



**Commission on  
Fire Accreditation  
International**

# **Accreditation Report**

**Poudre Fire Authority  
102 Remington St.  
Fort Collins, CO 80524**

**This report was prepared on December 8, 2020  
by the  
Commission on Fire Accreditation International**

**This report represents the findings  
of the peer assessment team that visited the  
Poudre Fire Authority  
on October 4-7, 2020.**

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## **PREFACE**

To the citizens and the governing body of the agency: This report represents a thorough review of the organization to verify and validate how this agency is executing its stated mission in accordance with universally accepted practices for a contemporary fire and emergency services organization. Quality improvement can only be initiated and realized by those agencies that challenge themselves through a comprehensive self-assessment. This report documents that this agency is seeking organizational improvements and discovering elements of excellence. Please note that the recommendations by the peer assessment team are opportunities for improvement provided from professionals in the fire and emergency service industry.

To the agency: This report communicates the outputs and outcomes of your dedication and commitment to quality improvement. Your self-assessment, community risk assessment: standards of cover, and strategic plan amount to years of work to understand your community, establish accountable goals, institute transparency, and factually comprehend what you did not know about your organization. The verification and validation of your agency by a team of peers represents a major accomplishment. The recommendations in this report are opportunities to become better and stronger in your community. Finally, take this report and communicate to your community the areas you identified during your self-assessment that were outstanding and those that represent improvement opportunities.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Poudre Fire Authority (PFA) was established in 1981, consolidating the City of Ft. Collins Fire Department and the Poudre Fire Valley Protection District. The authority is a combination career and volunteer organization with 193 uniformed personnel at 11 career and 2 volunteer fire stations. The authority also operates a two-firefighter roving alternative medical (RAM) unit during peak call activity periods. Engine companies are staffed with three firefighters, ladder companies are staffed with four firefighters, and all uniformed personnel are certified as emergency medical technicians (EMTs). Daily minimum staffing is 46 uniformed personnel. The number of personnel dedicated to community risk reduction/public fire education is 16 full-time and 10 part-time. There are five full-time employees assigned to the training division.

Poudre Fire Authority covers 230 square miles including Fort Collins, the town of Timnath, the communities of Bellvue and LaPorte as well as the unincorporated areas of Larimer and Weld Counties. The total value of property protected is \$41 billion. The service area is approximately 65 miles north of Denver and located at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains. Elevations within the service area range from 4,800 feet in the southeastern corner of the authority's jurisdiction to approximately 7,500 feet in the foothills to the west. The Poudre River bisects the authority from northwest to the southeast. Colorado State University is within the authority's jurisdiction and there are service agreements with the university in place. The population of the authority is just under 213,000 and experienced a nearly 20 percent increase in growth between 2010 and 2019. The primary population density is within the City of Ft. Collins.

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) has completed a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Poudre Fire Authority based upon the ninth edition of the *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*. The commission's goals are to promote organizational self-improvement and to award accreditation status in recognition of good performance. The peer assessment team's objectives were to validate the authority's self-assessment study, identify and make recommendations for improvement, issue a report of findings, and conclude if the authority is eligible for an award of accreditation.

The peer assessment team followed CFAI processes and the Poudre Fire Authority demonstrated that its self-study accreditation manual, community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC), and strategic plan met all core competencies and criteria. The peer assessment team recommends accredited Authority status for the Poudre Fire Authority from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

The peer assessment team observed a strong commitment by the authority to the CFAI accreditation process and as a second time accredited agency has incorporated the process in many ways into the organization. Evidence of this includes references in many formal documents to applicable performance indicators and the commitment to an accreditation manager succession plan. Several members of the agency including the fire chief regularly act as peer assessors for CFAI. These approaches ensure continuity, more direct access to quality improvement with similar organizations, and the engagement of a broader spectrum of the authority.

The peer assessment team had meetings with the Ft. Collins City Manager, the chairperson of the Poudre Valley Fire Authority Board, and the president and vice president of the firefighters' association. Individually and collectively they expressed strong interest in the process and support the authority's continued efforts of continuous improvement through the accreditation process. There is

clearly a commitment to continue to follow and support the implementation of identified opportunities for improvement.

The peer assessment team identified opportunities for improvement that are provided below. They include 8 strategic and 10 specific recommendations. These recommendations flowed from discussions, interviews, and a review of authority-supplied documentation to support its self-assessment conclusions.

The following represents a synopsis of the recommendations that were made by the peer assessment team during the on-site visit. Additional details for each of these recommendations can be found in the Observations Section of this report. For each of the recommendations, the performance indicator from the model is provided, including notating if it is a core competency (CC).

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations were developed from the evaluation of criterion, core competencies, and performance indicators.

1. It is recommended the agency revisit the critical task process for high risk emergency medical service (EMS) calls and incorporate the resulting effective response force (ERF) into the dispatch protocols. ([CC 2C.4](#))
2. It is recommended the authority continue to identify both short-term and long-term elements to improve call processing and turnout time. ([CC 2C.5](#))
3. It is recommended the authority in its next annual update of the current 2018-2023 strategic plan include possible additions that would include goals and objectives to take full advantage of the plan's effective period. ([CC 3B.1](#))
4. It is recommended the authority's goals and objectives and their current status be formally communicated to members, preferably in an in-person or visual interactive format that has the capability for questions and comments by members. ([CC 3C.2](#))
5. It is recommended the fire risks identified in the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC) be considered in the authority's code inspection program. ([5A.6](#))
6. It is recommended the authority develop specific, targeted, and achievable benchmarks for fire incidents and casualties. ([5A.7](#))
7. It is recommended the authority develop a formal standard operational procedure/directive to better define the fire inspection personnel continuing education program. ([5A.8](#))
8. It is recommended that the authority's public outreach committee be reactivated, and a guide mission statement developed for this program. ([CC 5B.1](#))
9. It is recommended the authority monitor the emergency medical dispatching (EMD) call processing procedures to ensure the system balances the need for patient information and expeditious call processing. ([CC 5F.1](#))

10. It is recommended the authority add the required wildland certifications and qualification training to the applicable policy. ([CC 5K.4](#)).
11. It is recommended that the authority consider rotating front-line, higher use apparatus with front-line, low use apparatus to increase the life cycle of all apparatus. ([6C.2](#))
12. It is recommended that the health safety officer (HSO) receive training based on HSO job task competencies that is in line with nationally recognized consensus standards. ([CC 7F.1](#))
13. It is recommended the authority review the existing near-miss program for elements that would make the program more effective and increase the use of it by members. ([7F.6](#))
14. It is recommended the HSO or other designee(s) receive formal accident and injury investigation training that is based on recognized best practices. ([7F.7](#))
15. It is recommended the authority provide incident safety officer (ISO) training that is based on ISO competencies of a nationally recognized consensus standard for all potential officers that could act as an ISO. ([7F.8](#))
16. It is recommended the authority consider increasing the frequency of physical evaluations to yearly for all line personnel. ([7G.1](#))
17. It is recommended that in the absence of required Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, the authority consider reviewing and adopting applicable national consensus standards and/or regulations. ([8A.3](#))
18. It is recommended the authority incorporate the volunteer training program into the training division. ([8B.1](#))

The authority demonstrated its keen desire to immediately implement plans to address opportunities for improvement. Two examples of initiatives that have already been accomplished since the site visit are the increase in frequency of annual medical exams for all line personnel from every three years to annually and establishing new turnout time goals for fire and emergency medical service (EMS) calls.

