross section of insurance providers in the State of Washington, which underwrite in excess of 40 percent of the homeowners market for this state. Mr. Brock continued by providing further data in regards to the commercial premiums. Premiums for commercial occupancies are derived from what the insurance industry labels as lost costs. The lost costs are developed from aggregates provided by ISO, as a result of specific data recovery of reported losses. As a result, the ISO Lost Costs are universally used by the insurance industry. From these tables Mr. Brock was able to illustrate the difference in insurance premiums for commercial occupancies. To summarize the findings of Mr. Brock, he noted that a wood frame commercial occupancy would see a variation of 6.7 percent between a Class 3 rating and a Class 4 rating. Further extrapolating his table shows a difference of 17.9 percent between a Class 3 rating and a Class 5 rating for the same occupancy. In a masonry commercial occupancy the differences are more extreme. The difference between a Class 3 and Class 4 masonry occupancy is 14 percent. The difference between a Class 3 and Class 5 masonry occupancy is 35.89 percent (Appendix I).

In summary, the ISO data illustrates that a difference in ISO ratings and rating periods between organizational types does exist, and furthermore that these differences can result in significant impacts to insurance premiums paid by a community's business partners.

Table 5.
A Comparison of ISO Ratings and Rating Periods

Average of agency type	ISO rating	Last rated
Non-DPS agencies	3	1990
DPS agencies	7	1986
Mercer Island Fire	5	1978

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

Staffing and Response Schedules

The results from the questionnaire to Mercer Island Firefighters (Appendix M), and the interview of Firefighter Lyons (Appendix L) indicated a belief that Mercer Island's staffing and response schedule were not adequate and were a result of the consolidation effort at Mercer Island. The survey to area Fire Agencies (Appendix N) analyzed differences in staffing and response schedules between organizational types to determine if there were indeed differences between organizational types. According to the survey results in Table 6, consolidated organizations and non-consolidated organizations differ greatly in their initial response to residential fires and commercial fires. The survey results illustrated that on residential fires, the average apparatus response and personnel response for consolidated organizations is 2.33 fire apparatus and 6.33 firefighters, versus 5.13 fire apparatus and 12.88 firefighters for non-consolidated organizations. Mercer Island's response to residential fires was very similar to the average of consolidated organizations: 3 fire apparatus and 7 firefighters. This confirms the beliefs of Mercer Island Firefighters regarding lower staffing and response schedule levels, and that consolidated organizations respond with fewer apparatus and personnel to residential structure fires (Table 6).

On commercial fires the results are similar in regards to the differences between organizational types. Again, consolidated organizations respond with fewer personnel and apparatus. The average apparatus and personnel response for consolidated organizations is 2.67 fire apparatus and 6.67 firefighters, versus 6.19 fire apparatus and 15.69 firefighters for non-consolidated organizations. Mercer Island's response to commercial fires was very similar to the average of consolidated organizations, and is identical to their response for residential fires: 3 fire apparatus and 7 firefighters (Table 6).

Table 6.
A Comparison of Apparatus and Personnel Responses

Average of agency type	Avg. apparatus to AFA	Avg. personnel to AFA	Avg. apparatus to residential fire	Avg. personnel to residential fire	Avg. apparatus to commercial fire
Non-DPS agencies	1.88	5.06	5.13	12.88	6.19
DPS agencies	2.00	4.33	2.33	6.33	2.67
Mercer Island Fire	3	7	3	7	3

Average of agency type	Avg. to commercial fire	Avg. apparatus to MVA	Avg. personnel to MVA	Avg. BLS response time	Avg. Fire response time	Avg. MVA response time
Non-DPS agencies	15.69	2.19	5.38	4.43	4.81	4.12
DPS agencies	6.67	2.33	4.67	2.67	4.00	4.00
Mercer Island Fire	7	3	7	5	5	5

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

The data in Table 6 shows little to no difference between organizational types in regards to Motor Vehicle Accidents (MVA) events, and Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA). It is not clear why there are differences between organizational types regarding responses to residential and commercial fires, but relatively no differences in responses to MVA's and AFA's (Table 6).

In Table 7, the survey revealed a significant difference between organizational structure types in the ratio of firefighters per square mile. In consolidated organizations, the average firefighter per square mile ratio was 2.1. The average firefighter per square mile ratio in non-consolidated organizations was 2.96. Mercer Island's ratio was more extreme, with a firefighter per square mile ratio of 0.89 (Table 7).

The results in Table 7 also illustrated a large difference in administrative support positions between the two organizational structures. The results revealed that the average firefighter per administrator ratio for a non-consolidated organization was 1.69. In contrast, the average firefighter per administrator ratio for a consolidated organization was 2.8. Mercer Island's ratio is even more extreme, with a firefighter per administrator ratio of 3.5 (Table 7).

In regards to daily staffing minimums, a difference was noted between organizational types. In non-consolidated organizations, the average minimum daily staffing level was 14.88. This figure does not include administrative positions, but is exclusively suppression personnel. In contrast, the average minimum daily staffing in consolidated organizations was 4.67. Mercer Island's minimum daily staffing level fell between those two numbers with a staffing level of 7 personnel (Table 7).

One of the most extraordinary discoveries in the survey was a measurement of population in relation to square miles--in other words, how many people lived in a square mile. The results in Table 7 revealed that the average population per square mile in non-consolidated organizations was 1128 people. In consolidated organizations the average population per square mile was slightly more at 1356 people. However, Mercer Island's results were more extreme. The average population per square mile was 3629 people, indicating a higher average population density per square mile (Table 7).

Table 7.
A Comparison of Department Data

Department name	Population	Area served	Daily staffing minimum	Total admin. FTE's
Mercer Island Fire	22500	6.2	7	2
Avg. non-DPS agencies	49633	44.02	14.88	8.81
Avg. DPS agencies	13300	9.81	4.67	1.67
Auburn Fire Department	44310	29.18	16	4
Bellevue Fire Department	129113	301	41	32
Edmonds Fire Department	41610	8.04	9	6
Federal Way Fire Department	110000	34	18	9
KCFD 40 – Spring Glen	40000	12.5	5	2
KCFD 50	1300	140	9	8
Kent Fire Department	145000	58	24	17
Lynnwood Fire Department	34000	7.5	6	4
North Highline Fire District	43000	9	8	3
Northshore Fire Department	32000	11	9	3
Port of Moses Lake DPS	15000	18	3	1
Port of Seattle Fire Department	0	6	13	6
Puyallup Fire & Rescue	32000	11	10	6
Renton Fire Department	58420	19	33	19
SeaTac Fire Department	23540	12.6	10	9
Snoqualmie DPS	2400	5.22	4	2

(table continues)

Table 7. (continued)

Department name	Population	Area served	Daily staffing minimum	Total admin. FTE's
Tukwila Fire Department	14840	9.5	14	6
Woodinville Fire & Life Safety	45000	36	13	7

Department Name	FF / Population	Pop. / Area	FF / Area	FF / Admin.
Mercer Island Fire	3214	3629	0.89	3.50
Avg. Non-DPS Agencies	3337	1128	2.96	1.69
Avg. DPS Agencies	2850	1356	2.10	2.80
Auburn Fire Department	2769	1519	1.82	4.0
Bellevue Fire Department	3149	429	7.34	1.28
Edmonds Fire Department	4623	5175	0.89	1.50
Federal Way Fire Department	6111	3235	1.89	2.0
KCFD 40 - Spring Glen	8000	3200	2.50	2.50
KCFD 50	144	9	15.56	1.13
Kent Fire Department	6042	2500	2.42	1.41
Lynnwood Fire Department	5667	4533	1.25	1.50
North Highline Fire District	5375	4778	1.13	2.67
Northshore Fire Department	3556	2909	1.22	3.0
Port of Moses Lake DPS	5000	833	6.0	3.0
Port of Seattle Fire Department	0	0	0.46	2.17

(table continues)

Table 7. (continued)

Department Name	FF / Population	Pop. / Area	FF / Area	FF / Admin.
Puyallup Fire & Rescue	3200	2909	1.10	1.67
Renton Fire Department	1770	3075	0.58	1.74
SeaTac Fire Department	2354	1868	1.26	1.11
Snoqualmie DPS	600	460	1.30	2.00
Tukwila Fire Department	1060	1562	0.68	2.33
Woodinville Fire & Life Safety	3462	1250	2.77	1.86

Note. Average of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Agencies represents all Departments of Public Safety, including Mercer Island. Average of Non-DPS Agencies represents all non-consolidated Fire Departments.

In summary, the questionnaire (Appendix M) responses from Mercer Island personnel, and the interview with Firefighter Lyons (Appendix L), indicate a belief that the Mercer Island Fire Division is highly understaffed, in regards to administrative personnel and suppression levels, and as a result the workload is very high. Firefighters also expressed frustration that current administrative support positions are open to police personnel only (Appendix M). The results of Tables 6 and Table 7 support the belief that the staffing levels and response schedules are less in consolidated organizations such as Mercer Island's. It would also support that in the case of Mercer Island where the ratio of firefighters per citizen is low, and the ratio of firefighters per administrative support FTE's is high, that an increased workload for Mercer Island Firefighters exists.

In an interview with Mercer Island Firefighter Steve Lyons, he identified staffing and equipment as a part of service delivery that has been impacted negatively as a result of consolidation. In part he believes this is because the Fire Department takes a back seat to the needs of law enforcement. As examples, he noted that law enforcement personnel fill all the administrative positions in the Department. He additionally noted the difficulty the Mercer Island Fire Division has had in acquiring equipment and apparatus (Appendix L).

Equipment

The questionnaire responses from Mercer Island personnel (Appendix M) indicate a concern and frustration in regards to the replacement and acquisition of equipment and facilities. Several individuals noted the seven-year delay prior to the 1984 fleet replacement. They also noted that wholesale replacement of fire apparatus had numerous consequences that the council has not addressed. Firefighters also commented on the inadequate facilities for the Fire Division. Fire Station 91's recent replacement was acknowledged, but it was felt to be long overdue; it was further noted that Station 92 is in dire need of replacement and there is no apparent plan to address that need (Appendix M).

Organizational Impact

In the interview with Firefighter Lyons (Appendix L), and the questionnaire to Mercer Island Firefighters (Appendix M), several results of the consolidation effort were noted. They include: 1) dysfunctional organizational structure, 2) a long recovery period for the Mercer Island Fire Division from the effects of consolidation, 3) cultural police bias, 4) marine patrol program with little to no fire service involvement, 5) a part-time fire marshal (Appendix L, Appendix M).

DISCUSSION

Study Results versus Specific Findings

Methods of Comparison

The literature research was unable to identify a singular method for measuring differences between consolidated organizations and non-consolidated organizations; however, several methods of measuring existing or future organizational types were found. They included: 1) a means to measure the process of consolidation, 2) a means to measure prior to consolidation for the purposes of consolidation, and 3) a means to measure the productivity of a fire service agency (Carlson, 1992, p. 6; Chelst & Matarese, 1991, pp. 2-18; Redman, 1994, pp. 3-11).

The interview with Ruth Obadal (2000) indicated her attempts to identify justifications for consolidation or de-consolidation were equally difficult. No method of measurement was identified. Her conclusion was that her Department's change in organizational structure occurred as a result of political reasons, not as a result of analyzing measurable data (Obadal, personal communications, August 23, 2000).

The author noted during his research that there appeared to be a lack of national standards relating to organizational performance, although this was not specifically researched. This is probably one of the reasons that it appears there is no method to universally measure or compare organizational types. A question that arises in the mind of this author is, why is there no such tool? Perhaps Ms. Obadal has captured the essence of the reason. In her interview, she noted that the change in Eugene was most likely the result of political reasons. It seems that this would support the findings of Rule (1989), who notes that ego is one of the three reasons for consolidating, or in this case, de-consolidating (Rule, 1989, pp. 29-30).

Negative Impacts to the Fire Service

The literature research identified several negative impacts to the fire service as a result of consolidation. Hamilton (1991), and Rule (1989), noted the following impacts: 1) lack of career development, 2) inefficient scheduling, 3) non-utilization of departmental resources, 4) low departmental effectiveness, 5) lack of fire service representation in management levels and decision making processes--too heavy with law enforcement personnel, 6) high attrition within the ranks of fire personnel, 7) lack of adequate training due to time constraints (Hamilton, 1991, p. 8; Rule, 1989, pp. 32-36).

The literature research also identified several negative impacts in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Rule (1989) noted several adverse effects from their organizational structure. He found that: 1) training suffered due to workload levels, 2) employee burnout occurred due to increased workloads and job stressors, 3) it was difficult for Public Safety Officers to keep up with changing firefighter methods. Kalamazoo continues to be a consolidated organization despite these issues (Rule, 1989, p. 37).

Any finally, the research also identified an apparent phenomenon in consolidated organizations. Patterson (1991) found that in almost all instances, the Director of Public Safety comes from a law enforcement background. He noted that it is rare to find a Public Safety Director from the fire service (Patterson, 1991, p. 5).

The results of the Department Survey (Appendix N), and the interviews conducted by this author (Appendix J, Appendix M), indicate some similarities to the literature research.

