



**Commission on
Fire Accreditation
International**

Accreditation Report

**Novato Fire Protection District
95 Rowland Way
Novato, CA 94945
USA**

**This report was prepared on July 9, 2009
by the
Commission on Fire Accreditation International
for the
Novato Fire Protection District**

**This report represents the findings
of the peer assessment team that visited the
Novato Fire Protection District
on July 7-9, 2009**

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Novato Fire Protection District Organizational Chart

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INTRODUCTION

The Novato Fire Protection District recently received accreditation candidate status. On April 14, 2009 the District asked the CFAI for a site visit to determine if they could be recommended for accreditation. On April 20, 2009, the CFAI appointed a Peer Assessment Team. The Peer Assessment Team conducted an on-site visit of the Novato Fire Protection District between July 7-9, 2009

In preparation for the on site visit, each team member was provided access and reviewed the Novato Fire Protection District's Self-Assessment Manual on the CPSE SharePoint Site. This manual produced by the Novato Fire Protection District represented a significant effort by the staff of the District and other community agencies. The District used the CPSE Technical Advisory Group for initial accreditation planning. They further used the services of CPSE (Rick Fagan and Rebecca Pillsbury), ESCI, Inc. (Ronny Coleman and Mike Price) and Fire Stats, Inc. (Paul Rottenburg) to assist them with analysis and completing any documents required for Accreditation.

The District was chartered in 1926. The District population enumerated in 1920 was 3,330. Now there are some 59,301 residents and a business hours service population is estimated at 76,731. They are ISO rated at 3/9.

Composition

The Novato Fire Protection District is primarily a residential community with a variety of business and retail entities and a redeveloped former US Air Force base. Over 50% of the 71 square mile district is agricultural and undeveloped areas that includes farms and ranches as well as grass, marshes and woodland cover. There is a significant part of the District that is mountainous and largely restricted from development. Highway 101 bifurcates the District north to south and Highway 37 further divides the eastern half of the district into northern and southern quadrants. These freeways are the hub for population concentration and community development.

Government

California Chartered the Novato Fire Protection District on July 6, 1926 and it is currently authorized under the California Fire Protection District Law of 1987. The District Board of Directors has five members elected at large in non-partisan elections.

Fire District

- 5 Fire Stations
- 76 Uniformed personnel
- 9 Civilian personnel
- 5 Type I ALS engine companies
- 3 Type III ALS engines (cross-staffed)
- 1 Ladder/truck company
- 1 Medium rescue squad (cross-staffed)
- 1 County wide hazardous materials unit
- 1 Water tender (cross-staffed)
- 2 ALS transport ambulances

- 1 ALS medic unit (cross-staffed)
- 2 ALS medic units (reserve)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) has completed a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Novato Fire Protection District (may hereafter be referred to as the “District”) based upon the 7th Edition of the Fire and Emergency Services Self Assessment Manual. The Commission’s goals are to promote organizational self-improvement and to award accreditation status in recognition of good performance. The assessment team’s objectives were to validate the District’s self study accreditation manual, identify and make recommendations for improvement, issue a report of findings and conclude if the district is eligible for an award of accreditation.

The District is commended for its participation in this very comprehensive and detailed accreditation process. All members of the District and other agency staffs i.e. North Marin Water District, Marin County Sheriff’s Office etc. were very open, responsive, and candid. This approach greatly aided the team in its limited three-day site visit. The benefits obtained will improve the quality of the fire service delivery system and the community’s emergency services.

The Novato Fire Protection District is a very dynamic and progressive agency. The District has managed to keep pace with the population growth and commensurate service demand increases and at the same time add resources that not only serve the growth area but also provide improved in-depth emergency resources and related services to the community.

The District’s accreditation self study reflected a genuine appraisal of current performance and improvement needs. This study represents a very time consuming detailed analysis of the District and their personnel are to be commended for their efforts.

The Peer Review Team found several exemplary and commendable items during their site visit and wishes to briefly enumerate them:

- The use of task work plans for the agency forces regular reviews, development of tangible goals and reporting of outcomes.
- The broad span approach to intervention in cardiac failures has produced extraordinary successes upon first, albeit very limited review. More is to follow as data accumulates.
- The use of standard company evolutions manual takes operation skills from the individual to team level assessments and competency.
- The District used ICS as the model to manage the accreditation process. Nearly a third of agency staff members were thus engaged at command, section, branch or division levels. (copy attached after organization chart)
- The District documented a process matrix/flow and dependencies chart that would be a useful tool for other agencies to understand and to adopt if so inclined. (copy attached after ICS chart).

The summaries of findings by the Peer Assessment Team are as follows:

Core Competencies and Criteria

The District met all core competencies and criteria.

Standard of Cover

Fire Suppression

The District met its stated standard of cover response objectives as follows:

For 90 % of suppression responses, the first-due apparatus arrived within 9 minutes, 20 seconds total response time (alarm to arrival). The first-due apparatus is capable of advancing the first line for fire control or starting rescue.

