

COMPILATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

**FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT STUDY
DEERING, NH**

NOVEMBER 2015

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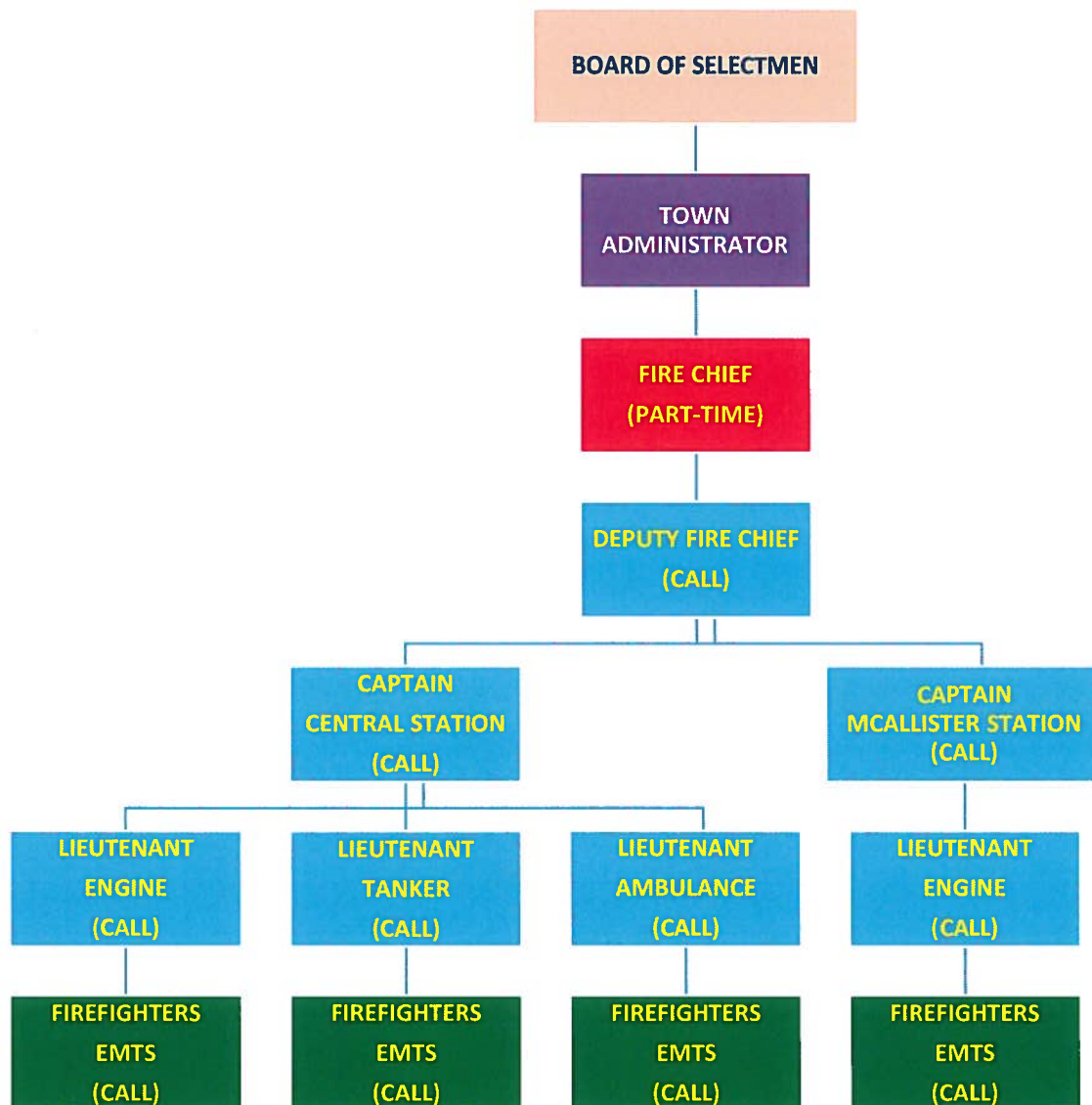
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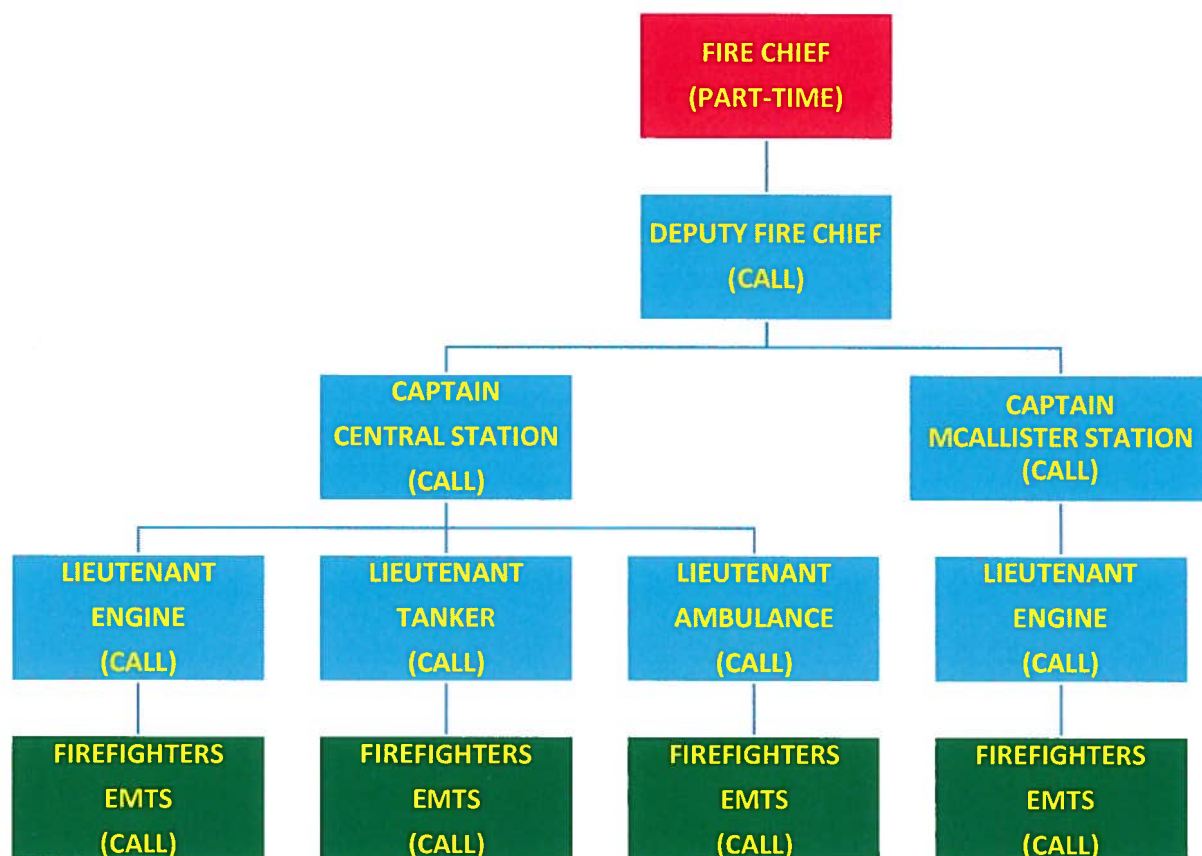
COMPILATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This compilation of recommendations is provided in order to assist the Town of Deering in prioritizing and establishing a work plan to implement the recommendations. For ease of reference, the recommendations are numbered consecutively, by chapter, as they appear in the report. A number of recommendations are similar but appear in several chapters so that when referenced, they can be viewed in the appropriate context and relevance within those different chapters.