The research found that there have been several negative impacts to the fire service regionally, though it is arguable that all can be attributed to the results of consolidation. The survey found the following differences between consolidated and non-consolidated organizations in the State of Washington: 1) better ISO ratings and rating periods in non-consolidated organizations, 2) fewer administrative support positions in consolidated organizations, and 3) differences in budget allocations that tend to favor non-consolidated organizations (Table 1; Table 4; Table 5; Table 7). The survey was unable to directly link these to the result of consolidation, though there is unquestionably an association.

Mercer Island's experiences seem to follow the national and regional patterns. Mercer Island Firefighters do not have the career opportunities that their counterparts in the Police Division are afforded. In an interview with Chief Ron Elsoe (Appendix K), and a review of the existing organizational chart (Appendix O), the fact that this discrepancy exists is apparent. Mercer Island Police Officers have a total of seven different positions they can attain, and seven programs they can participate in. In comparison, the Fire Division has two part-time positions they can attain, and two programs they can participate in (Appendix K). Clearly the career opportunities are more abundant for Police Officers than for Firefighters. This is partially a result of the consolidated structure at Mercer Island. One of the original goals of consolidation at Mercer Island was efficiency of both services (Tubbs, 2000, p. 7). The result of this goal was a combining of administrative positions, which are currently available only to law enforcement personnel.

As the literature research found that most Directors of Public Safety come from a law enforcement background, Mercer Island's experience is identical. The Director of Public Safety at Mercer Island is a commissioned Police Officer (Tubbs, 2000, p. 6). It is a universally held belief within the Mercer Island Fire Division that when the existing Director retires, if the City decides to refill the position, it will most certainly be another individual with a law enforcement background and not a fire service background.

The research identified one organization in which the Director of Public Safety came from a fire service background. The City of Eugene, when it was a consolidated organization, had a Director of Public Safety who came from a fire service background--Everett Hall (Obadal, personal communication, August 23, 2000).

In summary, the negative impacts of consolidation to the Mercer Island Fire Service have been: 1) lack of career opportunities for fire personnel, 2) high ISO rating, 3) lack of direct access to council, 4) low percentage of municipal budget, 5) lack of fire service representation at the council level, 6) upper management with no fire service background.

The results of the survey were similar for consolidated organizations versus non-consolidated organizations. Consolidated organizations typically had: 1) higher ISO rating, 2) lower percentage of municipal budget allocated for fire services.

In some cases it appears that consolidation can be linked to negative effects on the fire service, and in others it is not as clear. It should be noted, however, that the circumstantial evidence indicates a pattern that would support the theory that consolidation of Police and Fire Services results in negative consequences to the Fire Service.

Positive Impacts to the Fire Service

It was more difficult to locate positive effects to the fire service as a result of consolidation. The literature research found that in some cases ISO ratings were improved (Rule, 1989, p. 38). Additional positive effects included: 1) increased morale, 2) administrative refinement, 3) efficiency of service delivery, 4) single line of authority (Korf, 1979, p. 30; Rule, 1989, p. 37).

The survey did not support the improvement in ISO ratings. The average ISO rating of consolidated organizations was Class 7, versus the average ISO rating of non-consolidated organizations of Class 3 (Table 5). It is not apparent to this author why the average ISO rating for consolidated organizations is higher than non-consolidated organizations. It is acknowledged by this author that in some communities the ISO rating system is controversial and therefore they believe it is not worth the effort of improving.

An interview with Mercer Island Firefighter Steve Lyons indicated he was unable to identify any positive impacts to the organization. He did acknowledge that the City might have perceived a financial savings had occurred, but that he was not in agreement with that assessment (Appendix L).

Consolidation remains a highly controversial organizational model for the fire service. It appears that often the interpretation of certain data can be viewed differently by municipal managers and by the fire service.

Mercer Island's organizational chart (Appendix O) and an email response from Chief Elsoe (Appendix K) would initially support that an administrative refinement has occurred within the Department. But an interview with Firefighter Lyons would offer a different interpretation of the effects of the refinement (Appendix L). While this information illustrates a reduction in duplicated administrative positions, these positions are not available to fire personnel and thereby reduce their career opportunities. Additionally, as only law enforcement personnel fill these positions, the fire service experience and perspective is not enjoyed by the organization at large.

It occurs to this author that not having universally accepted means of measurement increases the difficulty of answering questions such as what the positive impacts to the fire service have been as a result of consolidation.

Effects of Service Delivery

The literature research noted some tangible outcomes as a result of negative impacts to the fire service. Morrison (1996) noted that reducing certain costs, while initially resulting in a reduction of expenses, could have long-term negative consequences (Morrison, 1996, pp. 42-43). The research also noted that in some cases there was no change in service delivery (Hamilton, 1991, pp. 8-10)

The survey and interviews offer this picture. The survey found that consolidated organizations had lower average suppression and administrative staffing positions, and that they responded with fewer apparatus to residential and commercial fires, than did non-consolidated organizations (Table 6). This may be perceived as consolidated organizations assuming a higher level of risk, which would support the findings of Morrison (1996) when he suggests that initial cost savings can have long-term negative consequences (Morrison, 1996, pp. 42-43).

The survey results also noted a difference in budget allocations for fire and EMS services. The average percentage of a municipal budget allocated for fire and EMS service delivery in consolidated organizations was 6.82 percent, versus 9.37 percent in non-consolidated organizations (Table 1, Table 4). Additionally, consolidated organizations have a higher ISO rating on average (Table 5). These factors would lead the author to suggest that a possible relationship exists between monies expended in fire services, and ISO ratings. For example, the lower allocation percentages of municipal budgets in consolidated organizations had tangible impacts; that is, higher ISO ratings and lower staffing and response schedules, or higher risk. However, what stands in contrast to this is the fire loss statistics. The author found it curious that the fire loss for consolidated organizations was lower than non-consolidated organizations (Table 3). It is not entirely clear why this discrepancy exists, although population density and survey groups may have played a role.

The average population of consolidated organizations surveyed was 13,300 people, versus the average for non-consolidated organizations of 49,633 people (Table 7). It appears that one cannot conclusively conclude that all of the tangible impacts of service delivery occur as a result of consolidation. Further analysis of this information is needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The City of Mercer Island should hire an independent consulting firm to analyze the Department of Public Safety structure and operations. Specifically they should examine and quantify such things as: 1) risk level of current operations, 2) costs, 3) efficiency of the Department of Public Safety, 4) an analysis of the original goals of consolidation, including quantifying the successes and failures.
2. The City of Mercer Island should request that the Insurance Services Office conduct another review of its service capabilities, with the goal of reducing the current classification. Ultimately, numerous commercial occupancies should enjoy a reduction in insurance premiums.

3. The Mercer Island City Council should conduct a retreat to re-examine the consolidated structure. It should specifically identify inherent weaknesses and strengths, and compare those with the current benefits and risks. The author would further recommend the inclusion of the results of recommendation 1.
4. National Fire Service Groups, such as the NFPA, should move forward with the objective of identifying common methods of measurement, in which organizations can honestly assess their efficiency, in comparison to other organizations of a similar nature.

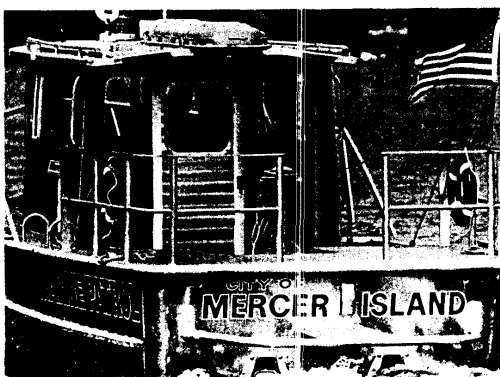
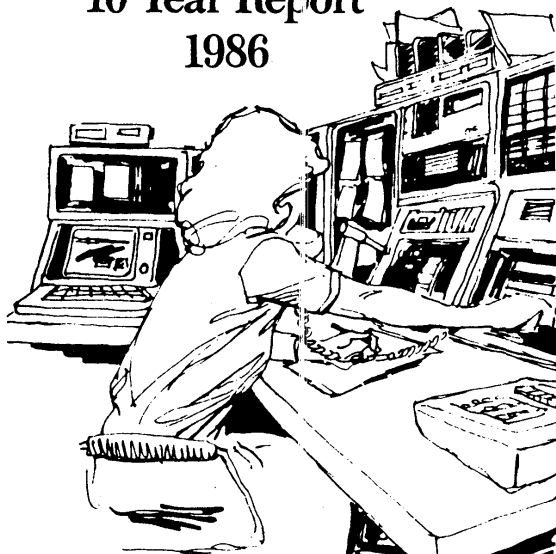
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Appendix A Ten Year Public Safety Report

The City of Mercer Island PUBLIC SAFETY 10 Year Report 1986



Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

CITY OF
MERCER ISLAND, WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

TEN YEAR REPORT

BY
JAN P. DEVENY
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY

AUGUST, 1986

Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

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- B. Mercer Island Municipal Code
re: Civil Service Commission

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Special thanks are due to the members of the Mercer Island City Council, all of whom have given their support to the Public Safety Department.

Mayor Fred Jarrett
Councilmember Ben Werner
Councilmember Jim Horn
Councilmember Verne B. Lewis
Councilmember W. Hunter Simpson
Councilmember Nan Hutchins
Councilmember Al Huhs

A thank you is also due to Lawrence D. Rose, City Manager of Mercer Island from 1975 to 1986. He had the idea to create the Public Safety Department and he was active in making that idea a reality.

F O R E W O R D

I am an odd duck; I am a Director of Public Safety. People do not know how to react to me. Their experience has taught them to think only in terms of a police chief or a fire chief. They don't know what it is that Public Safety Directors do. When I tell them I am both the police chief and the fire chief, it seems to make them more confused.

When the City Manager first suggested forming a Public Safety Department and appointing me as Director, it seemed like a great idea. In time I changed my mind. The first few years (especially the first year) were very demanding. I found myself faced with decisions about matters I did not fully understand. There was much to learn and not much time. It was challenging, frustrating, and exciting.

With the passage of more time, I have changed my mind again. The people of Mercer Island are well served by their Public Safety Department. While I would not want to go through those early years again, I now feel it was worth it. The members of the Department have accomplished something remarkable. They have turned two departments into one and they have improved the quality of the service. None of this happened overnight; change has been slow and sometimes difficult. In spite of the conflict, there has been steady progress towards the goal of providing the best service possible.

At times this evolutionary process has been painful, but the results have been rewarding. This has made it worth being different.

Jan P. Deveny

TEN YEAR REPORT

I INTRODUCTION

Many cities and counties in the United States have considered at one time or another whether to create a public safety department. When they research the idea, they learn several things. The first thing they learn is there are many different kinds of public safety departments. Some are public safety in name only, some have cross training of police and fire personnel, some have no fire personnel, and some combine the administrative services of police and fire.

A second thing they may learn is there is not much factual data available about public safety departments. They will be able to find out who has a public safety department, and in general what public safety model they are using. If they want data on how effective or efficient the department is, they may be disappointed.

A third thing they may learn is that open discussion of public safety causes people to say the darndest things. They can expect to hear statements like these:

"Fire losses will go up."

"Police and fire service will both suffer."

"Public Safety means layoffs of police officers and firefighters."

"Public Safety will save money."

"Public Safety has never worked anywhere."

Talk like this can cause confusion and may lead to executive paralysis. This is particularly true if there is a lack of factual information to counter such statements.

Mercer Island has over ten years of experience with its Public Safety Department and ten full years of data. The City has learned that the statements quoted above are simply not true. Those statements may be best characterized as public safety myths.

Thus, the idea was conceived to write a report which provided factual information about public safety for other cities to use. Put another way, the idea was to debunk the myths about public safety. There was also the desire to recognize the good work of the Public Safety employees of Mercer Island.

In November of 1975, the City of Mercer Island created a Public Safety Department. A particular model was chosen for what were regarded as good

reasons. The information presented here may not be true for other public safety models.

This report tells how the public safety idea was first conceived. Information is given about the initial steps establishing the Department and making it operational. A major portion of the report deals with the programs, activities and services provided by the Department over the years. In general, the history of the Department has been evolutionary. The programs have gradually taken shape and acquired definition as the Department learned more about its own capacity to do things.

Section IV contains approximately 40 pages of charts and data. These charts provide a ten year history of the community, the police service, the fire service, and the Department. The charts are intended to speak for themselves, and the reader is to draw their own conclusions about what they mean. What the reader needs to know is that the charts were carefully done and the data was carefully collected. The information presented in these charts is reliable.

The last two sections are not matters of history or fact, but rather of opinion. Section V highlights those things which the staff of the Public Safety Department feels they have learned over the last ten years. Section VI lists both problems and recommendations. The problems referred to have not been resolved by Mercer Island. The recommendations are valuable to Mercer Island and to anyone considering establishing a public safety department.

Several people in the Department contributed their efforts to this report. Some of them collected data, others prepared histories, and still others provided information about programs. There has been considerable discussion within the Department about the report and participation at all levels. While it is not possible to recognize everyone, there is one person who must be recognized - that is Sgt. Alan P. Lacy, who prepared all the exhibits for this report.

II IN THE BEGINNING

This section will explain how the Department of Public Safety was created. Included is a discussion of how the particular public safety model was selected. Specific actions taken by the City are also described. The initial steps toward implementation by the Department are presented.