For 90% of all residential structure fires, an effective response force (ERF) arrives within 14 minutes, 30 seconds total response time. The ERF is capable of establishing command, uninterrupted water supply, advancing an attack line and backup line, forcible entry, utility control, victim search and rescue and ventilation in accordance with national guidelines.

EMS

The District met its stated standard of cover response objectives as follows:

For 90 % of all EMS incidents an advanced life support unit (engine or ambulance) shall arrive within 9 minutes 15 seconds total response time (alarm to arrival). Either an engine or medic unit has the capability to provide ALS services. The District demonstrated that this standard of coverage was met 90% of the time for the previous three year period.

For 90% of all EMS incidents an effective response force shall arrive within 13 minutes 30 seconds total response time. The recognized baseline effective response force has been established through the Risk Assessment/Standards of Cover document dependent on the type of emergency medical call encountered. The majority of incidents involve no more than an ambulance and an engine response; however more serious incidents require additional resources.

Hazardous Materials

The District met its stated standard of cover response objectives as follows:

For 90% of all potential hazardous materials incidents, the first due apparatus, staffed with a minimum of three personnel, arrives within 8 minutes, 10 seconds total response time (alarm to arrival). The first-due apparatus is capable of isolating the incident, identifying the material released, and initiating shelter in place or evacuation procedures.

For 90% of all hazardous materials incidents, the Marin County Hazardous Materials Response team arrives within 60 minutes total response time. The HMRT is capable of providing technical expertise, in order to mitigate a hazardous materials incident.

Technical Rescue

The District met its stated standard of cover response objectives as follows:

For 90% of all potential technical rescue responses, the first-due apparatus arrives within 9 minutes, 15 seconds total response time (alarm to arrival). The first-due apparatus is capable of stabilizing the situation and extricating the victim(s) from the emergency situation or location without causing further harm to the victim, responders, public or the environment.

For 90% of technical rescue incidents, the Marin County Urban Search and Rescue Team arrives within 60 minutes total response time (alarm to arrival). The USAR is capable of providing technical expertise, in order to mitigate a technical rescue incident.

CONCLUSIONS

The self-study manual produced by the Novato Fire Protection District was of high quality. The manual represented a significant effort by the staff of the District to produce and present a quality document.

- The Novato Fire Protection District has demonstrated that all core competencies have been met and received a credible rating.
- The Novato Fire Protection District has demonstrated that all applicable criteria have been met and received a credible rating
- The Peer Assessment Team recommends Accredited Agency Status for the Novato Fire Protection District from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Peer Assessment Team conducted an exit interview with the agency consisting of the Fire Chief and many of the staff members that participated in the self-assessment study. The purpose of the meeting was to review the team's findings and recommendations. The District was given an opportunity to respond to any errors in findings of fact.

Strategic Recommendations

Strategic recommendations were developed from information gathered from the on-site assessment visit and the evaluation of the criteria and core competencies.

1. The District currently shares plans review responsibilities with the City of Novato and the County of Marin Community Development agencies. While verbal agreements are in place with both agencies and an excellent working relationship is currently noted it is recommended that these agreements be placed in writing to prevent future discord (5B.4).
2. The District should establish formal agreements with surrounding departments to maintain ladder truck capabilities when the existing unit is out of service. (6C.5)
3. The District should explore any opportunities to upgrade the existing training tower and classroom facilities to accommodate current technologies available. (8C.1)

4. The District should establish a formal method to evaluate training materials to ensure the agency needs are being met. (8D.2)
5. The District should consider dividing their coverage plans into a multi-tiered standard base areas that are primarily suburban and rural/agricultural/wilderness. (3A.2; 2B)
6. The District needs to monitor and validate the performance measures in the dispatch/communications center (9B.1)

Specific Recommendations

Specific recommendations were developed from the appraisal of performance indicators in each of the ten categories.

V. Category Programs

Criterion 5C: Public Education Program

Performance Indicator

5C.1 There is a public education program that includes individual, business and community participation

While the District has an extremely thorough public education program that responds directly to the communities requests, the District could benefit by establishing goals and objectives for the various educational programs.

VI. Category Physical Resources

Criterion 6D: Tools and Small Equipment

Performance Indicator

6D.4 An inventory control and maintenance tracking system is in place and is current.

Update current records management system to allow for ease of use and better tracking of equipment, and training data.

Criterion 6E:

Performance Indicator

6E.4 Maintenance on all safety equipment is conducted by qualified personnel and appropriate records are kept.

Create a method to assure personal protective equipment is being cleaned in accordance to District guidelines.

Category VIII Training and Competency

Criterion 8C: Training and Education Resources

Performance Indicator

8C.5 There is current inventory of all training equipment and resources

Create a comprehensive method to track resources assigned to the Training Facility.

Category IX Essential Resources

Criterion 9B: Communications Systems

Performance Indicator

9B.3 The agency's communications system is adequately equipped and designed

The District should advocate the upgrade/refurbishment or replacement of the communications center to include compliance with Life Safety and Building Codes and to provide back-up facilities to the primary dispatch center.