CHAPTER 3: FIRE AND EMS OPERATIONS

- 3.1 The MRI study team recommends that building upon our recommendations in Chapter 5, *Facilities, Apparatus and Equipment*, for a consolidation of facilities and rightsizing of its apparatus fleet, that the Town of Deering and Deering Fire and Rescue Department adopt the following revised organizational chart:





- 3.2 The MRI study team recommends that building upon our recommendations *in* Chapter 9, *Policies, Rules and Regulations, and Standard Operating Guidelines*, that the Town of Deering adopt the provision of New Hampshire RSA 154: 1-(I)b which will allow the board of selectman to not only appoint the fire chief, but would allow them to appoint any firefighters upon recommendation of the town administrator and the fire chief. This hiring practice would be consistent with all personnel policies adopted by the town.
- 3.3 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should work with the CAMAFC dispatch to collaboratively develop consistent response time statistics to determine compliance with the provisions of NFPA 1720.
- 3.4 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should establish a formal pre-incident planning program with the goal of having an up-to-date pre-plan for every business and commercial occupancy (including summer camp facilities). The purpose of a pre-incident planning program is to develop a fire/emergency response plan for buildings in the town. A pre-fire/incident plan

includes data such as the occupancy type, floor plans, construction type, hazards to firefighting, special conditions in the building, apparatus placement plan, water supply plan, forcible entry, and ventilation plan. Pre-planning will improve the firefighter's knowledge of the specific tactics needed to handle a fire or other emergency at a facility and will alert them to on-site hazards and risks. Pre-fire/incident plans should be reviewed regularly and tested by periodic table-top exercises and on-site drills.

