

# NORTHWEST FIRE DISTRICT



Office of the Fire Chief

Program Appraisal

for the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year

In partial or complete fulfillment of the following CFAI Criterion and Performance Indicators (core competencies identified in **bold**): **1B.1**, 1B.2, **9C.3**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Fire Chief is charged with upholding the mission and programs of the District while ensuring compliance with laws and regulations and providing stability and continuity to the agency. He is tasked with leading, planning, and controlling daily activities including recruitment of personnel, purchase of equipment, control of expenditures, preparation of budget estimates, and the assignment of personnel and equipment. The Fire Chief keeps the Governing Board informed on all matters affecting the agency and delivery of emergency services to the public.

## **DIVISION PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Office of the Fire Chief is to direct and manage all firefighting, fire prevention, and fire service activities of the Northwest Fire District. The Fire Chief is responsible, through study and consultation with the Governing Board, for developing recommendations for the protection of life and property in the District. Administrative duties include leading, planning, and controlling daily activities including recruitment of personnel, purchase of equipment, control of expenditures, preparation of budget estimates, and the assignment of personnel and equipment. The Fire Chief provides staff with leadership in developing policy proposals for the Governing Board, so those officials can take action to implement public policy based upon knowledgeable input from public safety leadership. He consults with the Governing Board on problems of policy and planning but works independently in supervising technical operations. The Fire Chief keeps the Governing Board informed on all matters affecting the agency and delivery of emergency services to the public. He is entrusted with the assets of the District and charged to uphold its mission and programs, to ensure compliance with laws and regulations, and to provide stability and continuity to the agency.

## **DIVISION ADMINISTRATION**

The Office of the Fire Chief is administered by the Fire Chief with administrative support from the Executive Management Administrator.

## **COMPLIANCE STATUS WITH FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL REGULATIONS AND CODES**

The Northwest Fire District, under the direction of the Fire Chief, complies with the legal requirements of local, state, and the federal government.

## **INTERNAL PROGRAMS**

N/A

## **CURRENT AND NEEDED MEASURES**

### **CURRENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

Evaluation and modification of the organizational chart should continue to provide the Fire Chief with an optimal number of direct reports as well as to provide for the most effective distribution of human capital and organizational structure.

The Fire Chief's performance is appraised annually by the members of the Governing Board. Results of the performance appraisal are reviewed with the Fire Chief during an Executive Session of a regularly scheduled Governing Board meeting in April or May each year.

### **PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN DEVELOPMENT:**

The Fire Chief meets regularly with Executive Staff to discuss the evolving performance measures being developed in each area of the organization. Annually, the Fire Chief reviews the metrics tracked by each division for inclusion in the annual report and accreditation self-assessment manual.

## **CURRENT DIVISION GOALS/OBJECTIVES AND STATUS**

The Fire Chief strives to set a standard for open and effective communication. To facilitate this, in FY24/25 the Fire Chief met individually with each division to discuss questions, concerns, and general feedback. These meetings were well received and proved valuable to all involved. In FY24/25, the Fire Chief periodically released Fire Chief update videos to all members of the organization. The videos served as an additional tool for communication of District news, upcoming events, and strategic decisions.

The Operational Leadership Guide was revised and rebranded as the Organizational Leadership Guide to be inclusive of all District leadership, including civilian positions. The revised guide was distributed to all personnel in early 2024.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN CRITICAL TASKS DISCUSSION**

The Fire Chief is a member of the Strategic Planning Team and is responsible for providing leadership to staff to properly resource and execute the plan.

## **CURRENT ISSUES**

N/A

## **UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR GOALS/OBJECTIVES – INCLUDE RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS/OBJECTIVES AS APPROPRIATE**

The Fire Chief will continue to focus on clear and effective communication, continuing divisional meetings and periodic video updates.

## **TRAINING**

### **CURRENT YEAR TRAINING ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR DIVISION STAFF**

The Fire Chief attended the July 2024 and January 2025 Arizona Fire District Association (AFDA) conferences. He also attended the second session of the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) Chief Executive Officer Program. The program is a comprehensive educational opportunity for current Fire Chiefs or those senior chief officers who aspire to become a Fire Chief. The Fire Chief attended the Metro Fire Planners Conference, the Fire Rescue International Conference, and the Western Fire Chiefs Association IGNITE (inspire, grow, network, innovate, transform, educate) Symposium. He also took part in regularly scheduled EMS hands-on skills training facilitated by the NWFD Training Staff.