OBSERVATIONS AND RATINGS

Category I — Governance and Administration

The Charter of the Novato Fire District is established by California State Law in 1926. Therein, with amendments (March 7, 1958 Authorizing Local Fire District Law –Section 14017 of the California Health and Safety Code; and Fire Protection District Law of 1987 Part 2.7) are outlined the authority, roles, duties, and responsibilities of the District. The organizational structure places the District in a hierarchical role with the Fire Chief reporting to the District Board of Directors.

The Board reviews and approves budgets, programs and basic agency policies. The Board leads the District by expression of vision and values through promulgation of policy and empowerment to the staff to execute same. Proposed budgets are submitted to the Fire Chief for review and then to the District Board of Directors for approval. The District plans and operations are articulated in the Strategic Plan document.

Category II — Assessment and Planning

The District utilizes a variety of sources and assessments for near-term, intermediate, and long range planning. The assessment includes a detailed risk analysis based on population studies and demographics, national standards, economic models, historical data, and community and structural risk assessments to include RHAVE and the Insurance Services Office's Community Rating System.

The District has produced a viable strategic plan that forms the basis for out year thinking and resource allocation. They review the plan and various inputs on a regular basis to adjust or

redirect District focus on a range of activities from targeted education to prophylactic efforts. This includes a review of the categories of services required based on land use and population density. Internal, external and governance stakeholders all have specific input into the planning processes. The eight major goals in the current Strategic plan are targeted from six to thirtysix months out.

Category III — Goals and Objectives

The District's Standards of Response Coverage meets CFAI requirements and standards. These documents contained measurable elements that are reviewed regularly by the District staff. The Novato Fire Protection District is guided by mission and value statements, core values and strategic goals and objectives as presented in their Strategic Plan, District Directives, and policies. The goals are to ensure adequate operational readiness and response throughout the jurisdiction.

The District has used response data collected for the accreditation process to review and affirm efficacy of current fire station locations. They plan to continue to do analysis of this nature on a regular basis to monitor progress of identified objectives and document via the CPSE Annual Compliance Report submissions. The long range plans of the District's Standards of Response Coverage will be incorporated into the subsequent updates of their Strategic Plan. The District plans to continue to review and update its mission, goals and objectives as appropriate.

Category IV — Financial Resources

The Novato Fire Protection District strives to balance fiscal responsibility with the operational and social needs of the District and its citizens. The District plays a pivotal role in its representation of this responsibility through daily interactions with the public. The community has been supportive of the Fire District, providing sufficient funding for staffing as well as the enhancement of service delivery through new apparatus, facilities and equipment. The community's perception of living in a safe city is the vision of the District's strategic plan.

The District's financial management and budgetary work was recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association as compliant with standards of practice with their Certificate of Excellence for their Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR). The District provides an annual external audit to assure the public of compliance of fiscal process with best practice as well as legal standards for fiduciary duties.

Category V — Programs

Criterion 5A – Fire Suppression

The Novato Fire Protection District's response and deployment standards are based upon the emergency service demand of the community. Five fire stations provide District coverage and staffing is based upon station location, incident type and frequency. Apparatus are assigned to meet anticipated fire demand and complement District service demand objectives. California standards, as well as district directives and other policies provide direction for the

program. The District has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and uses an incident management system (IMS) on a daily basis. The system is engrained into the organization's culture and used by all personnel.

The District's baseline service level objectives are currently:

For 90% of fire responses, the first-due apparatus shall arrive within 9 minutes, 20 seconds (from time of alarm to arrival) response time. The first-due unit shall be capable of advancing the first line for fire control or starting rescue. The district has a benchmark goal of 8 minutes, 90 % of the time.

For 90% of all structure fires, an effective response force shall arrive within 14 minutes 30 seconds total response time. The response assignment shall be capable of establishing command, establishing an uninterrupted water supply, advancing an attack line and a backup line for fire control, forcible entry, utility control, victim search and rescue and ventilation in accordance with Novato Fire Protection District Operational Directives and Procedures.

All fire apparatus utilized for fire suppression activity meets NFPA 1901 Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus and all referenced publications contained therein. New apparatus is purchased and equipped in accordance with NFPA 1901 and is further equipped to meet the District's inventory requirements and deployment objectives after delivery. Inspection and maintenance procedures for fire apparatus are established and maintained by company officers and in-house maintenance facility personnel. Fire apparatus equipment inventories are established and maintained in the District's computer system.

Current District operating policies, procedures and guidelines are identified in 3 manuals. These publications are available to all members of the District at their work sites, electronically on the district server and in hard copy form as part of the district/station library. This information can also be accessed on all apparatus electronically on the mobile data computers (MDC). Weekly and Monthly reports are prepared and outline activities of the District to provide ongoing representation of the emergency response program.