A. Before November 4th, 1975

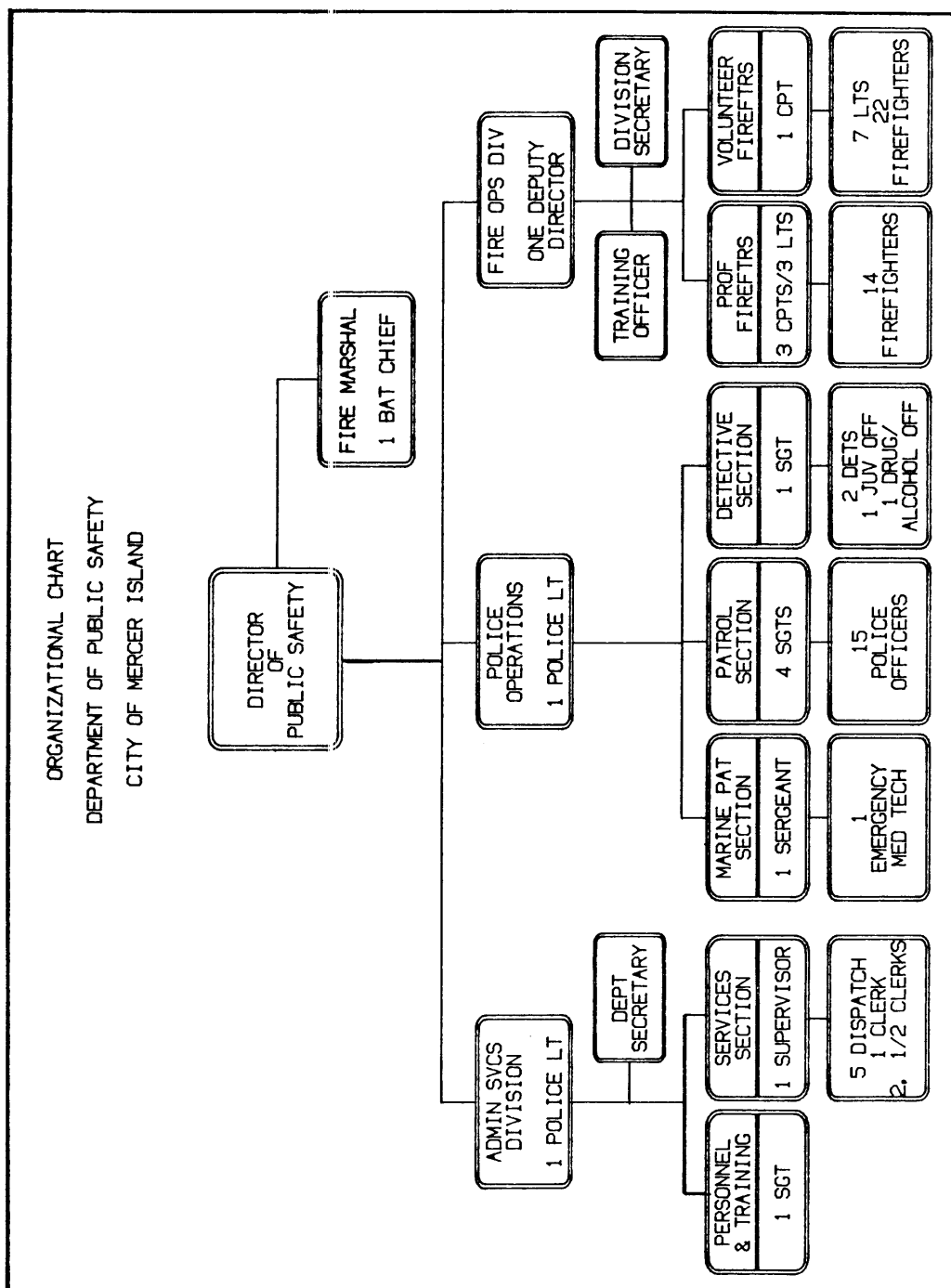
Since its incorporation in 1960, the City of Mercer Island had two traditional departments of Police and Fire. The Fire Chief resigned in September of 1975. The City Manager was new to the City, but experienced in city management. He saw the need to improve the staff services to the Fire Department. He also wanted to improve the efficiency of both the Police and Fire service.

A series of discussions were held with various City officials, including the Police Chief. As a result of these discussions, a concept emerged to create a new Public Safety Department, combining the former Fire and Police Departments under the command of a single Director. The idea was to create three Divisions - a Police Operations Division, a Fire Operations Division, and an Administrative Services Division. Administrative Services was to provide all administrative and staff support to the two other Divisions. The organizational chart on the next page depicts the Department structure as it has been for the past ten years. There have been minor variations, but the basic structure has not changed.

Consideration was given to different public safety models. It was decided not to try and cross train Police and Fire personnel for the following reasons:

- Police Officers and Firefighters have different work personalities. Police Officers almost always work alone, while Firefighters almost always work in teams.
- The motivation for being a Police Officer is quite a bit different from that for being a Firefighter. It was felt that most people presently in the Department would not want to be cross trained and, in fact, would resist it.
- Unions would be more likely to resist cross training than they would a model which preserved the Fire and Police identities.
- The community would more easily accept an administrative consolidation than they would a plan which involved the cross training of line personnel.

The City Attorney researched State Law to assure that the City could, in fact, carry out its plan. He also prepared draft Ordinances



3 a.

for review by the Council.

B. November 5, 1975

On this date, the City Council adopted an Ordinance which created a New Department of Public Safety and repealed earlier Ordinances which had created the Fire and Police Departments. On this same day, the Council also created a single Public Safety Civil Service Commission and repealed the Ordinances which had created the separate Fire and Police Commissions. Both these Ordinances were later codified and are included as appendices to this report.

These actions were taken at a public meeting, but there had been no public discussion of the idea before the Council meeting. Numerous informal discussions had occurred, particularly with Union leaders and other affected persons. While the Council action was certainly news, it did not create any community concern.

The City Manager appointed the Police Chief as Director of Public Safety under the authority granted by the Ordinance. The Ordinance specified that the Director of Public Safety would not be Civil Service. The Director was to have all the duties and responsibilities of a Police Chief and a Fire Chief.

C. Initial Steps in the Department

One of the first actions taken was to establish weekly staff meetings of Police and Fire supervisors. These meetings were held at the Main Fire Station so on-duty supervisors could participate. This created a forum for Police and Fire professionals to sit down face to face and begin discussing how they were going to carry out their new roles.

Another early step was to establish a Department-wide policy manual. In the Department, this is called the General Orders Manual. Among the first orders drafted were those which defined authority and responsibility of various organizational units, and established goals for the new Department. A Manual of Rules for Police Officers and Firefighters was also written in the first year. It has since been revised.

Some symbolic things were done to make clear to the members of

the Department and the community that a new Department, in fact, existed. Among the first of these was the development of a new Public Safety logo. Considerable effort was spent in this project, and numerous suggestions were received. When a final logo design was selected, it was made into a shoulder patch issued to all personnel, placed on the sides of vehicles, and placed on Department stationery. The words "Public Safety Department" began replacing "Police Department" and "Fire Department."

In January of 1976, a three day retreat was held where all the Department supervisors met to discuss problems and agree on future direction. Almost every supervisor present was assigned a project. Priorities were established and due dates were fixed. In general, these dates were all met. This meeting was significant in that it was the first sustained effort to work together at defining the future of the Department. The supervisors came away with a very clear idea of what was going to be done, who was going to do it, and when it was going to be completed.

D. Civil Service Commissioners

The City Manager appoints Civil Service Commissioners under Washington State Law. He decided to appoint three new Commissioners to the Public Safety Civil Service Commission. These Commissioners chose to rewrite all the Civil Service Rules. Their reasons were, first, they wanted the Civil Service Rules to be reflective of the new Department; and, second, they wanted to bring the Rules up-to-date with the latest State Law and case law. The Commission spent about six months developing its new Rules, which were completed in August of 1976. During the rule revision process, the Commission heard extensive testimony from representatives of the Police Association and the Firefighters Union. Many of the concerns of the Unions were addressed in the Rules.

E. Public Safety Committee

The Mayor appointed three members of the City Council to a Public Safety Committee. The Committee was to provide Council oversight of the new Department. They were also charged with giving guidance on major Public Safety issues. This Committee

was very active during the initial years of the Department's existence. For the first two years, they met monthly. This then dropped off to quarterly, and then to occasionally. The Committee has not met for several years.

When the Committee was active, its members played a key role in making vital decisions about the Department's future. They gave advice on policy issues, community problems, and on what level of resources the Council might be willing to provide. The Committee provided encouragement and support to the Department when it was needed.

F. LEOFF Membership of Director

Some concerns arose regarding the membership of the Director in the Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters Retirement System (LEOFF). Letters were exchanged between the City Attorney and a Deputy Washington State Attorney General who was assigned to represent the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS). The Deputy Attorney General questioned whether the Director was eligible for membership in LEOFF when he was neither a full-time police officer nor a full-time firefighter. The City attorney replied that the Director was doubly qualified for membership by virtue of being both a Police Chief and a Fire Chief. There was no clear resolution of this concern. For over ten years, the Director has continued his membership in LEOFF, and the State has continued to accept the contributions to the System. The State has also provided reports every year on the status of the funds credited to the retirement account of the Director.

In subsequent years when other cities sought to create Public Safety Departments, the Department of Retirement Systems has told them that the Director would not be eligible for membership in the LEOFF System. This has caused at least one city to abandon its existing department. Other cities which were considering establishing Public Safety Departments have decided not to, giving one of the reasons as the ineligibility of the Director for the LEOFF Retirement System.

III OVER THE YEARS

During the past ten years, the Department has actively involved itself in many programs and services. The Department has attempted to stay in the mainstream of both the Fire Service and the Police Service. Whenever possible, members of the Department have been willing to provide leadership within their profession.

This section of the report will give a sense of the history of the Department, the significant events which have occurred, and the major programs the Department has supported. Not everything can be listed in this report. Enough information will be provided to give the reader a good sense about the nature of the Department and the quality of its service.

A. Overall Management of the Department

The purpose of this portion is to provide information about the Department-wide programs and activities.

1) General Orders/Policy Manual. The Department General Orders Manual is a collection of all the written management policies. More important than the manual is the process by which the orders are written. More than sixty orders have been written, most of them affecting both Police and Fire. The process is that an issue or topic is assigned to a staff member, who prepares a draft policy statement for consideration at one of the regular staff meetings. They are discussed at a staff meeting, consensus is reached, and the orders are revised and issued. The manual, then, is a collection of the consensus decisions of department management. It has become well understood and well supported within the organization. Each supervisor is working on at least one general order at all times.

The process by which general orders are developed has, in effect, become a system of making management decisions and then communicating them to the members of the Department. These decisions have strong support from the supervisors, and are therefore better accepted by the people who do the work. The total importance of this process and this system can only be appreciated by reviewing the general orders manual.

2) Retreats/Workshops. In an earlier section of this report, it was mentioned that a retreat was held two months after the Department was created. For a few years, these retreats were done annually and were two or three days long. They were problem solving and planning sessions in which all supervisors participated. They have evolved and changed so that in recent years they have come to be called workshops. They vary in length from four to eight hours and are held two or three times a year. They still serve the same purpose of planning and problem solving, but more frequent meetings mean the Department can respond more quickly to important issues. The workshops have taken on the added purpose of making all Public Safety supervisors well informed about the Department and about city government. The thinking is that well informed supervisors are much more likely to make high quality decisions in the field.

The agendas for the workshops are prepared in advance. Staff members participate in the preparation. Handouts and completed staff work are attached to the agendas. Minutes are produced of each workshop and copies distributed throughout the Department.

3) Program Budget. Since its beginning, the Department has prepared a Program Budget every year. City policy does not require Program Budgets. The Department decided to prepare a Program Budget to focus attention on the services provided and the costs of those services. In 1979, the Department made its first attempt at incorporating Performance Objectives within the Program Budget. Each quarter, the person responsible writes a progress report on the objectives. The objectives and the reports have evolved over the years to where original crude efforts are now regarded as much improved. Performance Objectives focus even more attention on service to the community, and the quarterly reports focus attention on whether work is being performed.

The quarterly reports are reviewed at a regular staff meeting each quarter. This allows all those present to understand the programs, the objectives, and the progress of each departmental unit. This, in turn, makes for well informed supervisors and managers and puts pressure on them to perform.

4) Performance Evaluations. In the first few months of its existence, the Department revised its performance evaluation form so that it would be useful for both Fire and Police evaluations. Performance evaluations have been done twice a year for the last ten years. Recently, a revised procedure is being tested. If it is judged to be an improvement, it will be made permanent.

5) Training. There has been a sustained effort to provide high quality training to all Fire and Police personnel. The Department has identified some subject areas which it regards as mandatory such as firearms, first aid, and driver training. Other areas have been identified as goals. Over the years, there have been substantial improvements in the amount and quality of recruit training for both Police Officers and Firefighters. Recruits are evaluated weekly during the first few months of their probation. Recruit training guides were developed to assist the persons responsible in providing comprehensive on-the-job training.