- 3.5 The MRI study team recommends that when there is a report of a structure fire, or smoke in a structure, a full structural response should be automatically initiated. This would include the immediate and automatic response of several departments with additional water tenders/tankers.
- 3.6 The MRI study team recommends that, although more stringent than the requirements found in Table 4.3.2 of NFPA 1720 for rural communities, through the utilization of automatic mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities, the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should attempt to achieve a goal of having a minimum of 16 personnel on the scene of any reported structure fire, within 14 minutes or less.
- 3.7 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should attempt to improve its initial unit on scene response times AND reduce the number of times that the department is unable to respond to emergency incidents, particularly EMS incidents requiring the ambulance.
- 3.8 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department establish a formal fireground/incident safety officer program. All department officers should receive safety officer training, obtain safety officer certification, and an operational procedure should be implemented that results in a guaranteed response of at least one Deering (preferably two including a mutual aid) additional chief officer on every working/all hands incident.
- 3.9 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should acquire a vehicle (possibly a 4X4 SUV or pick-up truck) for use by the department's chief officers as a command vehicle to facilitate more effective, efficient, and safe, incident management/command operations on all types of emergency incidents, and allow the establishment of formal command posts on the scene. This vehicle would be used daily for inspections, responses, and administrative duties if a part-time fire chief is employed.
- 3.10 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should apply for a federal SAFER grant for on-call firefighter recruitment and retention. This grant should be utilized to develop a comprehensive marketing program to attract new

members, and provide incentives for the retention of those personnel, such as tuition reimbursement, health care benefits, tax abatements, etc.

- 3.11 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department make it a priority to develop an active on-call recruitment program led by a chief officer. At a minimum, this program should concentrate on recruiting personnel from within Deering and consist of:

- Developing a recruitment brochure and mailing it to all residents
- Performing public outreach through the local media
- Contacting community and service groups
- Developing an eye-catching banner on the town's website
- Placing signs recruiting call/volunteer personnel at the main entrances to town
- Placing signs call/recruiting volunteer in local businesses particularly high volume locations
- Although time-consuming, consideration should also be given to conducting a door-to-door recruitment campaign of every residence in the town. Increasing the number of personnel in the department should result in an enhancement of the number of personnel responding to incidents and assist with reducing response times.

- 3.12 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should work to develop statistics that indicate the frequency with which the department is able to comply with the requirements of NFPA 1720, and also the average number of call personnel who respond to each incident. These statistics should be further broken down by weekday/daytime (normal working hours 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM), weekday/night time (6:00 PM to 7:00 AM), and weekends.

- 3.13 The MRI study team recommends that as a primarily call organization where personnel respond from various locations upon receipt of an emergency incident dispatch, the Deering Fire and Rescue Department (or Concord Fire Dispatch) should purchase and implement a system to track members who are responding to the incident such as the "*Am Responding*" system. These systems let you know who is responding to the dispatches, where they are responding from, and when they will be responding or arriving. These web-based products can save critical time, and reduce response times,

for fire departments and EMS agencies. They will let the dispatcher and/or on duty officer in town know when personnel are on the way, or if they need to page additional personnel. It can also allow the officer to know who is responding to the station, scene, or any other location.

CHAPTER 4: MUTUAL AID

- 4.1 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department continue as a member of the Capital Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact. CAMAFC has worked well for the town and has provided necessary resources for fire and EMS services when Deering is unable to respond or when they need additional resources.
- 4.2 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department evaluate the current automatic aid areas of town and consider expanding the size of these areas. The town and the department should give consideration to entering into agreements for expanded automatic aid with communities that are willing and capable of providing these services, especially during daytime hours when Deering's staffing is limited. This will allow other departments that might respond to a specific area in Deering to initiate their response more rapidly.
- 4.3 The MRI study team recommends that data for mutual and automatic aid both given and received be recorded and analyzed regularly in order to determine what strains are being put on the regional mutual aid system and allow for better response planning for the department.

