Fact Sheet
Arkansas Fire Service Needs Assessment

There has been substantial progress in reducing many fire department needs, although more remains to be done.

Protective Equipment and Clothing

The 2010 percentage of Arkansas departments without enough equipment to equip all personnel (or all personnel on a shift, as appropriate) was:

- 49% for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), compared to 78% in 2001 and 60% in 2005;
- 53% for personal alert safety system devices (PASS), compared to 81% in 2001 and 59% in 2005;
- 6% for personal protective clothing, compared to 16% in 2001 and 8% in 2005; and
- 27% for portable radios, compared to 59% in 2001 and 35% in 2005.

Training

In many fire departments, not all involved personnel have been formally trained in their emergency response duties. The 2010 percentage of Arkansas departments in which not all involved personnel have been formally trained was:

- 41% for structural firefighting, compared to 49% in 2001 and 43% in 2005; and
- 69% for emergency medical service (EMS), compared to 75% in 2001 and 72% in 2005.

Fitness and Health

In many fire departments, there is no program to maintain basic firefighter fitness and health. The 2010 percentage of Arkansas departments with no such program was:

- 74%, compared to 88% in 2001 and 81% in 2005.

Stations and Apparatus

Some stations lack specific features, which are required by current standards but were not required when stations were constructed. Some stations are old enough that a variety of persistent or recurring problems are to be expected and replacement might be better and even cheaper. Some departments are using old fire apparatus.

- 49% of Arkansas fire departments do not have backup power for their fire stations.
- 75% of Arkansas fire departments do not have exhaust emission control for their fire stations.
- 20% of the fire stations in Arkansas are over 40 years old.
- 16% of Arkansas fire department engines and pumpers are at least 30 years old.

Unusually Challenging Incidents

There has been little or no progress in increasing the ability of fire departments to handle various unusually challenging incidents with local trained personnel and specialized equipment alone:

- Provide technical rescue and EMS at a structural collapse involving 50 occupants; and
- Provide hazardous material response and EMS at an incident involving chemical or biological agents and with 10 injuries.
- Wildland/urban interface (WUI) fire affecting 500 acres; and
- Mitigation of a major developing flood.

However, there has been progress in the percentage of departments having written agreements for working with others. The 2010 percentage of Arkansas departments with no such written agreement was:

- 56% for structural collapse, compared to 81% in 2001 and 74% in 2005;
- 58% for chemical or biological incidents, compared to 81% in 2001 and 71% in 2005;
- 49% for wildland/urban interface fires, compared to 73% in 2001 and 61% in 2005; and
- 69% for developing major flood, compared to 89% in 2001 and 83% in 2005.

Success requires more written agreements, with each participating department knowing its role, providing resources needed to play its role, and helping test the plan in simulations and rehearsals.