A continued effort has been made to provide supervisory and management training for all supervisors. Annual training objectives are set for each organizational unit. These objectives are not always met, but usually they are met. All mandatory training is accomplished. In-house evaluation files are kept on each training course so decisions can be made about whether to send other employees.

Worth noting is the fact that Mercer Island Public Safety employees are well educated. 79% of the police officers and 55% of the firefighters have attended college. 41% of the police officers have bachelor's degrees and 17% have masters' degrees.

A long-term commitment to training, combined with a stable work force, has produced well trained Public Safety personnel. There are many benefits which flow from having well trained people; one of these is fewer lawsuits.

6) Complaints/Lawsuits. The Department experiences few citizen complaints and a low number of lawsuits and legal actions against its employees. Much of this is due to the training, policy making, and informational systems which exist within the Department. The

City of Mercer Island is a member of the Washington Cities Insurance Authority, a group of local governments which united to form a risk management program. The losses caused by the actions of Mercer Island Fire and Police personnel have, for several years, been among the lowest in the insurance pool for cities of similar size. This is seen as evidence of the high quality of service provided, as well as an exceptionally good relationship between the Department and the people they serve.

7) Professional Organizations. Members of the Department have stayed active in professional organizations, frequently serving in leadership roles. These memberships keep the Department well informed about recent developments and new ideas in public service. The participation in these groups also assists in keeping Department members well informed about legislation, court cases, and new services provided by either the State or Federal Government.

8) Emergency Communications. Radio communications for Police and Fire have been improved dramatically in the last ten years. All communications equipment has been replaced with the most recent technology available. Enhancements have been made to allow Police Officers and Firefighters in the field to communicate with each other, even though the Police are on UHF and the Fire are on VHF. A ten channel recorder records all activities in the Communications Center. The Department has had 911 capability since 1970. In September of 1985, the E-911 system was installed as part of a County-wide effort. A new phone system was installed in September of 1980 to serve both City government and the School District. The system has been reliable and effective. A Mutual Aid Frequency (MARS) has been installed in Department radios. Radios also have multi-frequency capability for future expansion to regular communication with other agencies.

9) Records. In 1984, the Department automated its records system by purchasing computer hardware and software after an extensive study. Enhancements have already been made to the system, and additional improvements are being seriously planned, especially

to serve the information needs of the Fire Service.

10) Improvements. During this period, the City of Mercer Island has made numerous improvements which have benefited the Public Safety Department and other City departments. Some of the more important improvements include financial reporting, development controls, traffic engineering, prosecutor services, water system, and community facilities.

11) Staffing. The Administrative Services Division has operated with about the same staff during the last ten years. Two part-time clerks have been added. There was a Research and Development position from March of '75 to November of '76. This position was supported by a grant. A full-time Fire Marshal was added in June of 1978. This position reports to the Director and was established primarily to exercise control over the development and construction occurring in the City. Other than these listed exceptions, the same number of positions exist in the Division as did ten years ago.

B. Police Programs

This section of the report will highlight some of the more significant programs sponsored by Police Operations Division.

- Crime Prevention. The Department supports numerous crime prevention activities including Operation I.D., Neighborhood Watch, sport trading cards, bank robbery seminars, home security checks, and business security checks.
- A Crime Stoppers Program was begun in 1982. It was the second such program in the State and the first in the Seattle metropolitan area.
- The Department was the first in the State to implement the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program. An officer received training in Los Angeles in 1985 and has been teaching in the public schools since then.
- The Department has supported its own Dive Team for many years. The Team performs underwater search and rescue activities.
- A Marine Patrol service is provided which has law enforcement, rescue, and firefighting capabilities. The

boat is staffed seven days a week by a police officer and an emergency medical technician, who is also trained as a volunteer firefighter. Service is provided on a contract basis to the adjoining cities of Renton and Medina.

- A well trained Police Containment Team exists to stabilize situations pending the arrival of a SWAT team on a mutual aid basis.
- A model Field Training Officer Program was developed in the early 70's and refined in the middle 70's.
- The Department participates in the Eastside Drug Task Force, which is a law enforcement effort sponsored by several suburban cities in the King County area.
- There has been participation in research to improve the selection process for entry level employees.
- A representative is involved in the DWI Task Force for King County.
- There is a Law Enforcement Explorer Post which has been in operation since 1980.
- Police officers are routinely and repeatedly trained in the use of firearms, baton, first aid, and CPR.

C. Fire Programs

The Department has sponsored the following fire programs over the past several years:

- A full-time Fire Marshal was appointed in 1978.
- There has been a history of exercising strict control over development, and the Council has been willing to adopt the latest Fire and Building Codes.
- Since 1975, firefighter instructors have taught first aid to police officers.
- The Fire Marshal has arranged for new commercial construction and multiple dwellings to have fire alarms which ring into the Public Safety Communications Center.
- Considerable success and coordination has been achieved in the area of arson investigation. This involves the

cooperative efforts of the Fire Marshal and police detectives. Arsons have been solved and successfully prosecuted.

- Firefighters have provided hands-on fire extinguisher training to all City employees, and they have provided fire drill training to all City departments and to all local schools.
- There has been heavy involvement in the construction of the Interstate 90 freeway which crosses the north end of the Island. Successful efforts have been made to improve fire protection on the highway.
- The Department has written mutual aid agreements which do, in fact, work with the City of Bellevue, the City of Seattle, and two King County Fire Districts.
- Passage of a bond issue allowed the Department to purchase all new firefighting equipment in 1984. This included four maxi pumpers, two midi pumpers, a 110 ft. aerial ladder, and about \$100,000 in small tools and equipment.
- All firefighters are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT). The full-time firefighters are qualified to operate a Life Pak 4 defibrillator.
- Considerable effort has been spent for the last several years in developing pre-fire plans for commercial structures and multiple dwellings. This has been followed up with training for the Island firefighters.
- In cooperation with the Engineering Department, the Fire Service has developed high quality maps which show every address and fire hydrant on the Island. These maps have also been useful to police officers and dispatchers.
- Firefighters inspect every commercial structure and multiple dwelling for compliance with the Fire Code every year. The Fire Marshal follows up when corrections are not made by the owner.

D. Community Service Activities

Following are some examples of the kinds of activities the Department has supported by way of community service:

- In 1984, the Department sponsored a Public Safety Day which was well attended by hundreds of members of the community. The purpose of the day was to provide Public Safety information about fires, crimes, accidents, and first aid. Funds were provided by local service clubs.
- Hands-on fire extinguisher training has been provided to members of the business community.
- Public Safety personnel service and maintain the City of Mercer Island's fire extinguishers.
- Volunteer Firefighters install smoke detectors in homes on request.
- Firefighters have sponsored efforts to donate blood, "Give Burns the Boot", and raise funds for muscular dystrophy.
- Police officers distribute crime prevention trading cards which feature sports figures. Support for this program comes from the local Kiwanis Club.
- The Marine Patrol officer provides a boating safety class for members of the community.
- The Department has facilitated numerous races, runs, parades, fireworks demonstrations, and other community celebrations.
- A course of instruction in motorcycle riding has been provided by police officers.
- Police and Fire personnel both participate in "Safety Town", a program which educates small children in basic safety and prepares them to attend school.
- The Department is represented actively on the Mercer Island Drug Coalition, a community based effort to reduce substance abuse.
- Another member of the Department has been active for

several years in a citizen committee to increase the use of seat belts.

- Department instructors have provided CPR training to citizens for many years.
- The "Learn Not To Burn" curriculum is in place in all the City's elementary schools.

These examples are intended to illustrate that the Department has kept current in both the Police and Fire Service and has been responsive to the community it serves. Certainly other examples could be given, but there is enough information here to give the reader a general impression of the nature of the Department and the services it provides.

E. Response to Routine Calls

Understanding the coordinated police/fire response to routine calls may be helpful to the reader.

- Medic Aid Call. This is a call for emergency medical service when there is a threat to life. Some examples of medic aid calls include: heart attack, drowning or stoppage of breathing, electrocution, and severe bleeding. By definition, these calls require the services of paramedics. Mercer Island receives paramedic services from the City of Bellevue.

The dispatchers who take the call are trained to give CPR instructions over the phone. They simultaneously dispatch police, fire, and paramedic units. The police officer nearest the call responds to it and administers first aid until the arrival of the firefighters. The fire station closest to the call responds with an aid unit and relieves the police officer. A second police officer arranges through the dispatcher to meet the Bellevue paramedics and guide them to the call.

- Aid Call. This is a call for emergency medical service which is not life threatening. It is handled almost the same as a medic aid call except the paramedics are not dispatched.

- Fire Call. The dispatcher simultaneously dispatches police and fire units. The police officer nearest the call responds and when appropriate either relays descriptive information to the fire units via radio or uses his portable extinguisher.

Both fire stations respond to the call according to an agreed upon response schedule. Volunteer/Auxiliary firefighters respond to the main station and then to the fire. Police officers provide crowd control and traffic control at the fire. If mutual aid is requested from a neighboring City, a police officer will guide the responding units to the fire.

- Traffic Accident with Injuries. The dispatcher simultaneously dispatches police and fire units. The police officers assist with first aid, handle traffic direction, and investigate the accident. The firefighters deal with the injured in the same way as an aid call or medic aid call. If there is a car fire or spilled fuel, the firefighters take care of it.

Every time firefighters are dispatched, no matter what the call, the police are also dispatched. The cooperation and coordination of police and fire services can be achieved with two separate departments. However, when they are in the same department, coordinated delivery of emergency services is much more likely to be achieved. Working together has become a habit, communication is routine, and the command and control flows through a single system. All of these facts make it easier to deliver high quality services.

IV EXHIBITS - TEN YEAR DATA SUMMARIES

The following forty pages of charts and graphs provide a ten year history of several different kinds of data. There is information on population, budget, personnel, crime, arrests, fire losses, aid calls, traffic accidents, and other things.

There was some discussion about whether to comment on each chart. A decision was made to not comment on the data. Each chart gives a ten year history; the trends are clear enough that no additional comments are needed.

Some general remarks:

- Crime figures are based on reported crime; not all crime is reported.
- Fire loss figures are based on actual insurance settlements. In some cases, these amounts may be more than the actual loss; in other cases, these amounts may be less than the actual loss (inadequate insurance).
- The budget amounts represent actual expenditures.
- Assessed valuation is based on the records of the King County Assessor.

NOTE: The subsequent section – Ten-Year Report Exhibits, was deleted from this report due to lack of pertinence to this project, and its size.

V WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

This section begins reporting of what must be clearly labeled as opinions rather than facts. Up to this point, the material presented has been factual and can speak for itself. The opinions in the last two sections of the report represent consensus thinking in the Department. While they may not seem earth shattering at first, these comments represent the collective wisdom of many people and many years of experience.

- A. We learned that we had more in common than we thought. Initially, we thought there would be a few areas where working together would benefit service. During the first two or three years, we were repeatedly surprised at how many services could be improved by cooperation between Police and Fire. There was concern that the role of each might become blurred; in fact, the opposite was true. Understanding each other's role better made our own role more clear.
- B. We think that the City has not made any substantial cost savings by creating a Public Safety Department, but the quality of the service has improved and so has efficiency within the Department. In other words, the same dollars are producing better results than if the two departments had remained separate. Probably the best evidence for this is the Department's policy manual, where in dozens of policies the coordination and cooperation of Police and Fire service is detailed.
- C. People are more important than the organizational structure. We have come to believe that the organizational chart is helpful, but it is people who provide the service and make organizations work. Choosing capable people at all levels and giving them the tools and the training they need is essential. Public Safety is not a way to economize on training or personnel costs. It is a way to make good people even more productive.
- D. Actual fire losses are a better way to evaluate the fire service than the fire rating system of Insurance Services Office (ISO). Early in the Department's history, there was a tendency to get on the ISO treadmill. It was decided fairly early not to do that.

We felt that the costs to improve our fire rating would not be cost effective in terms of insurance savings to the citizens of our community. The decision was made to place heavy emphasis on prevention of fires and early detection. This has resulted in fire losses which were consistently below the national average.

- E. Consistency of effort and continuity of effort are critical to long-term success. We feel it is important that the members of the Department know there is a long-term commitment to making the Public Safety concept work. If it is established on a trial basis, it is too easy to sabotage. False starts hurt and confuse people in the organization. If the City had changed Directors or City Managers several times during the last ten years, it no doubt would have done harm to the Department. Many of our successes have been possible because of a shared vision of where the Department was going, combined with the commitment and the resources to get there.

VI PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Some problems persist which the Department has not been able to solve. We feel it is important to point these out honestly and to provide recommendations about how they could be addressed. These statements, like those in Section V, represent consensus opinions rather than fact. Some of these matters might not be problems in other cities or states, but we think that most of them will be problems for most public safety departments.

- A. The Washington State Retirement System for Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters (LEOFF) is a problem. It has prevented several departments from becoming public safety departments. The Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) has taken the position that if a person is not a police officer or a firefighter, he cannot be a member of the retirement system. He cannot be both in their opinion. Several cities which have seriously considered creating public safety departments have been discouraged by this decision. The corrective action is obvious. The Washington State Legislature needs to clarify the law so that DRS will allow people to be both police officers and firefighters and allow Directors to remain in the

LEOFF Retirement System.