The authority responded to a total of 21,939 emergencies in 2019 including: 277 fire calls (1.3% percent); 14,463 emergency medical service (EMS) calls (65.9%); and 7,199 miscellaneous calls, such as good intent, false alarms, service calls, etc. (32.8% percent).

The Poudre Fire Authority currently has three different Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings for its service area. Areas within Ft. Collins, Timnath, and any address within the authority that is outside city limits but less than 1,000 feet from a fire hydrant and within five road miles of a 24-hour staffed fire station have an ISO Class 2 rating. Areas within the authority that are outside city/town limits that are greater than 1,000 feet from a fire hydrant but within five road miles of a 24-hour staffed fire station have an ISO Class 3 rating. Any area in the authority that is outside the city/town limits and further than 5 road miles from a 24-hour staffed fire station has a Class 10 rating. An ISO regrading process is due this year but has not yet been performed.

During the visit, the peer assessment team identified two innovative practices that the team felt other agencies can strive to emulate. The first involved a comprehensive analysis and restructuring of Poudre's EMS system that resulted in a dramatic increase in code arrest saves. The pillars of improvement to the EMS program included protocols, quality assurance and improvement, training, response times, and equipment. An example of an innovative component of the restructuring effort is the authority has established baseline and benchmark measurements at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile level to track the effectiveness of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) compression factor, depth of compressions, and appropriate rate of compressions. As a result of the restructured EMS program, CPR saves have increased three-fold since 2017. Other elements of patient care have dramatically improved as well.

A second innovative practice identified at Poudre Fire Authority was their research on structure fire behavior and resulting changes in their approach to fighting structure fires. Their research included participation in: a National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) study in Spartanburg, South Carolina; an Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) attic fire study in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; attendance at an international fire behavior class in Sweden; and performing several burns to test theories resulting from the authority's attendance at the mentioned functions. The outcomes of these experiences and changes to their strategy and tactics have resulted in substantial improvement in increasing firefighter safety and a significant decrease in property loss resulting from salvage and overhaul operations. As further evidence of the success of this program, earlier this year Fire Department of New York (FDNY) reached out to the authority to learn more about the research and the resulting changes in strategies and tactics.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

### **Category 1 — Governance and Administration**

The governing body and/or authority manager is legally established to provide general policies to guide the authority, approved programs and services, and appropriated financial resources. The Poudre Fire Authority was established in 1981 through an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that originally consolidated the Fort Collins Fire Department and the Poudre Valley Fire Protection District. The authority is legally established under the 2014 Revised and Restated IGA between these entities and is compliant with all applicable governance and administrative legal requirements. The authority monitors and tracks changes in applicable local, state, and federal requirements through several different means. These include involvement in the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Association, International Association of Fire Chiefs, Special Districts Association of Colorado, state legislative conference calls, and regular communication with the local city and town governments that are within authority's service area.

Poudre Fire Authority Board of Directors regularly reviews and approves authority services and programs, including the strategic plan and community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC), annual budget, and authority rules and regulations. An annual report is also presented to the parental governing agencies, the Ft. Collins City Council and Poudre Valley Fire Protection District. The authority's board of directors sets the qualifications for the fire chief. The current fire chief is scheduled to retire early in 2021 and the qualifications were recently updated by the board of directors. The requirements for the fire chief position will include an evaluation of the candidate qualifications and credentials. The fire chief position is currently posted, with applications due at the end of December.

The organizational structure aligns with or supports the authority's mission, purposes, goals, strategies, and objectives. The authority has an organizational structure that is in alignment with its mission, goals, objectives, size, and service delivery programs. The organization structure has four divisions including operations, support, fire prevention and community risk reduction, and administrative services. There is currently a need to expand the administrative/management staff to dedicate efforts toward researching changing service demographics, ensuring appropriate service responses, and exploring new opportunities to better serve the community. Due to COVID-19 priorities, this expansion of staff is on temporary hold.

Poudre Fire Authority has adequate financial, equipment, and staffing resources to meet its mission. Resource allocation is directed by the authority's strategic plan, CRA/SOC, and annual budget. Personnel functions, rules, and responsibilities are formalized and the current organizational chart includes the authority's relationship to the authority's board of directors. Job descriptions are maintained and updated by the authority's human resources and the organizational chart is approved by the board of directors as part of the annual budget process.

### **Category 2 — Assessment and Planning**

The authority collects and analyzes data specific to the distinct characteristics of its legally defined service area(s) and applies the findings to organizational services and services development. The Poudre Fire Authority has a current intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that establishes the boundaries of the authority which consist of the combined City of Ft. Collins limits, which are in the

central part of the authority's 230 square mile service area, and the Poudre Valley Fire Protection District (PVFPD), which forms a ring around the city.

The authority operates 13 fire stations that are broken into 13 separate response districts. Each of these response districts serves as a geographic planning zone for service provision analysis purposes. The authority has a planning zone methodology that includes critical infrastructure, census information, socio-economic characteristics, land uses, topography, and climate to identify and document safety and remediation programs. The response area includes both urban and rural population densities. Since the authority's last accreditation period, the urban population density has increased from 48 to 77 square miles, an increase of 60 percent. The authority has current fire loss and safety data that is used to identify outcome-based data for planning purposes.

The authority identifies and assesses the nature and magnitude of all hazards and risks within its jurisdiction. Risk categorization and deployment impact considers such factors as cultural, economic, historical, environmental values, and operational characteristics. When addressing risk within their response area, Poudre Fire Authority analyzes the area characteristics that include cultural, economic, environmental values, and operational considerations. The chosen method for evaluating the risk is a modified two-axis, probability and consequence method which is adopted in the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA-SOC) by the authority's board of directors. The authority was able to demonstrate through records management systems (RMS), the service demands, and future probability of emergent and non-emergent call types.

The authority has determined and documented the different category service demands as well as event consequence losses of the previous five years by planning zone. The authority also has determined the probable future service demands based on historical data as well as information obtained from the various governmental entities that the authority serves.