Criterion 5B – Fire Prevention / Life Safety Program

The Novato Fire Protection District defined and described its Fire Prevention and Life Safety Programs to have been appropriately developed for the needs of the community and District. The Fire Loss Management Division is managed by the Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal and services are augmented through an additional fulltime inspector, part-time inspector, clerical staff and a contracted fire protection engineer. The Fire Loss Management Division provides services to the entire District including the City of Novato and Marin County.

The District has adopted the California Fire Code (2007). The District has also adopted a district fire code which is based upon the International Fire Code (2006), the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (2006) and the International Building Code (2006). These codes are updated every three years based upon adoption of the State of California.

The District's construction plans reviews are completed by the Fire Loss Management Division and encompasses all facets of fire/life safety. The District contracts with a fire

protection engineer for projects that require unusual or complex features in the review of plans. The District has excellent working relationships with the building departments in both the City of Novato and Marin County which aid in a consistent approach to permit requirements. The plans review process is adequate to ensure plans are approved in accordance with adopted codes and ordinances.

The Fire Loss Management Division has an aggressive inspection process for residential occupancies greater than three units which are visited annually. These occupancies are inspected by engine companies and their progress is monitored by the Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal. Additionally, all schools, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and detention centers receive annual inspections.

The Fire Loss Management Division utilizes an elaborate database to track inspections, plans review, violations and the time spent on projects for billing. This database is used by both administrative personnel and company officers and appears to meet the needs of the District very well. The District's operational guidelines are reviewed and found to be adequate.

Criterion 5C – Public Education Program

The Novato Fire Protection District maintains a proactive, comprehensive and well supported public education program suitable for the needs of the entire community. The District employs a fulltime fire training specialist who reports to the Battalion Chief of Training and Education. This division is adequately staffed and complimented by engine companies who assist in program delivery as needed.

It has been verified and validated that the public education program of the Novato Fire Protection District delivers fire/life safety educational programs to school age children, CPR/AED training to high school students, juvenile fire setter intervention services, business programs on fire safety and disaster preparedness, as well as senior citizen fire/life safety presentations. It is also noted that many efforts are placed on educating residents to the dangers posed by dry vegetation as it related to the wildland interface problem. Public education equipment, supplies and props were verified and validated to be adequate. Additionally, the District utilizes course evaluations to determine their effectiveness. These evaluations are given at the conclusion of programs and participants mail in their comments.

Public education reports are maintained by the District including a database that tracks class rosters of all participants in the District's programs.

Criterion 5D – Fire Investigation Program

The District has described and defined the Fire Loss Management Division as having the statutory responsibility to investigate fires and determine fire origin and PC832 arrest, search and seizure. A Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal and one Fire Inspector staff the Fire Loss Management Division. The District also has the ability to hire contract inspectors to support additional work load. Additional resources are available from the Marin County Fire Investigation Team; several Novato personnel are members of this team. Procedures are in place and current regarding use of the Marin County Fire Investigation Team.

District investigators are required as a minimum to meet California Fire Service Training and Education certification as Fire Investigators Level 1A and 1B. The District utilizes a tiered approach to fire investigation, whereby operations personnel perform origin and cause determination when possible and requests for Fire Loss investigators are escalated in accordance with district policy.

The District has methods and procedures in place to investigate the origin and cause of fires, and they use NFPA 921/Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations as a reference. Fire Loss Management personnel are equipped with district vehicles, pagers, cell phones and a variety of fire investigation tools. The District's incident reporting system, Firepoint ®, tracks all calls and captures information. More detailed reporting that conforms to the NFPA Standard 921 is maintained in a confidential electronic Microsoft Word document and database.

Criterion 5E – Technical Rescue

The Fire District provides adequate, effective and efficient technical rescue services. Specific programs are in place for auto extrication, confined space, high angle, surface water and building collapse. The District trains all personnel to the Awareness level for all rescue disciplines. Other members are trained to the Operations level and a smaller group are trained to the Technician level. Marin County also maintains a Type II Regional Urban Search and Rescue Task Force. Several of the District's members participate on this team.

The District provides initial response to all technical rescues, and when necessary, they are able to request assistance from the Marin County USAR team. The District maintains one truck company, which cross-staffs one medium duty rescue apparatus. The vehicles are well equipped and supplied for the services they are expected to provide.

The District complies with stated performance measures for response to technical rescue responses.

For 90% of all potential technical rescue responses, the first-due apparatus arrives within 9 minutes, 15 seconds total response time (alarm to arrival). The first-due apparatus is capable of stabilizing the situation and extricating the victim(s) from the emergency situation or location without causing further harm to the victim, responders, public or the environment.

For 90% of technical rescue incidents, the Marin County Urban Search and Rescue Team arrives within 60 minutes total response time (alarm to arrival). The USAR is capable of providing technical expertise, in order to mitigate a technical rescue incident.

Criterion 5F – Hazardous Materials

The District provides adequate, effective and efficient hazardous materials response. The District trains all personnel to the Operations level and a smaller group are trained to the Technician and Specialist levels. Marin County also maintains a Hazardous Materials Response Team (HMRT), under a Joint Powers Agreement established by the Marin County Fire Chiefs Association. Several of the District members participate on this team. The

District provides initial response to all hazardous materials incidents, and when necessary, they are able to request assistance from the Marin County HMRT.