- B. The question of where do Directors of Public Safety come from is a serious concern. If a person has several years' experience as a manager in a public safety department, he will probably be ready to be appointed as a Director. If, however, his experience has been one-sided, that is in Police or Fire, he will have more difficulty in taking over and directing a public safety department. Both the Fire Service and the Police Service require fairly extensive technical knowledge which must be learned and understood before good decisions can be made. Only when there is a good understanding of both disciplines can a Director hope to make some real improvements in the department. With improved understanding comes the opportunity to see all the wonderful possibilities.
- C. The world is not conditioned to thinking in terms of Public Safety. People are conditioned to thinking in terms of a Police Department and a Fire Department. Professional organizations are designed to serve one discipline or the other. There are Police Chief Associations and there are Fire Chief Associations. Other Police and Fire Departments have some difficulty in relating to a Public Safety Department. The same is true of people in the community. It is difficult to overcome a lifetime of conditioning. This problem may best be overcome when other departments become Public Safety Departments. If it becomes more common and accepted, people and organizations will adjust to the idea. In the meantime, we have learned to adjust to being different.
- D. The Director is unable to give as much time to either the Police Service or the Fire Service as he would if he were only a Police Chief or a Fire Chief. A solution to this is to provide the Director with able Division Commanders. The Division Heads must have more authority to make decisions about their own operations than they would in a traditional Fire or Police Department. If a Division Commander is not able to carry this increased responsibility, then more decisions fall to the Director, making him less effective. An Administrative Assistant or other staff person to

assist the Director is seen as desirable, but there is no substitute for able Division Heads.

- E. There is a need to house as many Public Safety personnel as possible in a single building. Presently, we are in three structures, two of which are fire stations. The third is a combination police station and public safety headquarters. Our opinion is that Police and Fire personnel would benefit from being in the same building. Sharing office space and bumping into each other in the halls would improve communication and understanding between the Fire and Police professionals. Geographic remoteness tends to preserve emotional isolation. Sharing space is more likely to create the feeling that they must work together.
- F. There has been little opportunity for Fire professionals to work in staff assignments. Part of the barrier to this is Washington State Law which provides that work performed by a bargaining unit cannot be removed from that bargaining unit without their agreement. So, for the last ten years, the majority of staff positions have been filled by Police personnel. The best solution to this problem would be to change the State Law. Another solution would be to create one or two new staff positions which could be filled with Fire professionals.
- G. Resistance to Public Safety by Police and Fire unions is a major obstacle in many cities. In Mercer Island, the unions were willing to give the concept a try. In most cities, the unions resist this idea and put a lot of energy into making sure it does not happen. The International Association of Firefighters will resist all attempts at creating Public Safety Departments of any kind. A solution to this problem is to convince the unions that their fears are groundless. Some Public Safety models will create more resistance than others. For example, if the plan were to create a completely cross trained department, it would encounter far more resistance than a plan of administrative consolidation such as done on Mercer Island. Still another solution is to negotiate an agreement that calms the union fears about Public

Safety.

- H. Municipal fire insurance is an idea which deserves further study. Mercer Island and a few other cities participated in a study and learned that it was economically feasible. The problem with the concept is that it may not be politically feasible. One of the values of municipal fire insurance is that it focuses attention on preventing fire losses, which is where we think it should be. Municipal fire insurance could be part of a Fire Master Plan.
- I. Consideration should be given to developing a Public Safety Plan for the community. Mercer Island is just beginning to look at this idea. The Department will prepare a draft plan for Public Safety with goals and objectives stretching over several years. An attempt will be made to get the City Council to adopt the plan and carry it out.

If we have learned nothing else, we have learned that not all communities are alike. Each city must decide for itself what will work. It should bear in mind that there are some real problems associated with implementing any form of a Public Safety Department. It should also be aware that many of the fears and frightening statements are, in fact, myths, and not a cause for real concern. Mercer Island is planning on continuing its Public Safety Department for the foreseeable future. No major changes are contemplated. What is expected is that the evolutionary process described here will continue.

MERCER ISLAND MUNICIPAL CODE

Chapter 3.32

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

3.32.010 ESTABLISHED.

There is created and established a new department for the City to be known as the "Department of Public Safety." (Ord. 396, Section 1, 1975.)

3.32.020 POSITIONS ESTABLISHED.

A. Positions within the Department of Public Safety shall consist of the Director of the Department of Public Safety, Assistant Directors of the Department of Public Safety, Police Lieutenants, Fire Captains, Police Sergeants, Fire Lieutenants, Police Officers and Firefighters. The positions of Police Lieutenant and Fire Captain shall be equivalent in rank and for the purposes of Civil Service. The positions of Police Sergeant and Fire Lieutenant shall be equivalent in rank and for the purposes of Civil Service. Police Officers and Firefighters shall be equivalent in rank and for the purposes of Civil Service.

B. The Director of the Department of Public Safety shall be head of the Department and shall be appointed by the City Manager. The Assistant Directors of the Department of Public Safety shall be assistant to the Director of the Department of Public Safety. In the event that a vacancy should occur in the position of Director, the duties of Director shall be assumed by the City Manager or his designee.

C. The Director and Assistant Directors of the Department of Public Safety shall not be included in the classified Civil Service. The positions of Police Lieutenant, Fire Captain, Police Sergeants, Fire Lieutenants, Police Officers and Firefighters are included in the classified Civil Service. (Ord. A-3, Section 1, 1981: Ord. 488, Section 1, 1979: Ord. 396, Section 2, 1975.)

3.32.030 FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES.

The functions and duties of the Department of Public Safety shall consist of those heretofore assigned to be performed by the Police and Fire Departments of the City and shall include crime prevention and suppression, traffic control, fire prevention, fire control, civil defense, emergency medical services and such other related functions and duties as may be assigned from time to time by the City Manager. (Ord. 396, Section 3, 1975.)

APPENDIX A

MERCER ISLAND MUNICIPAL CODE
Chapter 3.32
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Page 2

3.32.040 DUTIES OF DIRECTOR.

A. The Director of the Department of Public Safety shall have all of the powers granted, together with all of the duties imposed, by the laws of the State relating to Fire Chiefs and Police Chiefs, and in addition thereto he shall have the power and duty to enforce the ordinances of the City and to perform such other services as the laws of the State and the ordinances of the City may now or hereafter require, and shall receive for the faithful performance of his duties such compensation as shall be fixed by the City Council.

B. The Director is the Chief Executive officer of the department and the final departmental authority on all matters of policy, operations and discipline. He shall be authorized to appoint and remove employees of the department, subject to applicable Civil Service laws, rules and regulations. He shall be responsible to the City Manager for the operation of the department and shall provide the City Manager with such reports as he may require. (Ord. 396, Section 4, 1975.)

3.32.050 CIVIL SERVICE CONTINUED.

Pending the establishment of a Civil Service Commission for the Department of Public Safety, all personnel matters, with the exception of all such matters pertaining to the Director of such department, shall continue to be subject to the jurisdiction of the existing Police and Fire Civil Service Commissions of the City and such Commissions shall continue to exercise all powers granted by law. (Ord. 396, Section 5, 1985.)

3.32.060 BOND REQUIRED FOR DIRECTOR.

The Director of the Department of Public Safety shall, before assuming his duties, furnish a fidelity bond at the expense of the City in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) conditioned upon the satisfactory and lawful performance of his duties. (Ord. 396, Section 6, 1975.)

APPENDIX A

MERCER ISLAND MUNICIPAL CODE

Chapter 3.30

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

3.30.010 ESTABLISHED.

There is established a Civil Service Commission for the Department of Public Safety. (Added during 1980 codification.)

3.30.020 PURPOSE - FUNCTION AND JURISDICTION.

Pursuant to RCW Chapters 41.08 and 41.12, the Civil Service Commission shall exercise the powers and perform the duties established by State law in connection with the selection, appointment and employment of firefighters and police officers of the City. (Added during 1980 codification.)

3.30.030 MEMBERSHIP - TERM.

A. The Civil Service Commission shall consist of three (3) voting members who shall be appointed by the City Manager. In addition to the voting members, the City Manager may serve, or he may appoint, an employee or employees of the City to serve as an ex officio member without authority to vote. Vacancies occurring in any position on the Board shall be filled by appointment made by the City Manager for the unexpired term.

B. The term of each voting member, unless terminated earlier by the appointment authority, shall be for six (6) years and shall expire on December 31st, or until his successor is appointed and qualifies. The ex officio member shall serve at the will of the City Manager. (Added during 1980 codification.)

3.30.040 MEETINGS - ORGANIZATION.

The Civil Service Commission shall determine the time and place of its meetings and shall adopt rules and regulations which shall substantially accomplish the purposes of RCW Chapters 41.08 and 41.12. The rules shall be reduced to writing and a copy filed with the City Clerk. The rules may be amended from time to time by the Commission. (Added during 1980 codification.)

APPENDIX B

Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

Appendix B City Of Mercer Island--1999-2000 Biennial Budget

Section K

CITY HIGHLIGHTS

ABOUT MERCER ISLAND

ISLAND HISTORY

Just over five miles long and two miles wide, Mercer Island is an island community situated in Lake Washington, east of the City of Seattle and west of the City of Bellevue. Early settlement on Mercer Island began in the late 1870's. The island was named after one of the three pioneering Mercer brothers from Illinois, all of whom had great influence in the Seattle area. Although none of the brothers lived on Mercer Island, they would often hunt and explore throughout the island's secluded forests. In these early days, island settlers would travel by rowboat to the neighboring community of Seattle in order to pick up any necessities. An occasional tramp steamer would drop off items that were too large to transport by rowboat.

Because of the inconveniences of island living, settlement was slow until C.C. Calkins platted the town of East Seattle and built a luxurious resort on the western side of the island in 1891. A ferry dock was built and small steamers began to make regular stops. With transportation available, the area began to attract more residents. Public water travel continued until July 2, 1940, when the floating bridge from Mercer Island to Seattle was opened.

Today, Interstate 90, which connects Mercer Island with Seattle and Bellevue, is an eight-lane freeway system, which includes two separate side-by-side floating bridges across Lake Washington.

THE COMMUNITY

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family, high-quality residential community with a commercial business district and multi-family dwellings concentrated at the northern end of the Island. It's close proximity to both Seattle and Bellevue makes island living convenient. The City owns approximately 300 acres of parkland and open space, which helps maintain the island's natural beauty. The result is quiet, forested neighborhoods, complemented by stunning views of Seattle, the Cascade Mountains, Mount Rainier and Lake Washington. It is an active community where volunteer boards and commissions work closely with the City Council and city staff. The City of Mercer Island is known for providing quality customer service to its 21,000 residents.

The Mercer Island School District has an outstanding reputation and is a source of community pride. The District serves approximately 3,000 students on the island with three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and an alternative high school. In addition to the public schools, the island is home to St. Monica's Catholic School for grades K-8 and Yeshiva Jewish High School. Per capita spending for education in the all-island district also ranks at the highest levels in the state. On statewide exams, Mercer Island students consistently rank among the highest. Approximately 90 percent of the island's high school graduates continue on to post-secondary education.

The City Council's commitment to open spaces and parks is reflected in the three large city parks on the island, one public boat launch, and more than ten public waterfront parks which provide open access to a significant portion of the island's shoreline. In a landmark action, the City Council voted to create what may be the first municipal Open Space Conservancy Trust in the United States to protect a twenty acre parcel on the south side of the island. In other areas, there are numerous ball fields, bike trails and picnic areas, as well as over 50 miles of marked trails. The City's Parks and Recreation Department operates a number of programs geared to residents of all ages at its community center, including youth, senior citizen, and art programs.

CITY OPERATIONS

Mercer Island was incorporated on July 18, 1960 and operates with a Council/Manager form of government. Seven City Councilmembers are chosen during at-large, non-partisan elections to serve four-year terms. From among their seven-member body, the City Council members elect a Mayor to serve a two-year term. The Mayor and City Council appoint a City Manager who is responsible for the administration of City policies. There are a variety of boards and commissions including the Disability Board, Volunteer Fire Pension Board, Arts Council, Building Board of Appeals, Civil Service Commission, Planning Commission, Design Commission, Utilities Board, and the Youth and Family Services Board; all assist in the formulation of policy and direction for the City.

The City employs 164 full-time equivalent employees. Approximately one-half of the City's permanent employees are represented by bargaining units as follows:

<u>Bargaining Unit</u>	<u># of Employees</u>	<u>Current Contract Expires</u>
International Association of Firefighters	27	December 1999
Mercer Island Police Association	30	December 1998
Dispatchers	9	December 2000
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees	34	December 1999

The City of Mercer Island provides the following services:

Public Safety (police, fire and emergency medical services)
Street Maintenance
Utilities Maintenance (water, sewer and storm drainage)
Recreation Activities
Public Improvements
Planning and Zoning
Youth and Family Support Services
General Information

MERCER ISLAND AT A GLANCE

Demographics

Land Area		6.2	Square miles
Land Use	Developed residential	3675	Acres
	Undeveloped residential	368	Acres
	Multi-Family	112	Acres
	Commercial/Business	181	Acres
	Public Institutions	181	Acres
Public Schools	Mercer Island School District #400	3	Elementary Schools
		1	Middle School
		1	High School
Parks/Open Space	Developed Parks	23	Parks
	Sites Maintained	45	Sites
	Total Inventory	475	Acres
Climate ¹	Variant Summer temperatures	50 – 70	Degrees Fahrenheit
	Variant Winter temperatures	20 – 40	Degrees Fahrenheit
	Annual precipitation ³	32 – 35	Inches
Population ²	1998	21,690	
	1997	21,550	
	1996	21,490	
	1995	21,290	
	1994	21,270	
	1993	21,260	
	1992	21,210	
	1991	21,190	
	1990	20,816	
	1989	20,280	
	1988	20,690	

¹ Source: National Weather Service.