The authority identifies and documents the nature and magnitude of the service and deployment demands within its jurisdiction. Based on risk categorization and service impact considerations, the authority's deployment practices are consistent with jurisdictional expectations and with industry research. Efficiency and effectiveness are documented through quality response measurements that consider overall response, consistency, reliability, resiliency, and outcomes throughout all service areas. The authority develops procedures, practices, and programs to appropriately guide its resource deployment.

Poudre Fire Authority studies response in the jurisdiction and planning zones to assess its ability to provide consistent response time service in each risk category. The authority has performed critical task analyses for each risk category and class to determine first due and effective response force response (ERF) criteria. The peer assessment team identified a need to revisit emergency medical service (EMS) ERF dispatch protocols. Currently there is a company added by a company officer or battalion chief to high risk calls to complete the ERF. [It is recommended the agency revisit the critical task process for high risk EMS calls and incorporate the resulting ERF into the dispatch protocols.](#)

The authority has identified and established total response time components for delivery of services including fire, EMS, hazmat, technical rescue, and wildland fire. The peer assessment team identified opportunities for improvement of call processing and turnout times. [It is recommended the authority](#)

[continue to identify both short-term and long-term elements to improve call processing and turnout time.](#)

The authority has a formal evaluative approach to emergency responses by creating performance-based fact sheets that allow for efficient after-action reporting, resulting in training and performance enhancements.

The authority has assessed and provided evidence that its current deployment methods for emergency services appropriately address the risk in its service area. Its response strategy has evolved to ensure that its deployment practices have maintained and/or made continuous improvements in the effectiveness, efficiency, and safety of its operations, notwithstanding any outside influences beyond its control. The authority has identified the impacts of these outside influences to the authority having jurisdiction.

The Poudre Fire Authority has developed a community risk assessment/standard of cover document that identifies baseline and benchmark total response time performance within each planning zone. The authority-adopted methodology to assess performance is outcome based. The authority was credible in establishing outcomes for interceding flashover and cardiac arrest save data. The authority uses a standard of cover compliance team to ensure objectives for response time and outcome are consistently analyzed and reported on. Performance gaps are reported to the board of directors at a minimum of annually.

The authority was credible regarding maintaining continuous improvement through its compliance review team. The peer assessment team observed the credible methodology as planning and analysis personnel worked with program managers to identify outcomes and establish compliance throughout the authority.

### **Category 3 — Goals and Objectives**

The authority has established general goals and specific objectives that direct the authority's priorities in a manner consistent with its mission and appropriate for the community it serves. The Poudre Fire Authority has in place a published strategic plan. The plan was facilitated by the Center for Public Safety Excellence Technical Advisor Program (TAP). The strategic plan covers the period of 2018-2023 and was adopted by the authority's board of directors on February 18, 2018. The plan is available electronically to all employees and the public on the authority's website.

The authority's general goals and specific objectives direct its priorities in a manner consistent with its mission and appropriate for the community it serves. The authority has established goals and objectives within the strategic plan and the community risk assessment/standards of cover; both documents are published on their website. Objectives are time-bound and include elements of quantity and quality. Some goals and objective time frames have been extended due to COVID-19. Many of the goals and objectives have a timeline to be completed within two years of the five-year period of the strategic plan. [It is recommended the authority in its next annual update of the current 2018-2023 strategic plan include possible additions that would include goals and objectives to take full advantage of the plan's effective period.](#)

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis conducted during the most recent strategic plan process in 2018 provided for a current status analysis. The authority includes internal and external stakeholder input in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the authority's

goals and objectives. The external stakeholder group included 69 participants and the internal stakeholder group included 27 participants from every division and working group within the organization.

The authority uses a management process to implement its goals and objectives. Poudre Fire Authority utilizes two forms of organizational management processes to identify and track the authority's goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan Dashboard report is provided to the board of directors twice a year that includes a visual display of how many critical tasks within each objective have been completed as well as the status of the timeline for completion for the referenced goal. The second organizational management method is a self-assessment/budget process that includes the program appraisal completed by each program manager. The program managers use the appraisals to identify needed changes to accomplish their goals and objectives as well as the associated financial resources.

The authority has a responsible party assigned to each of the organization's goals and objectives. The authority posts goals and objectives on the organization's website for viewing by members and the public. No formal presentation of the latest strategic plan and its goals and objectives was completed for members. [It is recommended the authority's goals and objectives and their current status be formally communicated to members, preferably in an in-person or visual interactive format that has the capability for questions and comments by members.](#)

The authority utilizes many automatic and mutual agreements as well as intergovernmental agreements and contracts to aid in the accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives. In addition, the authority's strategic plan has a specific objective that is specific to seeking outside resources regarding goals and objectives.

Processes are in place to measure and evaluate progress towards completion of specific objectives and overall system performance. The goals and objectives are re-examined and modified periodically. In addition to the Strategic Plan Dashboard and the program appraisal/budget process, the authority's senior leadership team meets weekly and once to twice a year to discuss strategic issues and the status of goals and objectives. The authority's community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC) goals and objectives are regularly reviewed by the CRA-SOC operations team.

#### **Category 4 — Financial Resources**

Authority planning involving broad staff participation activates financial planning and resource allocation. The authority's plan for financing reflects sound strategic planning and a commitment to its stated goals and objectives. The authority deems financial support for programs and services adequate to maintain the number and quality of personnel and other operational costs.

The authority exhibits effective and efficient fiscal planning and management. The authority conducts their financial planning and resource allocation through cooperation between the Poudre Fire Authority, the City of Fort Collins, and the Poudre Valley Fire Protection District. There is an intergovernmental agreement in place that directs the fire chief to prepare and submit an annual operating budget for the next fiscal year in accordance with the budget schedules of Fort Collins and Poudre Valley Fire Protection District (PVFPD).

The authority's processes for fiscal planning and resource allocation include broad staff participation. This is done in accordance with formal policies in place. The authority has adequate

long-range financial planning processes that address the needs of the community. The authority uses the strategic plan as an integral part of the budgeting process.

Financial management of the authority exhibits sound budgeting and control, proper recording, reporting, and auditing. The peer assessment team confirmed that the Poudre Fire Authority in conjunction with the City of Fort Collins is in receipt of the most currently available Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (certificate) from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The authority has submitted its most recent GFOA certificate and CAFR as prima facie compliance with this criterion.

Financial resources are appropriately allocated to support the established organizational mission, the stated long-term plan, goals and objectives, and maintain the quality of programs and services. The authority has numerous related policies in place to ensure that the organizational mission, long-term financial plan, strategic plan, and quality of programs and services are accomplished. These include budget, expenditure, financial reporting, operating management, and revenue policies. The authority has received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by the Government Finance Officers Association for 20 consecutive years.