### **UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR COMPLIANCE RELATED TRAINING NEEDS**

The Fire Chief will continue training required to maintain his EMT and Paramedic credentials.

### **UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR JOB TASK RELATED TRAINING NEEDS**

The Fire Chief plans to take part in the following job task related training opportunities in FY25/26: Pinnacle EMS Leadership Conference, the Arizona Fire District Association (AFDA) Conferences, the Western Fire Chiefs Association (WFCA) Conference, the Southwest Regional Trauma Conference, the Arizona Ambulance Association Annual Conference, and regularly scheduled hands-on EMS skills training.

## **PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT**

THE PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT CONSISTS OF THE CURRENT ACCREDITATION CORE COMPETENCIES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS THAT DESCRIBE, APPRAISE, AND LIST A PLAN FOR YOUR DIVISION. THESE CORE COMPETENCIES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ALONG WITH THE CURRENT ISSUES IDENTIFIED, ARE THE FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPING UPCOMING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

## **CFAI STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS: N/A**

## **Category 1: Governance and Administration**

*For purposes of this category, governance is defined as the recognition of the authority that allows an organization or agency to legally form and operate. In fulfilling this responsibility, the legal entity that oversees this formation process reflects the public interest, protects the agency from undesirable external interference, determines basic policies for providing services, and interprets the agency's activities to its constituency. Administration is defined as the activities that carry out the implementation of the policies established by the authority having jurisdiction. In fulfilling this responsibility, the agency or organization carries out the day-to-day operations.*

*The legal entity and governing authority define the duties and responsibilities of the agency in an official policy statement. An organization's charter or local or state/province general statutes likely contain an agency's official policy statement.*

*The chief executive or chief fire officer should provide staff leadership in developing policy proposals for the legal civil authority having jurisdiction so those officials can take action to implement public policy based upon knowledgeable input from public safety leadership. Keeping an elected Governing Board and/or high-ranking individual informed on all matters affecting the agency and delivery of emergency services is the primary responsibility of agency leadership.*

*It must be recognized that other organizations participate in the governance of the agency, such as the state/provincial and federal governments through legislation, regulations, and funding procedures, and other organizations through associations and bargaining units. The Governing Board coordinates all of these diverse interests to set the direction of the agency.*

*The agency administration exercises responsibility for the quality of the agency through an organized system of planning, staffing, directing, coordinating, and evaluating. The agency administration is entrusted with the assets and is charged to uphold its mission and*

*programs, to ensure compliance with laws and regulations, and to provide stability and continuity.*

*For many volunteer fire service organizations, the Governing Board is within the municipal or county government and is the executive/legislative body for municipal or county governance, some elected directly by the public, such as special Districts. In the absence of a municipally appointed Fire Chief or chief executive officer, for*

*purposes of accreditation, the duly elected or appointed volunteer Fire Chief shall be the individual responsible for the criteria and performance indicators.*

*In many city or county municipal organizations a separation of powers exists that give the governing body legislative responsibility while giving administrative responsibility to a strong mayor or city manager. The chief fire officer/chief executive officer in such organizations generally reports directly to the mayor, manager, or designee. It is vital that the leadership of every agency understands who sets the policy for the government structure they are working in and their role in implementing that policy.*

### **Criterion 1B: Agency Administration**

*The organizational structure aligns with or supports the agency's mission, purposes, goals, strategies and objectives.*

#### Summary

The District's Fire Chief serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the District and is responsible for the overall management and direction of planning, policy making, and operations. The organizational structure provides for the delegation of administrative responsibility through three Assistant Chiefs and one Director who oversee work performed by Operational Services, Essential Services, Administration Services, and Business Services.

The District's Strategic Plan and Standards of Cover (SOC) provide the framework that ensures the District's divisions, as outlined above, continually work to support the agency's mission, purpose, goals, strategies, and objectives. The District's Governing Board reviews and provides input on the Strategic Plan and SOC; thus, ensuring the organizational structure aligns with and supports these goals.

The District will continue to review and update the organizational structure to ensure support of the District's strategic plan and SOC.