District engine companies are equipped with materials to isolate the scene, begin product identification, and to conduct gross decontamination. The District's single truck company carries similar equipment plus additional decontamination supplies. The vehicles are well equipped and supplied. The Marin County HMRT also stages a Hazardous Materials response vehicle (HM1) at one of the District's fire stations. When requested, personnel at this station bring HM1 to the scene for use by the Marin County HMRT.

The District complies with stated performance measures for response to technical rescue responses. For 90% of all potential hazardous materials incident, the first due apparatus, staffed with a minimum of three personnel, arrives within 8 minutes, 10 seconds total response time (alarm to arrival). The first-due apparatus is capable of isolating the incident, identifying the material released, and initiating shelter in place or evacuation procedures. It should be noted that there were very limited responses to obtain response information.

For 90% of all hazardous materials incidents, the Marin County Hazardous Materials Response team arrives within 60 minutes total response time. The HMRT is capable of providing technical expertise, in order to mitigate a hazardous materials incident.

Criterion 5G – Emergency Medical Services

The Novato Fire Protection District provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) treatment and transport to the citizens, workers and visitors of the District. All District personnel are trained at the minimum to the EMT-B (EMT-1) level, and there are a minimum of twenty-two (22) operational personnel who are certified at the Paramedic level. The District's ALS capabilities are augmented through the response of either an engine or ladder company which is also dispatched to EMS calls. The deployment strategy of "closest available unit" is utilized, thus providing adequate first on-scene coverage for emergency medical calls. EMS responses compose the vast majority of incidents mitigated by the District. EMS-related responses account for 66% of the District's responses.

The District's baseline service level objectives are as follows:

For 90 % of all EMS incidents an advanced life support unit (engine or ambulance) shall arrive within 9 minutes 15 seconds total response time. Either an engine or medic unit has the capability to provide ALS services. The District demonstrated that this standard of coverage was met 90% of the time for the previous three year period.

For 90% of all EMS incidents an effective response force shall arrive within 13 minutes 30 seconds total response time. The recognized baseline effective response force has been established through the Risk Assessment/Standards of Cover document dependent on the type of emergency medical call encountered. The majority of incidents involve no more than an ambulance and an engine response; however more serious incidents require additional resources.

It was demonstrated that Novato Fire Protection District met all baseline service level objectives in years 2005, 2006 and 2007.

The Novato Fire Protection District currently operates with 2 ALS medic units in front line service, 1 ALS unit that is cross staffed and maintains 2 reserve units. Additionally, the District operates 5 ALS engine companies and one BLS truck company. Staffed ALS units are located at Station 1 and 4, cross staffed at Station 2 and held in reserve at Stations 3 and 5. The EMS Battalion Chief manages the EMS Division and has an ALS equipped vehicle that can respond as needed.

Air ambulance capabilities are available from numerous providers in the District and are immediately available as necessary. The majority of patients are transported to the Novato Community Hospital which is located in the District. Trauma patients are transported to one of the area trauma centers located just outside the District's borders. The District follows the Marin County EMS Agency policy manual as its established protocols for the delivery of services. This manual outlines certification guidelines, system direction and treatment protocols. The District also has numerous operating procedures that relate to the EMS field. ALS services are overseen through the District Medical Advisor.

Criterion 5H – Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response

The Novato Fire Protection District has promulgated, exercised, refined, and applies continuous quality improvement processes to their emergency operations plans as detailed in the Disaster Response Plan and various standard operating procedures, directives, and policies. The District operates a joint City of Novato/District Emergency Operations Center with command and control capabilities appropriate to the District and operates in coordination with the Marin County EOC when activated. Staff members are trained in a variety of all-hazard disasters, all comport with NIMS training requirements, and the Disaster Plan is executed in at least one of its hazards annually to extraordinary emergency situations. The District uses ICS as the command and control process for disaster management.

The District has conducted extensive hazard/risk analysis and the Disaster Response Plan reflects expertise, concise thinking, and an appreciation of history. The Disaster Response Plan is a unified response to an all-hazard approach to widespread disasters and emergencies that may exceed the capacity of any one agency or be of extended duration. Noteworthy is the District's regular participation in actual disaster events, particularly in wildfire/wildland interface and winter storm/flood events so that many subordinate units and many of the staff members participate in real-life, real-time events. The District is connected to the regional Homeland Security Fusion Center and is able to consider appropriate threats/information regarding intentional attacks on the community.

Category VI — Physical Resources

The Novato Fire Protection District maintains 5 fire stations and one administrative facility. The fire stations are located based upon service demand and response time determined by hazard and risk analysis.

The District operates a multi-function facility that houses a fire station, maintenance bureau, distribution warehouse and the training facility that includes multiple props to meet the needs of the organization and surrounding emergency service agencies.