The authority has established an effective revenue allocation formula that has provided a sustainable revenue source. The authority's fiscal practices are based on revenue sources that are sustainable as the needs of the community change and evolve. The authority's strategic plan and long-range financial planning processes include future growth and development that are included in the budgetary process. This process in turn enables the authority to keep a concentrated effort on maintaining and expanding the quality of delivery and service to the community.

## **Category 5 — Programs**

### **Criterion 5A – Community Risk Reduction Program**

The authority operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program to manage community risks as identified in the community risk assessment and standards of cover. The approach is comprehensive and includes both prevention and mitigation strategies such as life safety, hazard risk reduction, plan review, code compliance, and the detection, reporting and control of fires.

Poudre Fire Authority has formally adopted and enforces the 2018 International Fire Code (IFC) with related appendices and amendments. This code applies to three of the four jurisdictions that the authority protects including the City of Ft. Collins, the town of Timnath, and Larimar County. The single exception is Weld County that currently remains under the 2012 IFC. The adopted IFC code including appendices and amendments are referenced throughout the authority fire prevention community and risk reduction program.

The authority has a comprehensive plan review process. The process covers all multi-family, commercial, and single-family developments. Construction documents are reviewed for compliance before a construction or installation permit is issued. This is followed by a series of inspections throughout construction ending with a final sign off for a certificate of occupancy.

The authority has adequate, qualified staff to achieve the fire prevention and community risk reduction division's (FPCRR) goals and objectives. The division's staff has various qualifications

including International Code Council, Colorado State, and the National Institute of Certification in Engineering Technologies.

Quarterly the FPCRR division assists with the development of an “intercession prior to flashover” report that includes contributing factors to stopping a fire prior to flashover including suppression systems, fire extinguisher inspection program, and any other factors that are identified in the authority’s records management system (RMS) reports. The FPCRR division prepares an annual appraisal that includes reporting on eight areas and emphasizes measures of output.

The frequency of occupancy inspections is primarily based on IFC classification. There is not currently correlation between the fire risks identified in the authority’s community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA-SOC) and the frequency of occupancy inspections. [It is recommended the fire risks identified in the CRA-SOC be considered in the authority’s code inspection program.](#)

The authority currently does not have annual loss reduction benchmarks for fire incidents and casualties. [It is recommended the authority develop specific, targeted, and achievable benchmarks for fire incidents and casualties.](#)

The authority provides continuing education (CE) for fire inspection personnel. However, there is no formal process or procedure in place that defines and describes the required number of hours and type of CE fire inspection personnel should receive. [It is recommended the authority develop a formal standard operational procedure/directive to better define the fire inspection personnel continuing education program.](#)

#### **Criterion 5B – Public Education Program**

A public education program is in place and directed toward reducing specific risks in a manner consistent with the Authority’s mission and as identified within the community risk assessment and standards of cover. Poudre Fire Authority’s public education program is developed from analyses of call data as well as national data and research.

The authority has adequately trained staff in place to deliver the public education program. The staff includes dedicated 40-hour staff as well as select on-duty firefighters. Program direction and education evaluation is provided by the authority’s public outreach committee, led by the community risk reduction manager. This committee has not been active in the two years due to substantial personnel changes within the fire prevention/community risk reduction program. [It is recommended that the authority’s public outreach committee be reactivated, and a guide mission statement developed for this program.](#)

#### **Criterion 5C – Fire Investigation, Origin and Cause Program**

The authority operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward origin and cause investigation and subsequent classification of fires, explosions, and other emergency situations that endanger life or property. All fire events occurring within Poudre Fire Authority’s jurisdiction require an investigation to determine the origin and cause. The program is authorized by the adoption of the 2018 International Fire Code by the required governing bodies within the authority’s jurisdiction. There is adequate staff in place to investigate fires. Most fires are investigated by the first-in

company officer or a community safety specialist (BU1). Large fires and those that offer more complexity to the investigation are investigated by an on-call investigator.

The authority uses the scientific method as outlined by NFPA 921: *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*, which is directed by fire prevention bureau policy. An annual appraisal is completed to assess the program's goals and objectives, determine areas in need of improvement, and in turn provide information for budget development.

#### **Criterion 5D – Domestic Preparedness, Planning and Response**

The Poudre Fire Authority operates an all-hazards preparedness program that includes a coordinated multi-agency response plan designed to protect the community from terrorist threats or attacks, major disasters, and other large-scale emergencies occurring at or in the immediate area. Poudre Fire Authority and the City of Fort Collins have adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS and the Incident Command System (ICS) are used at all emergency scenes.

The authority works in coordination with the City of Fort Collins Department of Preparedness and Security (FCDPS). The authority has an emergency management specialist who is permanently assigned to FCDPS. The authority operates under a published emergency operations plan (EOP) developed by FCDPS. The FCDPS also coordinates response exercises and readiness training for the authority.

The authority has a continuity of operations plan (COOP) that is contained within the Fort Collins COOP plan. The most recent version of the COOP is dated 2017 and is reviewed every other year to determine whether an update is needed. The current COOP is being revised and the authority is an active participant in its revision and update.

#### **Criterion 5E – Fire Suppression**

The authority operates an adequate, effective, efficient, and safe fire suppression program directed toward controlling and/or extinguishing fires to protect people from injury or death and reduce property loss. Poudre Fire Authority provides fire suppression services from 11 career and 2 volunteer fire stations. The service area is split utilizing a two-battalion system, with one assigned as north and the other as south. The authority staffs 11 fire engines with a minimum of 3 personnel, 2 ladder trucks with a minimum of 4 personnel, and 2 battalion chief vehicles. The authority also cross staffs a collapse rescue, a rescue, two type 3 engines, four brush trucks, three water tenders, and a hazardous materials apparatus. The daily minimum staffing for the authority is 46 personnel to support the 13 response zones, assigned by station.

The authority utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS) as specified by the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5, *Management of Domestic Incidents*. The authority utilizes NIMS ICS on all incidents and establishes incident command on all single and multiple unit responses regardless the complexity of the incident. The authority utilizes the Blue Card System for all emergency incidents.

## Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represent the authority’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

<b>2015-2019 Moderate Risk Fire Suppression Aggregate Response Times</b>				
<b>1st/ERF</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Gap</b>
1st Due	Urban	8:13	7:30	0:43
		n=329		
1st Due	Rural	14:14	12:20	1:54
		n=42		
ERF	Urban	14:32	10:20	4:12
		n=200		
ERF	Rural	15:19	16:20	1:01
		n=14		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Poudre Fire Authority had a statistically insignificant number of high-risk fire suppression incidents for 2015-2019, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for the high-risk ERF is provided in this report.