### **CC 1B.1 The administrative structure and allocation of financial, equipment and personnel resources reflect the agency's mission, goals, objectives, size and complexity.**

#### Description:

Under the direction of the Fire Chief, the Northwest Fire District creates the Strategic Plan and the Standards of Cover (SOC) to outline the mission of the District. These two documents provide justification for its size and the complexities of the District

when meeting its essential functions. The organizational structure reflects the District's mission, goals, objectives, size, and complexity and is organized to include the following senior management positions:

- \* Assistant Fire Chief – Essential Services
- \* Assistant Fire Chief – Operational Services
- \* Assistant Fire Chief – Administration Services
- \* Business Services Director
- \* Deputy Chief – Preparedness
- \* Deputy Chief – Response

Equipment, financial, and personnel resources are allocated based on the mission, goals, and objectives established by the District's Strategic Plan and the SOC. The Strategic Plan and the SOC provide data which guides resource deployment models and are primary factors influencing the District's budget. The Strategic Plan is updated each quarter as part of the status update process and the SOC is updated every five years. The updates utilize input from Executive Staff, Division Managers, and the Governing Board to ensure that funding priorities and deployment analysis are in line with the mission, goals, and objectives of the District.

#### Appraisal:

The District's administrative structure met the District's needs. An evaluation of the District's organizational structure took place during the strategic planning process. The structure was reviewed and updated as needed. The Fire Chief and Executive Staff reviewed the updates and made changes to meet the District's immediate needs. The District's goal was to provide a structure that enabled achievement of the mission and successful execution of the goals and objectives of the District.

The strategic planning process and the budget process ensured that funding was allocated to programs, equipment, and personnel that achieved the District's mission and met the goals and objectives identified in the District's Strategic Plan and SOC. Program appraisal documents were submitted by each division during the budget process to provide detailed information on all budgetary needs, including how they relate to the mission, strategic plan, and SOC.

#### Plan:



This structure will be evaluated regularly and revised as additional needs are identified or changes are made to the strategic plan and to the SOC. The Fire Chief and Executive Staff will continue to review and update the organizational chart at least monthly, so iterations that reflect the District's structure are captured with each adjustment. The District's Strategic Plan and SOC will continue to be updated to show changes in population size, distribution, and new or updated response needs. The District's organizational structure will be adapted as indicated to ensure the District continues to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

Quarterly Strategic Plan status meetings will continue to ensure that goals and objectives are relevant, are being met, and that associated expenditures align with budget allocations. Emphasis will be placed on the goals and objectives contained in the SOC and it will be part of the planning and budgetary process.

#### References:

Arizona Revised Statute § 48-805

Northwest Fire District Bylaws

NWFD Organizational Chart

NWFD Strategic Plan 2022-2029

NWFD CRA-SOC

Fire Chief's Employment Agreement

Fire Chief Job Description

FY25/26 Adopted Budget

**1B.2 Personnel functions, roles and responsibilities are defined in writing and a current organizational chart exists that includes the agency's relationship to the governing body.**

#### Description

Job descriptions are continually updated and made available to each position in the fire District. The job descriptions contain essential functions, knowledge, skills, abilities, and minimum qualification requirements. The District's organizational chart depicts each position and reporting relationship within the organization. The

organizational chart represents the Governing Board as the ultimate reporting authority.

#### Appraisal

The District accurately portrayed the expected functions, roles, and responsibilities in writing for each position and made these descriptions available to all personnel. The District reviewed job descriptions at least annually during the performance appraisal process and as part of each employee recruitment process. In FY24/25, Human Resource Services personnel met individually with each division to review and revise job descriptions. The District's organizational chart accurately depicted active positions within the District, their relationship to each other, and to the Governing Board. The organizational chart was reviewed and revised, as necessary, at least monthly by the Fire Chief and members of Executive Staff. The organizational chart was available to all staff on the District's intranet, SharePoint. A version of the organizational chart that does not contain names and contact information was available on the District's external facing website.

#### Plan

The Human Resource Services Division will continue to monitor job descriptions and ensure they accurately reflect the position and any legal requirements. Employees will continue to review their job description with their supervisor as part of the annual performance appraisal process. Job descriptions will also be reviewed before the recruitment process begins for any vacancies. The organizational chart will continue to be reviewed and revised as changes occur, at least monthly.

#### References

NWFD Organizational Chart

NWFD Job Descriptions (Available on Human Resource Services SharePoint)

#### **Category 9**

**CC 9C.3 Organizational documents, forms, standard operating procedures or general guidelines, and manuals are reviewed at least every three years and updated as needed for all agency programs.**

#### Description

NWFD's organizational documents, specifically District policies (reviewed annually through Lexipol), procedures, standard operating guidelines, and manuals (reviewed

at least every three years and updated as needed), are reviewed and up to date. All known “critical” forms essential to the mission of the District are also reviewed at a minimum of a three-year interval. The District’s contract with Lexipol was to ensure policy and procedure reviews are completed on the CPSE models review schedule.