The District's Administrative Section is located in a large office complex that previously served as an insurance office/facility. The building is home for the Leadership Team, Fire Loss Management staff as well as other support staff. The supply warehouse is located at Fire Station 2 and is maintained by a Fire Captain and Lieutenant. Methods are in place to provide for the needs of the organization during normal business hours and after hours. The District also conducts in-house SCBA fit testing by utilizing shift personnel to maintain the program and records.

All facilities undergo regular inspections conducted by the company officers with the shift battalion chiefs and the Fire Loss Management Fire Inspector assuring compliance with building, fire, and safety considerations. All facilities are fully sprinklered with fully functional smoke detectors. Each facility also has exhaust recovery capabilities.

The District staffs a fleet of Type I and III engines as well as a ladder truck, four ambulances and multiple staff vehicles and one water tender. The County's Haz Mat unit is also housed at Fire Station 5, which also is base for the Tamalpais Fire Crew. Maintenance is conducted by District personnel on front line vehicles with routine maintenance on staff vehicles being contracted out to private vendors. Apparatus technicians are certified as Emergency Vehicle Technicians (EVT).

The Vehicle Maintenance Division is modern and well managed with clean work areas. Each unit tracked through a records management system. There is direct communication to and from the District to schedule service work based upon preventive maintenance schedules. Work flow is tracked in the District's computer server as the apparatus enter/depart the facility located at Fire Station 2. District personnel perform routine maintenance. Mechanics are certified through the California Fire Service Training and Education System for the work they perform. There is a well stocked parts supply area that is well managed by District personnel to control loss.

The District has developed a Capital Improvement Plan to accommodate the replacement of vehicles and large equipment. One fire station (Fire Station 4) is being considered for replacement/relocation at the current time. The District will continue to evaluate apparatus and vehicle needs. The District has a formal apparatus replacement plan to ensure that future needs are met and has reasonably maintained the schedule. Vehicles are replaced based on an assessment of each vehicle's serviceability, mileage, and years of service. The District regularly replaces vehicles based upon set replacement criteria.

The District has a comprehensive safety program and provides a high quality supply of safety equipment for its employees. State law and district regulations require seat belt use at all times and was witnessed by the Peer Team while on site. PPE including ear protection, eye protection, and medical exposure equipment are provided as personal issue. Company officers are charged with the regular inspection of this equipment and internal cleaning and repair facilities are utilized. Safety equipment is integrated in a risk management and safety program that includes in-station and on-scene activities.

Category VII — Human Resources

The Novato Fire Protection District Personnel Ordinance designates the Fire Chief or his designee as the Human Resources Manager. Currently this responsibility is assigned to the Division Chief for Organizational Resources and Planning. The District is preparing for an upcoming reorganization because of retirements which will result in reassignment of the responsibilities for Human Resource Management. All personnel files are securely located the District's administrative building.

The District has a personnel policy ordinance and a memorandum of understanding with the bargaining unit that outlines the conditions of employment. These documents include job descriptions and pay scales. Pay and benefit surveys are conducted periodically and adjustments are made during negotiations. Rate of pay, compensation and benefits are published and are communicated to the employees. Each employee is provided a copy of these documents and an additional copy is stored at each fire station. Updates to these documents are typically completed annually.

Recruitment, selection and promotional processes are in accordance with local, state and federal laws and statues. Applicants for firefighter positions are required to successfully pass a validated written examination, a physical agility test and an oral interview panel. Promotions are conducted in accordance with the process defined in the Memorandum Of Understanding with the Firefighters Association.

Category VIII — Training and Competency

The District has a thorough, well planned, and comprehensive training program. The District utilizes performance-based training with objective skill and task analysis conducted for all areas of training within the organization. A model Company Evolutions Manual provides for individual and company level competency measurements.

All employees are trained through a complete certification program as outlined by NFPA and the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. Minimum training requirements have been established for each position with a Career Development Guide that outlines training specifications for new and incumbent positions. An annual training planning session assures all local, state, and federal requirements are met.

The District currently has a training facility located at Fire Station 2. The training facility is coordinated by a training battalion chief and shift training captains. The facility has an aging training tower, classroom building, multiple training props, and available reserve apparatus that meet the current needs of the District.

Category IX — Essential Resources

Criterion 9A – Water Supply

The Novato Fire Protection District has an adequate and reliable water supply for firefighting purposes. North Marin Water District is responsible for the water supply system. Approximately 80% of the water comes from the Sonoma County Water Agency (Russian River) and the other 20% comes from a local reservoir. The Water District includes the Fire

District in the planning and operations processes for all development and system upgrades. The Water District maintains the location of water mains and fire hydrants in a GIS based system. The Fire District maintains map books for all apparatus, which identifies the location of fire hydrants. The dispatch center documents out of service hydrants and responding apparatus are notified via mobile computer terminal of nearby out of service hydrant locations. The 2003 ISO rating of water supply for the “hydranted” area was 32 or 40.