### **Criterion 5F – Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

The authority operates an EMS program with a designated level of out-of-hospital emergency medical care that meets the needs of the community. As the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), Poudre Fire Authority (PFA) is legally responsible for providing emergency medical services (EMS) within the authority’s response jurisdiction, as well as within the Northern Larimer County Emergency Response Area (NLCERA). This is accomplished through a combination of intergovernmental agreements with multiple agencies and a contract with the University of Colorado Health-EMS for advanced life support (ALS) and ambulance transport services.

Response to low risk incidents utilizes a roving alert medical (RAM) unit staffed with two firefighter/emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and is in operation during periods of peak demand. Moderate and high-risk incidents utilize an engine staffed with a minimum of three personnel to assist the transporting authority.

The authority recently re-implemented emergency medical dispatching (EMD) into their dispatching process, EMD had been removed from the system in 2014. The addition of EMD into the dispatch process has led to a marked increase in call processing times. This has been related to a change in how the dispatch conducts the EMD process in relation to when the dispatch initiates the response. [It is recommended the authority monitor the EMD call processing procedures to ensure the system balances the need for patient information and expeditious call processing.](#)

## Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represent the authority’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

<b>2015-2019 Moderate Risk EMS Aggregate Response Times</b>				
<b>1st/ERF</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Gap</b>
1st Due	Urban	7:59	7:30	0:29
		n=34,824		
1st Due	Rural	13:36	12:20	1:16
		n=1804		

<b>2018-2019 High Risk EMS Aggregate Response Times</b>				
<b>1st/ERF</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Gap</b>
1st Due	Urban	9:22	7:30	1:52
		n= 150		
1st Due	Rural	16:42	12:20	4:12
		n= 16		

In 2018 the authority began using a new records management system (RMS) that recorded high risk response times in a different manner than the previous RMS. As such, there is only two years of response time data under the new system.

A high-risk response receives a minimum of five personnel consisting of a three-person PFA engine company and a third party two-person advanced life support ambulance.

### **Criterion 5G – Technical Rescue**

The authority operates an adequate, effective, efficient, and safe program directed toward rescuing trapped or endangered persons from any life-endangering cause (e.g., structural collapse, vehicle accidents, swift water or submersion, confined space, cave-in, trench collapse, fire). Poudre Fire Authority has an established technical rescue program comprised of personnel trained to the awareness, operations, and technician level. The program consists of members who receive training in various technical rescue disciplines including confined space rescue, trench rescue, swift water rescue, still water rescue, ice rescue, vehicle extrication, elevator rescue, and large animal rescue who staff various apparatus that are well-equipped for the risk found within the community served.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1670: *Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and rescue Incidents* and NFPA 1006: *Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications* are the authority’s guiding documents for technical rescue training, equipment, and deployment. The authority trains its personnel to a minimum of the awareness level, as defined in NFPA 1670. Identified personnel are trained to an operational and technician level depending on the discipline and assigned company.

The authority responds to and provides technical rescue services within Larimer County through mutual aid agreements. The authority has multiple members that serve on Colorado Task Force One

Urban Search and Rescue Team (CO-TF1). CO-TF1 is one of 28 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) task forces that operate under the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as part of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represent the authority’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

<b>2015-2019 Moderate Risk Technical Rescue Aggregate Response Times</b>				
<b>1st/ERF</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Gap</b>
1st Due	Urban	8:42	7:30	0:48
		n=145		
1st Due	Rural	16:08	12:20	3:52
		n=66		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Poudre Fire Authority had a statistically insignificant number of moderate risk technical rescue incidents requiring an effective response force (ERF) for 2015-2019, to provide a sufficient data set to study. There were also a statistically insignificant number of high-risk technical rescue incidents for 2015-2019, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analyses for these incidents are provided in this report.

**Criterion 5H – Hazardous Materials (Hazmat)**

The authority operates an adequate, effective, efficient, and safe hazardous materials program directed toward protecting the community from the hazards associated with the uncontrolled releases of hazardous and toxic materials. Poudre Fire Authority has hazardous materials response responsibility and jurisdiction for all areas within the authority service area. All operations personnel are certified at the operations level and the authority also maintains 35 hazmat technicians. There is a designated hazmat station where there are two dedicated hazmat techs assigned to each shift. A hazmat apparatus equipped with a wide variety of technician level equipment including Level A personal protective equipment (PPE) is assigned to the hazmat station.

A response area hazmat risk assessment has been completed as part of the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC). As a result of this assessment, the authority operates a tiered response model for hazmat emergencies. Low level hazmat emergencies receive a single engine company (three personnel) response with operations level personnel. Medium level risks receive an effective response force of six personnel of which two are hazmat technicians. High level risks receive an effective response force of 17 personnel, of which there are 9 hazmat technicians in the event of a required Level A or B entry. Additional resources if needed are available from adjacent automatic and mutual aid agencies.

There are up to date policies and operational directives based on national consensus standards that guide the authority’s hazmat responses. Training is maintained to meet minimum Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Operations level continuing education (CE) is

instructed by authority hazmat techs. Technician level CE is accomplished utilizing education and training resources at the authority, state, and national levels.

An annual program appraisal is completed by the hazmat program coordinator and identifies specific outputs of the previous year as well as identifies needed areas of improvement. The authority in general follows all applicable hazardous materials regulations, however there may be some minor adjustments needed to be completed to applicable operations directives to ensure they align with the applicable federal regulations.

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represent the authority’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

<b>2015-2019 Moderate Risk Hazardous Materials Aggregate Response Times</b>				
<b>1st/ERF</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Gap</b>
1st Due	Urban	9:26	7:30	1:56
		n=1,133		
1st Due	Rural	14:03	12:20	1:43
		n=118		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Poudre Fire Authority had a statistically insignificant number of moderate risk hazardous materials incidents requiring an effective response force (ERF) for 2015-2019, to provide a sufficient data set to study. There was also a statistically insignificant number of high-risk hazardous materials incidents for 2015-2019 to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for these responses are provided in this report.

**Criterion 5K – Wildland Fire Services**

The authority operates an adequate, effective, and efficient program directed toward a wildland fire. The wildland program service area includes approximately 25,000 acres of natural areas and open space. Also included is sizable area of wildland/urban interface, primarily on the authority’s western slope area. The authority has sufficient mutual aid agreements to assist in an incident should it grow out of the authority’s capabilities. The wildland fire program also educates and trains personnel and the authority participates in training with mutual aid partners to maintain proficiency. The authority has two Type 3 and four Type 6 engines that are cross staffed by career personnel and two Type 6 and one Type 3 engine that are staffed by volunteers.

The authority utilizes a three-tiered wildland fire danger system to determine the associated risk levels. The system utilized current weather systems and correlates that with fuel moisture levels based on a 10 or 1000-hour fuel moisture level. Low, moderate, and high-risk levels are determined by the percentage of 10 or 1000-hour fuel moisture levels.