² Approximately half falls between October and January.

³ Sources: 1990 United States Census Report and Washington State Office of Financial Management.

MERCER ISLAND AT A GLANCE

More Demographics

Population (Future Projection)	2015	25,000
Gender Composition⁴	Male	48%
	Female	52%
Median Age		41.2 years
Age Composition	Under 5 years	5%
	5–17 years	18%
	18–20 years	3%
	21–24 years	4%
	25–44 years	29%
	45–54 years	16%
	55–59 years	7%
	60–64 years	7%
	65–74 years	6%
	75–84 years	4%
	85+ years	1%
Racial composition	Caucasian	89.1%
	Asian or Pacific Island	8.0%
	African American	1.3%
	Hispanic	1.3%
	Amer. Indian, Eskimo or Aleut.	.15%
	Other	.15%
Family Size	1990	2.59/unit
	1980	2.85/unit
	1970	3.37/unit
Number of Dwelling Units	Single-family	6,895
	Multi-family	<u>1,840</u>
	Total	8,735

⁴Source: 1990 United States Census Report. This source has been used for other demographic statistics in this section including median age, age composition, racial composition, family size, housing values, housing income, and educational attainment.

MERCER ISLAND AT A GLANCE

More Demographics

Housing Values	Less than \$49,999	11
	\$50,000-\$99,999	82
	\$100,000-149,000	263
	\$150,000-\$199,000	475
	\$200,000-\$299,999	1,526
	\$300,000+	3,240
	Median Housing Value	\$335,900
Housing Income	Less than \$15,000	8%
	\$15,001-\$25,000	10%
	\$25,001-\$35,000	9%
	\$35,001-\$50,000	15%
	\$50,001-\$60,000	15%
	\$60,001-\$75,000	15%
	\$75,001-\$100,000	9%
	\$100,000+	28%
	Mercer Island	<u>1990</u>
	Median Household Income	\$71,136
	King County	<u>1990</u>
	Median Household Income	\$44,555
Educational Attainment	<i><u>Persons 25 years and over:</u></i>	
	Less than 9 th grade	.7%
	9 th – 12 th grade, no diploma	2.2%
	High school graduate	11.4%
	Some college, no degree	20.7%
	Associate degree	4.2%
	Bachelor's degree	36.6%
	Graduate or professional degree	24.2%
	% of high school graduate or higher	96.8%
	% of bachelor's or higher	60.3%

MERCER ISLAND AT A GLANCE

More Demographics

Police and Fire Protection

The City provides police and fire protection. Some emergency medical services are contracted with outside agencies. The City also operates a marine patrol on Lake Washington throughout the year.

# of Commissioned Police	
Officers:	31
# of Calls for Police Service:	21,282
# of Firefighters:	27
# of Auxiliary Firefighters:	30
# of Fire Stations:	2
# of Emergency Calls:	1,668
Response Time for Urgent Calls (minutes):	Under 5 minutes

Utility Services

Residential Units Served	7,070
Commercial/Multi-Family Units Served	1,771
Public/Inst. & Misc. Units Served	47

<u>Water Utility</u>	Gallons
Storage Capacity	8,000,000
<i>Annual:</i>	
Average Daily Demand	2,125,597
Average Monthly Use	63,767,935
<i>Winter:</i>	
Avg. Daily Demand	1,810,666
<i>Summer:</i>	
Avg. Daily Demand	3,937,429
Miles of Lines	85

Sewer Utility

Miles of Mains	97
Number of Pump Lift Stations	20

Sewage Treatment provided by:
King County/Metro

MERCER ISLAND AT A GLANCE

More Demographics

Storm Drainage	<u>Description</u>	Feet
	Pipes	337,000
	Water Courses	116,600
	Ditches	157,000
	Catch Basins/Manholes (#)	3,500
Transportation	<u>Paved Streets</u>	Miles
	Residential	54.1
	Minor Arterial	4.1
	Collector Arterial	18.5
	Major Arterial	1.0
	Total	78.1
Legal Status	Non-Charter Code City	
Congressional District	Washington's Eighth	
Legislative District	41 st	
Voting Information	Registered Voters:	15,839
	% Voted in Last Election:	59%

ECONOMIC INFORMATION

The Central Business District is the larger of two commercial areas on Mercer Island. A smaller commercial district, the QFC Village, is located on the south end of Mercer Island and includes a large supermarket, drug store, bank, and other retail and service businesses. A 76-acre bowl-shaped area, located at the north end of Mercer Island, just south of Interstate 90, the Central Business District is comprised primarily of low-rise developments surrounded by parking lots, typical of suburban development. Revitalization efforts were initiated in 1993 to create a memorable, desirable, and accessible downtown for Mercer Island citizens, business owners, and visitors. Beginning with the adoption of the *Comprehensive Plan* and subsequent adoptions of the *Town Center Plan* and *Town Center Development District Guidelines*, Mercer Island citizens have created a new vision for downtown. The primary goals of the process are:

- To provide a mixed use commercial core with retail shops and professional offices linked by a pedestrian-oriented circulation system;
- To create a mid-rise office district with ground level retail and below grade or rear lot parking;
- To build low rise, high density housing that encircles the retail core;
- To improve linkages with increased bus service or light rail, and;
- To create memorable open spaces suitable for public art and community celebrations.

The Mercer Island City Council reaffirmed its commitment to downtown revitalization at its 1996 retreat, establishing an ad hoc committee of Councilmembers and staff to develop long and near term strategies for the Central Business District improvements, and to initiate a number of smaller projects. Projects currently in the planning stages include:

- Partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to provide a downtown business/community liaison;
- Design of downtown gateway markers and a monument honoring the contributions of service clubs;
- A downtown parking study;
- And an ordinance allowing for private commerce on public right-of-way in the business district.

In the last three years, public efforts have been focused on new light standards, street and sidewalk improvements and enhancements, landscaping and the installation of street furniture, while private investment in downtown is also becoming visible.

With 558 employees, Farmers New World Life Insurance Company is the largest employer on Mercer Island. The firm established its offices on the Island in 1958 and relocated its facilities to its current location in the Central Business District in 1982. The Mercer Island office serves as the firm's national headquarters.

Two of the largest office complexes within the City are the Island Corporate Center, which was built in 1987 with approximately 103,000 square feet and the John Hancock Building, also built in 1987, with 35,850 square feet. These buildings house both retail and office tenants.

ECONOMIC STATISTICS

Business Provides:

4,200 Jobs

Major Employers:

Farmers New World Life Insurance Company

558 employees

Mercer Island School District #400

335 employees

PacifiCare of Washington

186 employees

City of Mercer Island

164 employees

Local Sales Tax Rates:

Effective 11/98

Total Sales Tax Rate	8.6%
State Sales Tax Rate	6.5%
RTA	0.4%
Local:	1.7%
Criminal Justice	.1%
Transit	.6%
City	1.0%

Building Construction:

<u>Year</u>	<u># of Permits Issued</u>		<u>Valuation</u>
	(Total #)	(Bldg. only)	
1997	1983	264	\$29,280,362
1996	1297	268	\$27,553,464
1995	1069	248	\$31,293,498
1994	1262	255	\$42,039,108
1993	1,573	258	\$16,250,785
1992	1,685	327	\$19,573,619
1991	1,604	310	\$28,063,563
1990	1,541	402	\$46,816,174

PROPERTY TAX INFORMATION

City of Mercer Island Levy Rates⁵

Representative Levy Rates and Percents for Collection Years 1997 and 1998
(Per \$1,000 of Assessed Valuation).

Tax Category	1997 Levy Rate	1997 Levy Percent	1998 Levy Rate	1998 Levy Percent
King County	2.13	16.9%	1.85	16.0%
Port of Seattle	.28	2.2%	.26	2.3%
City of Mercer Island	2.40	19.0%	2.25	19.5%
Emergency Medical Services	.25	2.0%	.00	0.0%
School District No. 400	3.55	28.1%	3.18	27.5%
State Schools	3.52	27.9%	3.51	30.4%
King County Library System	<u>.50</u>	4.0 %	<u>.50</u>	4.3%
TOTAL		12.63		11.55

City of Mercer Island Major Taxpayers⁵

Taxpayer	Business	Assessed Valuation
Paul G. Allen	Residence	\$63,341,000
Shorewood Apartments	Apartments	\$23,127,000
Covenant Shores	Apartments	\$22,546,000
Farmers New World Life Insurance Co.	Insurance	\$15,448,314
Island Corporate Center	Office Building	\$11,880,800
Puget Sound Power & Light	Electric Utility	\$ 9,171,615
U.S. West Communications	Telephone Utility	\$ 8,602,978
Gencor S-Mercers Island Associations	Retirement Home	\$ 6,945,725
1020 Corporation	Convalescent Center	\$ 5,930,300
Mercer Island Beach Club	Private Recreation Club	\$ 5,088,158

⁵ King County Department of Assessments, September 1998

Levy Rates for Voted Bonds and General Tax

There are two parts to the levy imposed by the City -- general tax and voted bonds. In support of basic services including fire, police and park and recreation programs, the City levies a general tax (non-voter approved) of 2.163/\$1,000 assessed value (1996). To pay off the costs of voter approved bonds for large capital projects (City Hall, Library, Fire Trucks, Park Development, and Open Space purchases), the City levies a voter-approved general obligation bond tax of \$0.176/\$1,000 assessed value (1996).

Levy Rate⁶

Levy Amounts

Collection Year	Voted Bonds	General Tax	Total	Voted Bonds	General Tax	Total
1998	\$0.12148	\$2.13358	\$2.25506	\$ 400,186	\$7,028,390	\$7,428,576
1997	\$0.16658	\$2.23025	\$2.39683	\$ 486,465	\$6,585,643	\$7,072,108
1996	\$0.17567	\$2.16259	\$2.33826	\$ 504,982	\$6,312,757	\$6,817,739
1995	\$0.18066	\$2.03959	\$2.22025	\$ 513,278	\$5,881,546	\$6,394,824
1994	\$0.28054	\$2.05494	\$2.33548	\$ 751,596	\$5,587,951	\$6,339,547
1993	\$0.37008	\$1.9141	\$2.28418	\$ 990,562	\$5,191,834	\$6,182,396
1992	\$0.35985	\$1.76626	\$2.12611	\$ 979,839	\$4,862,342	\$5,842,181
1991	\$0.40053	\$1.65395	\$2.05448	\$1,091,084	\$4,537,811	\$5,628,895

Property Tax Collection Information⁷

Taxes are due and payable on April 30 of each year succeeding the levy. The entire tax or first half must be paid on or before April 30, or else the total amount becomes delinquent on May 1. The second half of the tax is payable on or before October 31, becoming delinquent November 1.

Collection Year	Assessed Valuation	Levy Rate	Tax Levy	Tax Collection Year of Levy	Tax Collection As of 9/30/98
1998	\$3,294,183,967	2.256	\$7,428,576	in process	in process
1997	\$2,952,878,554	2.367	\$7,072,108	+98.4%	99.5%
1996	\$2,918,884,544	2.338	\$6,817,739	98.4%	100.0%
1995	\$2,883,007,844	2.220	\$6,394,824	98.3%	100.0%
1994	\$2,719,252,413	2.335	\$6,339,547	98.4%	100.0%
1993	\$2,710,268,409	2.284	\$6,182,396	98.3%	100.0%
1992	\$2,751,623,069	2.126	\$5,842,181	97.7%	100.0%
1991	\$2,742,485,140	2.054	\$5,628,895	97.6%	100.0%

⁶ Source: King County Department of Assessments

⁷ Source: King County Finance Division

Appendix C

City Ordinance--City Classification

2.02.010 City classification.

The city of Mercer Island is classified as a noncharter code city, under the council-manager plan of government as set forth in Chapter 35A.13 RCW, endowed with all the applicable rights, powers, privileges, duties and obligations of a noncharter code city as set forth in RCW Title 35A, as the same now exists, or may be provided hereafter, including any and all supplements, amendments, or other modifications of said title at any time hereafter enacted. (Ord. 442 § 1, 1978).

Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

Appendix D

Letter To Ruth Obadal

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire Operations Division
3030 78th Avenue S.E. Mercer Island, WA 98040
(206) 236-3600 FAX (206) 236-3622

July 14, 2000

Ruth Obadal
Eugene Fire Department
1705 West 2nd Ave.
Eugene, OR 97402

Dear Ms. Obadal,

My name is Chris Tubbs and I am a Captain with the Mercer Island Fire Division. I am also a third year student in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. I am writing this letter in the hopes that you can provide some assistance for my current ARP.