The majority of the Fire District is served by the domestic water supply and hydrant system. The water supply system has approximately 2600 hydrants and 296 miles of pipe. The Water District performs flow-testing and routine maintenance of the fire hydrants. Data collected during flow testing is sent to and stored by the Fire District. The Fire District is responsible for weeding and painting of fire hydrants; they have contracted this work out to a private vendor. Fire District officials work closely and on a routine basis with the staff at the water district.

In those areas without fire hydrants, the Fire District includes water tenders in the initial response to structure fires. The Fire District maintains one water tender and maintains mutual aid agreements with other nearby fire departments to send their water tenders when needed.

Criterion 9B – Communication Systems

The Novato Fire District communication system is adequate for emergency communications throughout the district. The District has two-way radio capability utilizing an UHF T-band radio system that serves multiple agencies in Marin County; this radio network is operated by the Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA). Mobile Data Computers are installed on all apparatus. The District assigns portable radios to every riding position on first line apparatus. Fire station alerting is operated on the radio system.

Dispatch services are provided by the Marin County Sheriff’s Department, who provides communication services to other police and fire agencies in the county. The dispatch center has ten dispatch positions. Minimum staffing is six dispatchers, two of which are assigned to fire dispatching. Dispatchers serve as both call takers and dispatchers. One supervisor is on duty at all times. The center has recently created a full-time Fire Liaison person, who is responsible for addressing the service needs of participating fire agencies. The District has a current agreement for professional services, which defines performance measures. The center does not currently meet all established performance measures.

The dispatch center uses Emergency Medical Dispatching for medical calls and uses local procedures for processing fire calls.

The dispatch facility space is limited. It does not have sprinklers and is not built to current seismic standards. The dispatch facility maintains a server room, uninterrupted power supply and a backup generator. Small backup facilities exist at the Novato and San Rafael Police Departments. The District is in the process of building backup facilities for fire dispatch operations at their administrative building in Novato.

Criterion 9C & D – Administrative Support Services & Office Systems

The Fire District provides general administrative support through a variety of personnel. The Fire Chief has an Executive Assistant. The Deputy Fire Chief manages the operations and administrative areas and has one Administrative Specialist assigned. The District also has an Organizational Resource and Planning Division, managed by a Division Chief. The Finance Director oversees an Accounting Specialist and an IT Analyst.

The District maintains adequate and effective management processes and procedure analysis. The Executive Team meets frequently, along with other district members from various levels of the organization. Meeting minutes are kept and action items are included as part of the Executive Staff Meeting Standing Agenda.

The management and procedural processes of the District provide an adequate framework for the management of the District and maintenance of policies. Office systems are modern and well maintained. The Records Management System is useable, though the District has found the ability to acquire data is difficult.

Category X — External Systems Relationships

The District is geographically located in Marin County, which is north of San Francisco. Marin County is home to 15 fire departments, all of whom participate in the Marin County Local Fire Service and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan. The District also provides statewide mutual aid through the State of California Office of Emergency Services cooperative agreement. The District also borders Sonoma County and has automatic aid agreements with three departments in this county.

The District utilizes county resources for dispatching, Urban Search and Rescue, and Hazardous Materials response. A professional services contract is in place for the dispatch services. A Joint Powers Agreement exists for the Hazardous Materials team and the county wide mutual aid plan covers utilization of the Urban Search and Rescue team.

The District understands and supports the need to integrate resources across jurisdictional boundaries and provides response capabilities to other jurisdictions in the area. The District's Strategic Plan references the need to establish an interoperability issues and plan, which includes establishing a backup radio communications plan, formalizing auto aid agreements with surrounding agencies, developing countywide standardized evolutions and developing a plan for functional consolidation of fire prevention services.

All agreements are current, though some have not been reviewed recently. The District has identified as part of its Strategic Planning process the need to review these agreements on an annual basis.

**CFAI Accreditation Summary Rating Report - Seventh edition
(For Commission Use Only)**

Agency: Novato Fire Protection District

Date: July 10, 2009

<u>CAT</u>	<u>CR</u>	<u>PI</u>	<u>Subjects Rated</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u># Credible</u>	<u>CR</u>	<u># Credible</u>	<u>Rating</u>
I			Governance and Administration	2	2	2	2	4
II			Assessment and Planning	6	6	4	4	4
III			Goals and Objectives	4	4	3	3	4
IV			Financial Resources	3	3	3	3	4
V	A	1	Fire Suppression - Deployment and Staffing	1	1	-	-	3
	A	2-7	Fire Suppression - Overall	3	3	1	1	3
	B	2-3	Fire Prevention - Compliance & Staffing	2	2	-	-	3
	B	1 & 4-8	Fire Prevention – Overall	4	4	1	1	3
	C		Public Education Program	3	3	1	1	4
	D		Fire Investigation Program	4	4	1	1	3
	E		Technical Rescue	3	3	1	1	3
	F		Hazardous Materials	3	3	1	1	3
	G	1	EMS – Deployment and Staffing	1	1	-	-	3
	G	2-10	EMS – Overall	2	2	1	1	3
	H		Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	3	3	1	1	3
	I		Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting Services	3	0	1	0	0
	J		Marine and Shipboard Rescue and Fire Fighting Services	3	0	1	0	0
K		Other Programs	0	0	1	0	0	
VI			Physical Resources	8	8	6	6	3
VII			Human Resources	7	7	6	6	3
VIII			Training and Competency	4	4	4	4	3
IX	A		Essential Resources – Water Supply	2	2	1	1	3
	B		Essential Resources – Communication Systems	2	2	1	1	2
	C-D		Essential Resources – Administrative support services & Office systems	2	2	2	2	3
X			External Systems Relationships	2	2	2	2	3
Credible Number of Core Competencies & Criteria				71	71	45	45	70
						Overall Rating		4
CAT = Category		CR = Criterion		PI = Performance Indicator		CC = Core Competency		
# Credible = number of ratings 3.0 or above								
Ratings: 5.0/exemplary, 4.0/superior, 3.0/satisfactory, 2.0/minimal, 1.0/does not meet, O.O/NA								