The authority was innovative in their approach to ensure all members received their required training by conducting training through Zoom and documenting the training in their training software. Each member was also responsible for verifying their training was completed inside the software. This two-tiered approach authenticates the validity of the training.

The authority has a policy that clearly identifies the certifications required for each position and that they must be maintained. This policy does not mention wildland certifications and all members of the authority receive the training. [It is recommended the authority add the required wildland certifications and qualification training to the applicable policy.](#)

Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represent the authority’s actual performance (baseline) versus the goal (benchmark). The gaps are provided in red (representing improvement opportunities), and green (when actual performance exceeds the goal).

<b>2015-2019 Moderate Risk Wildland Fire Services Aggregate Response Times</b>				
<b>1st/ERF</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Gap</b>
1st Due	Urban	12:51	7:20	5:31
		n=209		
1st Due	Rural	19:55	16:20	3:35
		n= 95		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Poudre Fire Authority had a statistically insignificant number of moderate risk wildland incidents requiring an effective response force (ERF) for 2015-2019, to provide a sufficient data set to study. There was also a statistically insignificant number of high-risk wildland incidents for 2015-2019 to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analyses for these incidents are provided in this report.

**Category 6 — Physical Resources**

Development and use of physical resources is consistent with the authority’s established plans. A systematic and planned approach to the future development of facilities is in place. Poudre Fire Authority has an adequate established budget to ensure the physical resources are consistent with the authority’s needs. The apparatus, buildings, and equipment are well maintained, and sufficient backup resources exist should an item need maintenance or be placed out of service. The community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC) has identified future facility needs and these have been incorporated into the long-term planning process. When planning for future facilities, the authority incorporates feedback from all levels of the organization, including employees, management/leadership staff, as well as the Poudre Fire Authority Board of Directors.

The authority designs, maintains, manages fixed facility resources that meet the authority’s goals and objectives. Poudre Fire Authority has adequate facilities to meet the current need of the authority. The authority has identified that two of their facilities, Station 7 and administration, are at or close to capacity. The authority has purchased space to allow for the expansion of Station 7. The authority also has created plans to utilize open space in other authority facilities and utilize more telework options to ease the burden on the administration building. The peer assessment team witnessed existing facilities that meet or exceed code and regulatory requirements and are in a good state of repair. The authority has plans and processes in place to conduct repair and maintenance on the facilities, should it be warranted.

All facilities are built to the federal, state, and local codes and regulations at the time of their construction. All fully staffed fire stations have been upgraded to include Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and have separate men's and women's bathrooms. Station safety enhancements include fire sprinklers, decontamination sinks, and vehicle exhaust systems for front line and secondary apparatus. To meet the authority's environmental goals and objectives, facilities built since 2009 are designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

Apparatus resources are designed, purchased, maintained to adequately meet the authority's goals and objectives. Poudre Fire Authority has an established apparatus committee that reviews apparatus resources on at least an annual basis. This committee concept also allows for a variety of input from throughout the organization. The committee ensures that apparatus purchased comply with national consensus standards and meet any applicable governmental requirements. The committee has a replacement scoresheet for both staff vehicles and apparatus to assist in determining replacement timetables. The committee also serves as a conduit for end-user feedback to enhance performance in operations. The authority has a capital budget in place to order replacement vehicles and apparatus based on the scoresheets and replacement timeframes. These processes in place have allowed the authority to continually meet the apparatus needs for the CRA/SOC identified service programs.

It was observed by the peer assessment team that some apparatus have a significantly higher call volume than others and the higher utilized apparatus are not rotated with other apparatus at slower stations to maximize apparatus life cycle. [It is recommended that the authority consider rotating front-line, higher use apparatus with front-line, low use apparatus to increase the life cycle of all apparatus.](#)

The inspection, testing, preventive maintenance, replacement schedule, and emergency repair of all apparatus are well established and meet the emergency apparatus service and reliability needs. A standard operating procedure has been developed and is in place to ensure the maintenance of the authority's apparatus is timely and within manufacturer's recommendations for severe service. The maintenance program utilizes a fleet maintenance software program to track needed maintenance as well as record maintenance and repairs performed. The authority has sufficiently trained maintenance personnel to ensure the standards of the Department of Transportation and the National Fire Protection Association are met. The repair shop is equipped to only handle two major repairs at a time and the specialized tools needed to work on apparatus are limited. The authority has begun preparations for a remodel of the space to add two additional bays to perform work on the apparatus and to purchase the additional specialized tools frequently needed to conduct related repairs.

There are five front-line reserve apparatus, including one aerial apparatus, and one reserve chief officer vehicle. The authority has also established agreements with other area fire departments to conduct maintenance on their apparatus. This has allowed the authority to hire an additional maintenance technician.

Equipment and supplies are adequate and designed to meet the authority's goals and objectives. Poudre Fire Authority purchases, distributes, and maintains equipment and supplies to meet the identified service delivery programs identified in the CRA/SOC. The equipment and supplies meet national consensus standards and any applicable regulations. Committees/teams, equipment project

managers, and/or subject matter experts are involved in selection of specific tools. to maximize employee involvement.

Poudre Fire Authority has assigned program managers to oversee the tools and equipment for the authority. The program managers are responsible for ensuring applicable inspections, testing, and maintenance for equipment and supplies are conducted in accordance with manufacturers' and regulatory requirements. A warehouse manager tracks supply levels and ensures there is adequate stock to meet the needs of the authority. The replacement and distribution of equipment is reviewed yearly with the budgeting cycle; this ensures that there are adequate financial resources available to purchase new equipment and supplies as well as maintain existing equipment.

Safety equipment is adequate and designed to meet authority goals and objectives. The authority has a warehouse manager tasked with maintaining, issuing, and tracking safety equipment. The authority has a safety committee to provide additional oversight to ensure the operations policy for personal protective equipment is being met. The authority has issued all member two full sets of firefighting protective ensembles has established a rotation cycle of every five years to meet the 10-year replacement cycle. The authority performs an annual personal protective equipment (PPE) audit to ensure there is an adequate supply of PPE and is inspected and maintained per manufacturer recommendations and applicable national consensus standards.

All necessary inspections, maintenance, and repairs are performed by qualified internal personnel or a third party. Records are kept of all maintenance, testing, and repairs by the individual program manager who is overseen by a chief officer. There is currently work in progress to establish a central location for tracking maintenance, certification, and program information.

### **Category 7 — Human Resources**

General human resources administration practices are in place and are consistent with local, state/provincial, and federal statutory and regulatory requirements. Poudre Fire Authority has an administrative services director that oversees the human resources functions. In 2019, an employee and labor relations manager position was implemented to assist the administrative services director. All processes and policies appear to be consistent with applicable requirements. Policies are reviewed and updated as needed.