During my second year at the Academy, I conducted research on consolidated departments, (Mercer Island operates an Administrative Consolidation), and I utilized your paper as one of my research documents.

I am again researching this topic, for my third year paper. I am following up on some recommendations made in my paper. It is on this basis that I hope you might be able to provide some insight from your organization's experience, by responding to the following questions:

1. Prior to de-consolidation, did the City of Eugene conduct any analysis/comparison between the consolidated structure and a more traditional structure?
2. If so, what type of model/formula/methodology was used to conduct the measurement?
3. If so, what were the results?
4. If not, what was the basis for de-consolidating?
5. Did the City of Eugene experience any bias towards the fire service as a consolidated organization?
6. If so, how/in what way?
7. If so, was it measured, how?
8. Since de-consolidation, have these biases disappeared, (if applicable)?
9. Now that Eugene has de-consolidated, what have been the advantages and disadvantages?

10. It is my understanding that the Director of Public Safety was Everett Hall and he came from a fire service background, is this correct?
11. Did he have any Police experience prior to his appointment?
12. Did the Police Department object to his appointment?
13. If so, on what basis?
14. If so, what was done to address those concerns?
15. Do you have any recommendations or other thoughts?

I hope that you will be able to share your organization's experiences through these questions. I recognize the time limitations you may have and would understand if you are unable to respond.

If you are able to respond, I can be reached through the following methods:

Email: chris.tubbs@ci.mercer-island.wa.us
Fax: (425) 836-9076 (personal number)
Mail: enclosed self-addressed envelope.

I truly appreciate your time and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Chris Tubbs, Captain
Mercer Island Fire Division

Appendix E

Response From Ruth Obadal

From: OBADAL Ruth A [Ruth.A.OBADAL@ci.eugene.or.us]
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2000 4:56 PM
To: 'Chris Tubbs'
Subject: Deconsolidation questions reply

Chris,

The first four questions you ask can probably be answered best by two e-mail messages from then-City Manager, Vicki Elmer. In the first, she briefly explains her reasons for deconsolidating the department. In the second, she provides some detail on the process for doing this.

I'm not sure what you mean by bias toward the fire service as a consolidated organization. I do think being part of a Department of Public Safety caused some identity issues for fire personnel. Since they were strictly Fire & EMS, and not cross-trained as Police officers, they were not Public Safety Officers. Yet they felt less visible and identifiable to the City Council and the public. It also seemed unfair that the Fire Chief and the Police Chief were not department directors, so they were not included on the City's executive management team. The Fire & EMS Division seemed to get the short end of the budget stick when combined with Police. Police needs always seem to be so great and visible, it is hard to compete with them.

Since deconsolidation, Fire has been a department in its own right but still has to compete with Police for "public safety" resources. Police received the bulk of the support staff after the breakup, from which Fire is still trying to recover.

Advantages of deconsolidation: We're a fire department again. This is not just a cosmetic change. It has a tangible benefit in improved employee morale, equal status with other City departments, and opportunities to pursue financial and operational goals specific to fire and emergency medical service.

Disadvantages: As I mentioned above, we are still struggling to get enough support staff to meet our needs.

I had hoped to find evidence of studies to justify both consolidation and later deconsolidation, but I believe they were not done, at least not in any depth. I think it is apparent that both the move to consolidate as well as the move to deconsolidate had political implications.

Good luck with your project.

Ruth Obadal
Eugene Fire & EMS Dept.

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Appendix F

Letter To Department Of Retirement Systems



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire Operations Division
3030 78th Avenue S.E. Mercer Island, WA 98040
(206) 236-3600 FAX (206) 236-3622

August 1, 2000

Director
Washington State Department of Retirement Systems
PO Box 48380
Olympia, WA 98504-8380

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chris Tubbs and I am a Captain with the Mercer Island Fire Division, and a student at the National Fire Academy. I am currently working on an Applied Research Project as part of a requirement for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program.

There are two questions and related documents I am hoping that you can provide or direct me to in order to assist me with my research project. They are:

1. What WAC(s), (or other State Code/Provision), addresses membership in the LEOFF Retirement Program?
 2. What WAC(s), (or other State Code/Provision), addresses Mercer Island Public Safety Director Jan Deveny's inclusion in the LEOFF Retirement Program?
- **NOTE:** It is my recollection as a member of the Mercer Island Department of Public Safety, that Director Deveny was granted inclusion into the LEOFF program during the 1980's. This was accomplished through a piece of legislation that allowed Directors of Public Safety Departments who were hired between a certain date, to be included into the LEOFF System. It was supported by the Washington State Council of Firefighters. Director Deveny was effectively the only Director of a DPS who was included in the legislation.

If it is possible, I would additionally like to request a copy of the language of each of these WAC's, (or other State Code/Provision).

I should also note that I am on a restricted time schedule as part of the project requirement. It would be beneficial to me to receive a reply no later than August 30th, 2000.

I can be contacted by the following methods:

Postal Mail: Captain Chris Tubbs
Mercer Island Fire Division
3030 78th Ave SE
Mercer Island, WA. 98040

Email: chris.tubbs@ci.mercer-island.wa.us

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I look forward to your reply.

Respectfully,

Chris Tubbs, Captain
Mercer Island Fire Division

Appendix G

Response From Director Of Department Of Retirement Systems



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

P.O. Box 48380 • Olympia, WA 98504-8380 • (360) 664-7000 • Toll Free 1-800-547-6657

August 14, 2000

Captain Chris Tubbs
Mercer Island Fire Division
3030 78th Avenue SE
Mercer Island, Washington 98040

Dear Captain Tubbs:

Thank you for your letter of August 1, 2000 requesting information on the provisions for membership in the Law Enforcement Officers' and Firefighters' Retirement System (LEOFF), and on the inclusion of the position of public safety director in that system.

Prior to 1987 the position of public safety director was not a LEOFF eligible position. Legislation passed in 1987 provided that:

The term "law enforcement officer" also includes any person employed on or after November 1, 1975, and prior to December 1, 1975, as a director of public safety so long as the duties of the director substantially involve only police and/or fire duties and no other duties". RCW 41.26.030(3)(e), (4)(h).

Because of the 1987 legislation, City of Mercer Island Public Safety Director Jan Deveny was made eligible for LEOFF membership under RCW 41.26.030(3)(e).

In 1991 the legislature deleted the 1987 provision from both the definition of law enforcement officer and fire fighter.

In 1993 the legislature amended the definition of law enforcement officer to include public safety officer or director of public safety. RCW 41.26.030(3)(e) now states:

The term "law enforcement officer" also includes a person employed on or after January 1, 1993, as a public safety officer or director of public safety, so long as the job duties substantially involve only either police or fire duties, or both, and no other duties in a city or town with a population of less than ten thousand. The provisions of this subsection(3)(e) shall not apply to any public safety officer or director of public safety who is receiving a retirement allowance under this chapter as of May 12, 1993. This legislation tightened the qualifications for the position to be eligible for LEOFF membership.



Captain Chris Tubbs
August 11, 2000
Page 2

In 1995 WAC 415-105-0120 was adopted that defined the term public safety officer.

- (1) "Public Safety Officer" means a person who is employed on or after January 1, 1993, on a full-time, fully compensated basis by a city or town to perform both law enforcement and fire fighter duties.
- (2) "City or town" as used in this definition, includes only a city or town whose population did not exceed ten thousand at the time the person became employed as a public safety officer.

WAC 415-104-224 through 415-104-245 addresses LEOFF membership in general.

Per your request, I am enclosing copies of the above-mentioned WACs, RCWs, and legislation. You can also visit DRS's web site at <http://www.wa.gov/DRS/> for access to additional RCWs and WACs applicable to LEOFF retirement system administration. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact LEOFF Supervisor Dave Alexander at (360) 664-7063.

Sincerely,



Lucille Christenson, Assistant Director
Retirement Services

LC:jh
Enclosures

Appendix H Letter To Safeco Insurance

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire Operations Division
3030 78th Avenue S.E. Mercer Island, WA 98040
(206) 236-3600 FAX (206) 236-3622

July 25, 2000

Mr. Gary Brock, Vice President
Safeco Property & Casualty
Safeco Plaza
Seattle, WA 98185

Dear Gary,

As you know I am conducting research as part of a course requirement for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program.

According to our Department Records, the City of Mercer Island was last rated by ISO in 1978. As a result of that inspection, Mercer Island received a rating of class 5.

I am interested in determining the impact to residential and commercial building owners, if the City's rating were improved. Specifically what the impacts to these owners would be if our ratings were improved to a class 4, and if they were improved to a class 3.

I would appreciate your assistance in this regard. Given the parameters listed below, what changes in insurance rates would occur to the owners of these buildings, if the Safeco Company insured them?

PARAMETERS

Residential

1. House Value: \$797,000 (median housing value of residence on Mercer Island).
2. Construction Type: Wood Frame.
3. Average Age: 15-20 years

Commercial

1. Type of Business: Office/Retail
2. Square Footage/Size of Occupancy: 2500 Square Feet
3. Construction Type: Ordinary (Masonry/Brick/Concrete Block).

I am also interested in contacting some other insurance companies also. If you have information regarding your counterparts in these other companies, I would be very grateful if you could provide me with that direction.

Thank you in advance Gary for your assistance. If you need any additional information/parameters to aid in the determination of policy rates based on the different ISO ratings, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Tubbs, Captain
Mercer Island Fire Division

chris.tubbs@ci.mercerisland.wa.us

Appendix I

Response From Gary Brock--Safeco Insurance

City of Mercer Island
Department of Public Safety
Fire Operations Division
3030 78th Avenue S.E.
Mercer Island, Washington 98040

Dear Chris,

My apologies for the delay in responding to your request of July 25th. I have gotten information from both our Commercial department and from the Insurance Service Office (ISO) that should supply you with what you need.

As the premiums customers pay for residential homeowners insurance varies significantly from commercial insurance I will address each of these items separately.

For Homeowners insurance I was able to use our TopRate rating system from Quadrant, which contains SAFECO's rates as well as those of five major insurance competitors. These 5 competitors, State Farm, Travelers, the Hartford, Prudential and Encompass (formerly C.N.A.) along with SAFECO write in excess of 40% of the Homeowners market in Washington State. In examining each company we found that there would be no change in rate should the fire protection rating be changed to a 4 or a 3 from its current class 5.

Most losses in the Homeowner line are small partial losses under \$3,000. Large fire losses comprise less than 1/10 of 1% of the total number of losses paid within a typical calendar year. Due to their small number in combination with the small difference in response times between a class 3,4 or 5-rate fire department there is not a statistically significant difference in the overall dollars of loss paid for fire losses to justify a higher charge to the customer.

Commercial, however is a different story. Preparing quotes for commercial property is labor intensive and as a result costly. Rather than develop individual quotes from individual companies, including us, I acquired the ISO Loss Costs. Allow me to explain how loss costs function.

Virtually every insurance company relies upon ISO for one service or another. As a member of ISO you are obligated to report to them your actual losses by very specific categories. ISO takes these reports and aggregates them. Then shares the aggregate numbers with all its members. These aggregated numbers are viewed by both the industry and Insurance Departments as much more creditable than any single company's individual experience. From this, loss costs are developed.

A loss cost is the actual amount of pure premium you should include in your price to the customer in order to have enough money to pay for your average losses. In addition to loss costs companies need to consider the other expenses they incur (general operating expense, commissions, claims handling costs, etc.) in running their business. The sum of these two parts makes up the premium the customer pays.

ISO Loss Costs are universally used by the insurance industry. This is the common starting point for rates. Using Loss Costs as the standard will give a more specific picture of the impact of protection class. As all companies have their own rating schemes with debits and credits for various characteristics. To accurately measure just the impact of differences in protection class, loss costs are the best standard to use as they reflect actual experience and are not tainted by the individual company's rating scheme.

Below is a table of the Loss Cost relativities for protection classes 3, 4 and 5 for Washington. As you will see it illustrates a noticeable difference between these classes. As an example, for an office building the difference between a class 3 and 4 is 6.7% for a frame building and 14% for a masonry building. Example: frame $(1.34 - 1.43) / 1.34 = 6.7\%$; masonry $(0.89 - 0.78) / 0.78 = 14\%$

Category – Light Hazard Service – frame

Protection class	3	4	5
Loss Cost Relativity	1.34	1.43	1.58

Category – Light Hazard Service – masonry

Protection class	3	4	5
Loss Cost Relativity	0.78	0.89	1.06

In summary, while there is no difference between the companies measured for Homeowners coverage, there is a noticeable difference in the commercial arena. Should you need any further information on this matter, please feel free to let me know.

Good luck in your research effort.

Sincerely,

Gary Brock
Assistant Vice-President, SAFECO Insurance Company

Appendix J
Email To Chief Elsoe--Mercer Island Police Division

From: Chris Tubbs
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2000 7:04 PM
To: Ron Elsoe
Cc: Chris Tubbs
Subject: National Fire Academy Paper

Chief,

I am continuing a project at the National Fire Academy and I am looking for some assistance. I am again required to write an applied research project as part of my class requirements. I have chosen to continue with the Public Safety topic.

I am interested in looking at the "career opportunities" offered to Police Division personnel and Fire Division personnel. As best as I can recall the following opportunities are available to police officers. Can you confirm these? Are there any additions, modifications, or deletions?