August 2009
Interim Reorganization Phase II
Changes indicated in GREEN

Functions:
Board of Director
support,
delegation/
supervision of other
Exec. Assistant
responsibilities

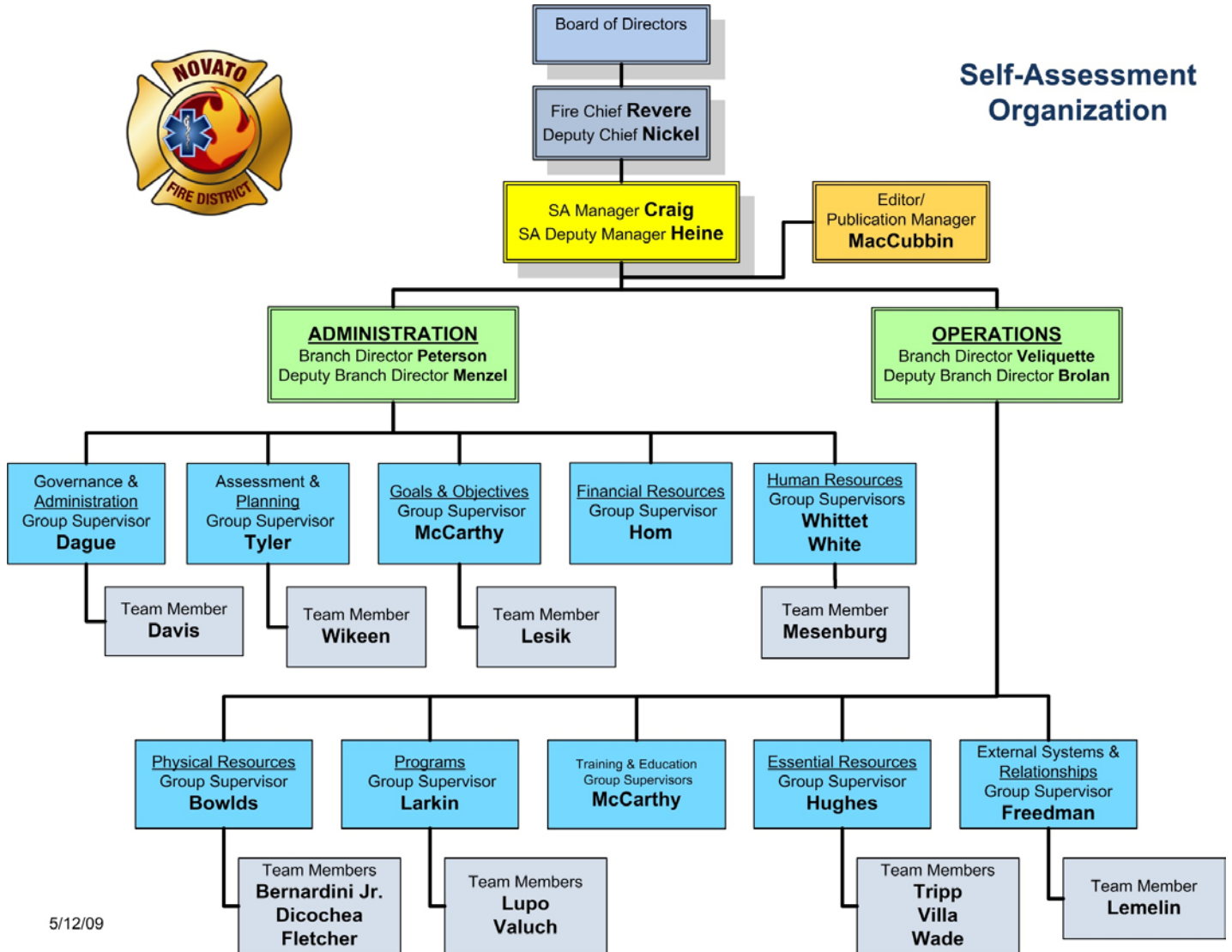


August 2009

Accreditation Process Flow Chart



Self-Assessment Organization



5/12/09