Systems are established to attract, select, retain, and promote qualified personnel in accordance with applicable local, state/provincial, and federal statutory requirements. The peer assessment team observed the authority is committed to maintain and enhance an accountable, well-qualified, inclusive, diverse, and safety-conscious workforce. The human resources function is responsible for overseeing the recruitment, selection, and hiring of new employees and uses multiple methods depending on the position being recruited to seek qualified candidates. There are policies in place to identify and announce entry level, lateral, and promotional positions. Processes for selecting recruits and other initial, lateral, and promotional employees follow all local, state, and federal requirements.

The authority has a standing recruitment committee to attract qualified and diverse applicants for entry-level firefighter positions. Efforts by the recruitment committee include attending job fairs and special events, conducting fire camps for high school students, and performing outreach to local colleges and universities. For executive and civilian recruitments, various internal stakeholder groups are included in the development of position announcement criteria.

The authority has a formal probationary process for newly hired firefighters beginning with the firefighter academy and continuing through the completion of the first year of employment. Fire academy graduates must complete rookie book training requirements to be cleared of probationary status as well as be signed off by their immediate supervisor and battalion chief.

Personnel policies and procedures are in place, documented, and guiding both administrative and personnel behavior. The authority's board of directors approves rules, regulations, and policies that guide personnel behavior. All personnel policies, procedures, and rules are available to employees on the authority's intranet. Personnel within the agency are required to acknowledge the receipt and review of these rules, regulations, and policies. Annual training is provided to all employees that includes the review of these documents.

The authority has a policy in place that prohibits unlawful harassment or discrimination based on race, color, religion, creed, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, military status, or status in any other group protected by federal, state, or local law. Anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training is conducted annually for all employees. The authority encourages all members to report suspected incidents of harassment and discrimination to managerial staff. Policy requires supervisors at all levels to immediately report all complaints, observed incidents, or suspected instances of harassment or discrimination to the fire chief or human resources, and requires a prompt and thorough investigation of the alleged incident. Policy also prohibits retaliation against employees who participate in harassment or discrimination complaints or investigations.

Human resources development and utilization is consistent with the authority's established mission, goals, and objectives. The authority uses its strategic plan and community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC) to determine how human resources are developed and utilized. The agency has job descriptions for full-time, classified positions. These are used to develop a classification system and pay plan which are approved by agency's board of directors and included as part of the annual budget. Job descriptions are updated as necessary and prior to posting a new job opening. The human resources staff is responsible for administering and maintaining job descriptions. Uniformed positions, including firefighters, captains, battalion chiefs, and division chiefs are placed in the pay plan and aligned with market data. The authority will be conducting a classification review of administrative support positions prior to the development of the 2021 annual budget.

The authority has a policy of providing annual performance evaluations to all members. The system is designed to provide opportunities for employees and supervisors to discuss job performance and the authority's values, mission, vision, and organizational culture. The personnel appraisal system was updated in 2019 following input from selected organizational leaders and interested members.

The authority maintains a policy committee whose role is to review existing policies and the development of new ones. Compensation is negotiated for CBA members and reviewed in the market for non-members. A system and practices for providing employee/member compensation are in place. The authority publishes pay plans for uniform and civilian positions in the annual budget report. Additionally, all members can access the pay plans on the agency intranet. Reports on individual employee total compensation (salary and benefits) are provided to employees annually in reports produced by the Fort Collins payroll office, which the authority contracts with for these services.

The authority's occupational health, safety, and risk management programs protect the organization and personnel from unnecessary injuries or losses from accidents or liability. Poudre Fire Authority has a battalion chief who fulfills the health and safety officer (HSO) role. The battalion chief recently was assigned a captain to assist with the battalion chief's other roles/responsibilities so he could concentrate more effort toward health and safety tasks. The HSO oversees the authority's occupational health and safety committee that is comprised of members from emergency medical service (EMS), apparatus, personal protective equipment (PPE), and fitness committees as well as representation from the IAFF Local chapter. The HSO currently has no formal training for the position. [It is recommended that the health safety officer \(HSO\) receive training based on HSO job task competencies that is in line with nationally recognized consensus standards.](#)

The authority has adequate policies and operative directives in place including an occupational health and safety manual that includes all elements of health and safety programs in place. Included in the occupational health and safety manual is a risk reduction plan that addresses identified workplace hazards. The authority has an infectious control manual as well as a cancer reduction operational directive to minimize exposure to communicable diseases or chemicals.

The authority has adequate occupational health and safety programs in place for both new members as well current members. When new processes, procedures, or equipment are implemented, supervisors responsible for the changes coordinate training and necessary documentation, primarily through operational directives.

While the authority has had a near-miss program in place for several years, it has not been successfully utilized. [It is recommended the authority review the existing near-miss program for elements that would make the program more effective and increase the use of it by members.](#)

The authority has in place a process to investigate accidents and injuries. However there has been no formal training provided in how to investigate accident and injuries. [It is recommended the HSO or other designee\(s\) receive formal accident and injury investigation training that is based on recognized best practices.](#)

The authority recently moved from a dedicated shift incident safety officer (ISO) to an incident safety officer platform that utilizes a fire officer from one of the effective response force engine companies. [It is recommended the authority provide incident safety officer \(ISO\) training that is based on ISO competencies of a nationally recognized consensus standard for all potential officers that could act as an ISO.](#)

The authority has a wellness/fitness program for recruit and incumbent personnel. The authority specifies and communicates the provisions if employees/members do not comply with the wellness/fitness program. Poudre Fire Authority provides for initial, regular, and rehabilitative medical and fitness evaluations that generally follow NFPA 1582: *Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments*. Line personnel receive a physical evaluation every two or three years, depending on their risk level. [It is recommended the authority consider increasing the frequency of physical evaluations to yearly for all line personnel.](#)

The authority provides a wide range of fitness equipment at all stations that are available for use by all employees. Twelve certified peer fitness trainers are available to provide wellness/fitness training to all employees. The authority has a peer support team in place that is overseen by a licensed counselor. All members and their families are eligible to utilize this program.

The authority performs an annual appraisal of the wellness/fitness program. The appraisal process is relatively new and the HSO is working to incorporate it into quarterly reporting to the senior leadership staff as well as identifying needed improvements to the program.

### **Category 8 — Training and Competency**

The authority has established general goals and specific objectives that direct the authority's priorities in a manner consistent with its mission and appropriate for the community it serves. Poudre Fire Authority training has a process in place to identify training needs. The process incorporates national standards, certification requirements, Insurance Services Office (ISO) requirements, organizational needs as determined through company performance tasks, after action reviews, and working with program managers. The authority demonstrated a focus on strategic planning through documentation that identified performance gaps and future needs. The authority also uses a comprehensive measurement reporting system and regular staff meetings to identify training needs. This includes annual, semi-annual, quarterly, and monthly reports and meetings. After action reports are part of the training needs process as well.