## Appraisal

The District’s policy and procedure review methodology using Lexipol is working well to meet the agency’s needs. Agency membership worked with Lexipol contractors in 2022 to migrate all NWFD policies and SOGs into the platform. To not inundate the Fire Board, Business Services staff is bringing batches of policies through the monthly Fire Board meetings for approval. The Knowledge Management System (KMS) by Lexipol was deployed to membership in January 2023 following the 2022 policy review and revamping process. The current SOG manual is being incorporated into the Lexipol procedure section for rollout once the policy portion is approved and reviewed by members.

The Lexipol service provides data and tracking of policy and procedure employee reviews, legislative compliance, and organizational review/revision reminders to ensure that NWFD has notified the members of all policies and procedures, that NWFD has met federal and state compliance, and that the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) review requirements for policies (every year) and procedures/other critical documents (every three years) are met.

## Plan

The District plans to finish the development of the new organizational documents within Lexipol and will evaluate once the project is complete.

## References

Sample of Lexipol policy review and revision

## FINANCE BUDGET DEPARTMENT ID:

Department Finance ID #	Department(s)
1200	Fire Chief

## ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST

\$658,532

## PROGRAM ECONOMIC EFFICIENCIES IDENTIFIED DURING PREPARATION OF PROPOSED BUDGET

N/A

## CAPITAL ITEM REQUEST DISCUSSION

N/A

## LINE-ITEM DISCUSSION

\$7,500 was added to line item 100-1200-52196-000 Employee Recognition for the initial retirement brick project at the NWFD Training Center. The budget for retirement bricks in subsequent years will be substantially lower.

## PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET

Account	Account Name	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Adopted Budget	2025-26 Proposed Budget	Variance	Comment
<b>1200 - Fire Chief</b>						
51110	Salaries	\$ 203,897	\$ 231,000	\$ 231,005	\$ 5	
51190	PTO Paid Out	\$ 12,855	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
51211	Medical Insurance	\$ 12,633	\$ 12,430	\$ 13,290	\$ 860	Premium Increase
51212	Dental Insurance	\$ 384	\$ 478	\$ 475	\$ (3)	
51213	Vision Insurance	\$ 107	\$ 114	\$ 112	\$ (2)	
51215	PSPRS-Cancer Insurance	\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ -	
51216	Life Insurance	\$ 41	\$ 42	\$ 42	\$ -	
51218	STD Insurance	\$ 224	\$ 600	\$ 221	\$ (379)	
51231	Medicare	\$ 3,072	\$ 3,349	\$ 3,350	\$ 1	
51250	PSPRS	\$ 83,516	\$ 95,469	\$ 96,121	\$ 652	
51280	Deferred Compensation	\$ -	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000		
51290	PEHP	\$ 1,986	\$ 2,309	\$ 2,310	\$ 1	
<b>Total Personnel</b>		<b>\$ 318,767</b>	<b>\$ 360,841</b>	<b>\$ 361,976</b>	<b>\$ 1,135</b>	
52160	Dues, Memberships & Subscriptions	\$ 4,610	\$ 4,575	\$ 4,575	\$ -	
52170	Travel & Per Diem	\$ 6,245	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ -	
52177	Meals & Entertainment	\$ 2,985	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ -	
52180	Training	\$ 8,189	\$ 28,000	\$ 27,000	\$ (1,000)	
52196	Employee Recognition	\$ 16,094	\$ 27,000	\$ 28,000	\$ 1,000	
52260	Legal	\$ 42,182	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ -	
52540	Building Services	\$ -	\$ 164,854	\$ 176,481	\$ 11,627	.01 Tax Incr. for O&M
<b>Total Non-Personnel</b>		<b>\$ 80,305</b>	<b>\$ 284,929</b>	<b>\$ 296,556</b>	<b>\$ 11,627</b>	
<b>Total Fire Chief 1200</b>						
		<b>\$ 399,072</b>	<b>\$ 645,770</b>	<b>\$ 658,532</b>	<b>\$ 12,762</b>	

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS, TABLES, CHARTS, ETC**

N/A

## **REFERENCES**

N/A