Thank you for your assistance.

Police Opportunities:

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Patrol | 2. Detectives | 3. Marine Patrol | 4. Dive Team |
| 6. DARE Officer | 7. HS Resource Officer | 8. Bike Patrol | 9. SOT Team |
| 10. Admin positions | 11. Eastside Narcotics TF | 12. Violent Crimes TF -FBI | |

Thanks Ron, I look forward to your reply.
Chris

Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

Appendix K
Response From Chief Elsoe--Mercer Island Police Division

From: Ron Elsoe
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2000 7:56 AM
To: Chris Tubbs
Subject: RE: National Fire Academy Paper

Chris, your list looks pretty good. I think you could add John Pritchard's position as a Financial Investigator. Also Pete assists in Arson Investigation. As far as staff positions for sergeants we have patrol, detectives, and personnel and training. This is all I can think of for now. I would be happy to assist you in any way I can later. Ron

Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

Appendix L

Interview Summary--Firefighter Lyons

Summary of Steve Lyons Interview

Date: August, 2000

Location: Station 91 Kitchen.

1. How long have you been employed by the City?
 - 28 years.
2. In what capacity have you worked for the City?
 - Firefighter
3. What do you believe have been the successes of being a Department of Public Safety?
 - I honestly can't think of anything.
 - In concept there are some things that should have been better such as better working relationship between police and fire; a smoother run closer organization.
 - In the City's view it has probably saved money. They think they are on the cutting edge, like when they hired the woman fire chief.
4. What do you believe have been the failures of being a Department of Public Safety?
 - Loss of Fire Chief who direct contact and influence with city council & city management.
 - If council wanted to something about the fire department, they would ask the fire chief; if they wanted to know something about the police department, they would ask the police chief.
 - Now we have a policeman in charge of the fire department who has made little effort to learn anything about the fire service.
5. Has service delivery been hurt to the community?
 - The firefighters have been what has kept the service delivery great.
 - Fallen short in manpower and equipment.
 - Taken back to seat to everything--we are the red-headed step child.
 - Eg: can remember going to calls in apparatus that were broken down at the same time cops would purchase \$6000 worth of new guns every year. This is only one example of how the police always got things before us.
 - Police fills all administrative positions. This was supposed to be shared with the fire department.
 - Last 5 years under Provost training was drastically improved--before that we hardly had any training. Cops got to go to all the training. It would be interesting to compare training budgets between fire and police say 5 years ago.
 - Citizens not getting the fire protection they deserve--real fire chief would fight for staffing and equipment.

- Bond issue for fire trucks--this was a boondoggle on the citizens. The City took our truck replacement money and spent it on bike trails and lighting tennis courts because they knew the citizens would vote for new fire trucks. So now we buy 20 years worth of fire trucks at one time, which is ridiculous. Now they are talking about making it last for 25 years. So we have 20-25 year old technology. A real fire chief would be explaining all this to council. We have a police chief who doesn't really care.
6. What changes would you make now and why?
- Fire Department study--Police have had, we have not. This study could quantify what things are wrong with our organization
 - Immediately split into separate departments. Equal weight / representation with both chiefs.
 - The only person in our department that can be a Director of Public Safety is a Police Chief.--Is this required/true? In any case police would oppose if firefighter became Director of Public Safety.
7. If we went to separate departments, what would you want to see with marine patrol and dispatch?
- Marine patrol should have integration with fire. The MPA should be a firefighter, not a PT employee.
 - Dispatchers are basically police.

Appendix M

Questionnaire & Response Summary of Fire Division Personnel

1. Describe how you believe our current organizational structure is dysfunctional.

The responses indicated a belief that the organizations is dysfunctional in the following ways:

- Lack of understanding by management of the fire service needs.
- Lack of adequate staffing (suppression and administrative) resulting in personnel filling positions they are not qualified for, nor adequately compensated for.
- Director of Public Safety has no fire service background that impacts the fire service message delivered to council.
- Administrative Division is open to Police only.
- Lack of career development and opportunity for fire personnel.
- Director of Public Safety has very limited interaction and involvement with fire operations.
- Combined structure prohibits focused attention to each type of service.
- Police bias in most areas.
- Current auxiliary program does not meet organizational needs.
- Lack of organizational growth.

2. How does this impact the Fire Division?

The responses indicated a belief that the Fire Division is impacted in the following ways:

- Police get their needs met more than Fire.
- Poor Marine Patrol Program--lack of Fire representation.
- A dispatch center that tends to favor police.
- An unhealthy organization.
- Unsafe work environment.
- Perception that City Management is not concerned with firefighters or their safety.
- Low morale.
- Conflict between labor and management.
- Lack of efficiency.
- Recovery from consequences of consolidation will take years to overcome.
- Poor financial support.
- Lack of adequate staffing.
- Council does not understand or appreciate how much fire does with so little money.
- Equipment extended beyond reasonable life span.
- Lack of fire service advocate.
- Lack of long-range plan.

3. How do you believe the Fire Division has suffered as a result of consolidation?

The responses indicated a belief that the Fire Division is suffered in the following ways:

- Police Officer in charge of Fire Operations.
- Financially.
- Lack of Council access
- Lost administrative positions.
- Poor morale.
- Lack of unified direction.
- Station 91 replacement took too long.
- Fire equipment replacement took too long.
- Lack of adequate training.
- Loss of focused leadership at top.
- Lack of attention to fire service needs.
- In competition with Police for resources--fire usually loses.
- Crisis Management is how City solves problems.
- Marine Patrol has no fire presence.
- Part-time Fire Marshal and works for DSG.
- Dispatch center police oriented.

4. What areas has the Fire Division been neglected and why?

The responses indicated a belief that the Fire Division has been neglected in the following ways:

- Lack of staff support and administrative positions.
- Lack of adequate training.
- Fire Station neglect.
- Apparatus neglect.
- Fire Division issues being communicated honestly to Council.
- Lack of long term planning.
- Lack of adequate staffing.
- Neglect of Fire Service needs.
- Station 92 replacement need being ignored.

5. What do you believe we should change to improve the Department?

The responses indicated a belief that the Fire Division can be improved in the following ways:

- De-consolidate organization.
- Establish officer standards.
- Hire additional staffing.
- Continue to educate Council and Management.
- Educate Community.
- Re-establish equipment rental fund for fire apparatus replacement.
- Eliminate beauracratc hoops to make change.

6. Any additional comments?

The following comments were offered:

- "I feel for a small fire department we have incredible personnel working for us. We are **grossly**: 1. Understaffed, 2. Under-supported (financially and equipment), 3. We are incredibly **un-appreciated!!**"

Format changes have been made to facilitate reproduction. While these research projects have been selected as outstanding, other NFA EFOP and APA format, style, and procedural issues may exist.

Appendix N

Department Survey

1. Organization Information

Question	<i>Response</i>
<i>1. Department Name</i>	
<i>2. Department Contact</i>	
<i>3. Type of Department – (City, District)</i>	
<i>4. Population of City / District served.</i>	
<i>5. Area served - (square miles)</i>	
<i>6. ISO Rating / Last Rated (date)</i>	
<i>7. Is your Department Accredited?</i>	

2. Budget Information

Question	<i>Response</i>
<i>1. Total City Budget - (NA if District)</i>	
<i>2. Total Fire Department Budget</i>	
<i>3. Total Training Budget – (including Personnel Costs).</i>	
<i>4. Total Fire Department Personnel Costs</i>	

3. Call / Alarm Information

Question	<i>Response</i>
<i>1. Total Call Volume 1995</i>	
<i>2. Total Call Volume 1996</i>	
<i>3. Total Call Volume 1997</i>	
<i>4. Total Call Volume 1998</i>	
<i>5. Total Call Volume 1999</i>	

6. Total EMS Call Volume 1995	
7. Total EMS Call Volume 1996	
8. Total EMS Call Volume 1997	
9. Total EMS Call Volume 1998	
10. Total EMS Call Volume 1999	
11. Fire Loss 1995	
12. Fire Loss 1996	
13. Fire Loss 1997	
14. Fire Loss 1998	
15. Fire Loss 1999	
16. # of Apparatus & Personnel Responding to an AFA	
17. # of Apparatus & Personnel Responding to a residential structure fire	
18. # of Apparatus & Personnel Responding to a commercial structure fire	
19. # of Apparatus & Personnel Responding to a	
21. Average ALS response time for 1998 & 1999 – (N/A if non ALS agency)	
22. Average fire response time for 1998 & 1999	
23. Average MVA response time for 1998 & 1999	

4. Personnel

Question	Response
2. Total # of Admin. Personnel	
3. Total Daily Suppression Level	
4. Total # of Training Officers, (FT / PT)	
5. Total # of Fire Marshal / Inspectors, (FT/PT)	

6. Public Educator, (Uniformed / Civilian, FT / PT)	
7. PIO, (Uniformed / Civilian, FT / PT)	
8. Safety Officer, (Uniformed / Civilian, FT / PT)	

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer these questions. Your time & energy are greatly appreciated!

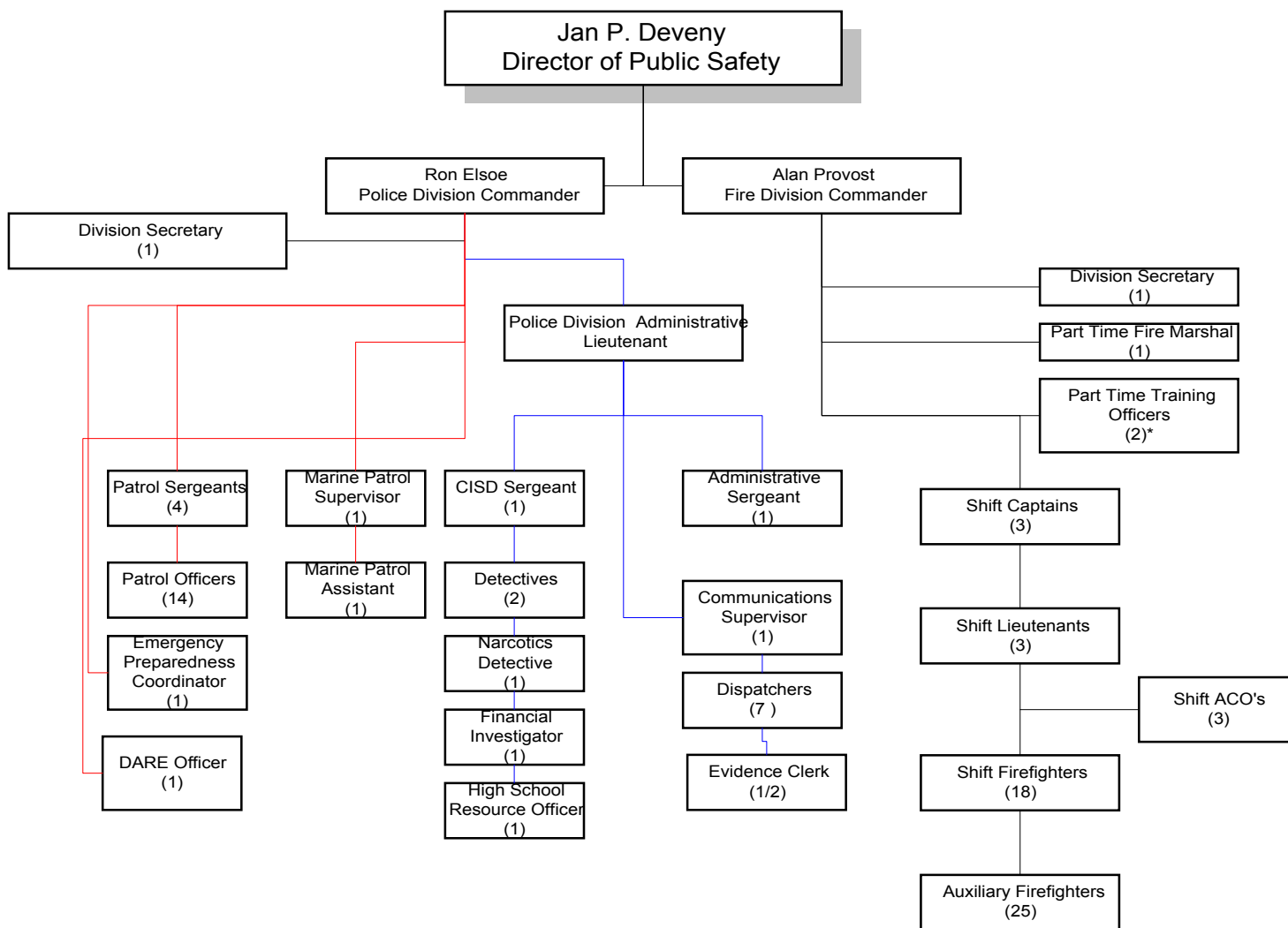
Chris Tubbs, Captain
Mercer Island Fire Department

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Appendix O

Mercer Island Department Of Public Safety Organizational Chart

MERCER ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



SPECIAL DUTIES

For Police Personnel:

1. Special Operations Team
2. Bike Patrol
3. Dive Team
4. Range Officer

For Fire Personnel:

1. Dive Team

* - These positions are filled by existing shift personnel. they are contracted on their days off.

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