The authority identifies minimum training levels for all full-time positions within the authority. Additionally, the authority has a staff development program in place with a dedicated positioned captain assigned to deliver content to all levels of full-time personnel within the authority.

The authority does not have any federal government mandatory training requirements. Colorado is a non-Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) state that does not require OSHA compliance for public agencies. [It is recommended that in the absence of required OSHA regulations, the authority consider reviewing and adopting applicable national consensus standards and/or regulations.](#)

Training and education programs are provided to support the authority's needs. The Poudre Fire Authority Training Division has a yearly calendar training process which ensures that personnel are appropriately well trained and provides a set schedule for all personnel to follow. There are processes in place for individual and crew performance evaluation through validated performance measurements. Performance is measured through job performance requirements (JPRs) and crew performance tasks (CPTs). Additionally, the authority utilizes a third-party vendor (TargetSolutions) to ensure training content is issued and completion documented regularly to personnel. While generally following the training, criteria required for career firefighters, firefighter volunteer training is currently managed outside of the training division. [It is recommended the authority incorporate the volunteer training program into the training division.](#)

The use of task books with associated JPRs for the recruit firefighter are used post-fire academy, with driver operator initial and ongoing certification, technical rescue, wildland, and hazmat. The authority uses evaluations to analyze training reliability and leverages technology by using a QR code system to accurately capture evaluations supporting the authority's training needs.

Training and education resources, printed and non-printed library materials, media equipment, facilities, and staff are available in sufficient quantity, relevancy, diversity, and are current. The authority's training division values the importance of providing relevant training and education resources, printed and non-printed library materials, media equipment, updated facilities, and qualified staff. Each training captain supervises the quantity, relevancy, and diversity of resources

under their purview to ensure resources are current and necessary. The peer assessment team observed resources being properly maintained with budgeting in place to improve and replace training material and equipment.

The authority has a very functional training facility which houses ample sized classrooms and dedicated apparatus for training needs. The peer assessment team observed a live burn facility with vertical ventilation and forcible entry props. Additionally, the authority has sufficient instructional personnel and all captains are required to hold Fire Instructor I certifications.

## **Category 9 — Essential Resources**

### **Criterion 9A – Water Supply**

The water supply resources are reliable and capable of distributing adequate volumes of water and pressures to all areas of authority responsibility. All areas meet fire flow requirements in accordance with applicable fire flow criteria.

The peer assessment team confirmed that Poudre Fire Authority is in receipt of a most recent Insurance Services Office (ISO) grading of 38.04 out of 40 points. The peer assessment team reviewed most recent ISO report as prima facie compliance with this criterion.

### **Criterion 9B – Communication Systems**

The public and the authority have an adequate, effective, and efficient emergency communications system. The system is reliable and able to meet the demands of major operations, including command and control within fire/rescue services during emergency operations, and meets the needs of other public safety agencies having the need for distribution of information.

Poudre Fire Authority partners with the Fort Collins 911 (FC911) center. This communication center provides dispatching and call answering services for the authority as well as several other regional public safety entities. The FC911 center is an accredited center of excellence through the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch.

The authority utilizes a robust P25 800MHz radio system that provides interoperable radio communications. This system provides the authority with adequate talk groups and channels to provide safe and effective radio communications not only within the authority's response area but statewide as well. In areas unserviceable with 800 MHz radios, or when having worked with agencies without 800 MHz capability, VHF and UHF frequencies are still utilized based on the situation and area.

In September 2020, there was a new state-of-the-art computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system installed at the dispatch center. This new system provides interoperability with all public safety answering points (PSAPs) in Larimer County and has new state-of-the-art functionality features for field operations. The authority and the FC911 continue on a growth curve to obtain optimal performance from the new system.

### **Criterion 9C – Administrative Support Services and Office Systems**

Administrative support services and general office systems are in place with adequate staff to efficiently and effectively conduct and manage the authority's administrative functions, such as organizational planning and assessment, resource coordination, data analysis/research, records keeping, reporting, business communications, public interaction, and purchasing.

The Poudre Fire Authority administrative support staff is stationed at fire headquarters. Support services include clerical and professional support for administrative functions, financial support services, record keeping, information technology support, public reception, and planning/assessment services. The peer assessment team was able to verify and validate the effectiveness of the information technology (IT) staff regarding records management, staffing and scheduling, mapping, dispatch, and communication needs.

The authority uses a networked IT system (wireless and fiber) covering 15 locations and servicing over 200 employees. Microsoft Outlook, Tiburon CAD (moving to Central Square in September 2020), ImageTrend record management system, TeleStaff (employees scheduling), SharePoint and JD Edwards are the primary software programs that support the daily operation of the authority. A video teleconference system (VTC) is used to link the various authority locations for training and meetings. A new geospatial analysis software program (DECCAN) has recently been installed to conduct data analysis projects.

The authority provides public reception for administrative programs in three locations: community safety and service, administration, and at the training center. These three locations are staffed with administrative support personnel to address walk-in needs of the public. By policy, major documents (rules and regulations, policies and procedures, operational directives) are updated at least once every three years.

### **Category 10 — External Systems Relationships**

The authority's operations and planning efforts include relationships with external agencies and operational systems that affect or may influence its mission, operations, and/or cost effectiveness. Poudre Fire Authority has long-standing relationships with external partners, which have been built on continuous outreach and cooperation. The authority fosters the growth of these relationships by participating in formal and informal programs and meetings with partner agencies. The authority is credible in maintaining legislative relationships with regional fire service partners, local political bodies, and statewide organizations. Additionally, the authority has operational relationships with auto aid and mutual aid partners including Loveland Fire Rescue Authority, Wellington Fire Protection District, Windsor-Severance Fire Protection District, Livermore Fire Protection District, Poudre Canyon Fire Protection District, and Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department.

The peer assessment team was able to validate the strategic plan strategic initiative #5 – Governance and Organizational Sustainability which mandates the identification of relationships with external agencies. The authority demonstrated through strategic planning their focus on potential regionalization of emergency services.

The authority maintains current agreements with those external agencies which support the identified programs. All external authority agreements required to be maintained in support of any program are

current, reviewed and/or updated within the accreditation period and adopted by the appropriate governing bodies.

Poudre Fire Authority has a procedure in place that ensures agreements are reviewed on an annual basis. The planning and analysis battalion chief completes a review of specific agreements in January of every year. The operations chief has the authority to update agreements as the chief's designee and the planning and analysis battalion chief provides the administrative support to ensure that the agreements are updated, signed, as well as ensuring all planned changes are able to be implemented.