CHAPTER 5: FIRE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES, APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT

- 5.1 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering and Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop a comprehensive capital improvement plan (CIP) for apparatus, major equipment, and capital facility needs. The plan should be incorporated into the town's capital improvement plan. The plan should also take into consideration potential funding strategies, such as bonding, lease-purchase agreements, and grant opportunities.
- 5.2 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering begin a planning process to construct a new, modern, energy-efficient, "green" fire station near the center of the town. The operations of the Donovan and Murdough stations should then be consolidated into this new central (headquarters) facility. Since the new central (headquarters) fire station would consolidate two stations into one, it should be big enough to accommodate the assigned apparatus and support vehicles, as well as training, gear storage, crew quarters (for extended stays), decontamination areas for

both equipment and personnel, EMS equipment storage (clean area, out of the apparatus bay), and an at-source vehicle exhaust removal system.

- 5.3 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering seek funding for the design of the new station recommended in 5.2, after the capital improvement plan has been developed and adopted by the town.
- 5.4 The MRI study team recommends the McAllister station continue to be maintained due to the geography of the town. Upgrades should include the addition of facilities such as showers, locker room, and eating and sleeping areas for crew members who may need to remain in the station for extended periods. Funding for this project can also be sought after the capital improvement plan has been developed and adopted by the town.
- 5.5 The MRI study team recommends automatic fire alarm systems with heat and smoke detection be installed in all fire stations. These systems should not only be equipped with both audible and visible warning devices, they should automatically transmit an alarm to either the department's dispatch center or an approved central monitoring station. All stations should also be equipped with CO detectors. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants. The new station should be equipped with a complete automatic fire suppression system.
- 5.6 The MRI study team recommends all fire stations be equipped with emergency generators to provide back-up power supply in the event of interruption of the electrical service allowing for continuity of operations. Grants may be available through the New Hampshire emergency management agency to assist with this project.
- 5.7 The MRI study team recommends all stations be equipped with source capture vehicle exhaust emissions systems. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.
- 5.8 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering and the Deering Fire and Rescue Department begin the process of replacing twenty-nine-year-old Engine 3, a 1986 International. MRI recommends this apparatus be replaced with a modern, state of the art, quick attack fire rescue pumper equipped with a full-size pump, carrying at least 500 gallons of water and equipped with hydraulic rescue tools. A fire/rescue pumper or squad combines the functions of an engine (pump, hose, water) with vehicle extrication and possibly other basic special hazards/operations (technical rescue/hazardous materials) tools and equipment.

- 5.9 The procurement of the rescue pumper “squad” recommended in 5.8 could be funded at the fiscal year 2017 town meeting after a federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG or Fire Act) was applied for during the 2016 grant period, which will open in the spring of that year. If the AFG grant application is successful, then the FY 2017 capital project can be canceled.
- 5.10 The MRI study team recommends that since the town is heavily wooded, consideration be given to the Deering Fire and Rescue Department acquiring an appropriate forestry vehicle that can not only be used for wildland fire operations, but also for search and rescue and other types of off-road operations.
- 5.11 The MRI study team recommends that when the time comes for them to be replaced, Engine 2 and Tanker 1 should be consolidated into a single tender/pumper which combines a regular Class A pumper with the water carrying capabilities of a tender/tanker. If possible, this unit should be configured with a 3,000-gallon water tank, at least one portable tank, quick dump discharges, and a hose bed with a large capacity (4” or larger) diameter hose.
- 5.12 The procurement of the combination pumper-tender recommended in 5.11 should be funded at the fiscal year 2022 or 2023 town meeting. A federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG or Fire Act) should also be pursued provided the program is still available and funded at that time. If the AFG grant application is successful, then the capital project can be canceled.
- 5.13 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department adopt the following long-term apparatus deployments:
- Central Station: 1 quick attack rescue pumper, 1 tender pumper, 1 ambulance, 1 rescue boat, command vehicle
 - McAllister Station: 1 pumper, 1 forestry unit
- 5.14 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department work to ensure that all apparatus and vehicles comply with the appropriate NFPA and ISO standards for equipment carried. They should also adopt a policy of purchasing new NFPA 1901 and ISO compliant equipment when new apparatus is purchased. This policy will ensure that equipment is the most technologically up-to-date and that it is safe and functional.

- 5.15 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department provide a portable radio to each member of the department for use on emergency incidents. If this is not feasible, at the very minimum, the department must ensure that every member wearing SCBA and entering an IDLH atmosphere is equipped with a portable radio. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.
- 5.16 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering provide funding for the Deering Fire and Rescue Department to acquire two new thermal imaging cameras allowing one to be deployed to each station and each major piece of apparatus, and one to be kept as a spare. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.
- 5.17 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department review the recommendations in NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus (National Fire Protection Association, 2012 edition), and update and revise its vehicle fleet maintenance program as necessary to comply with the recommendations.
- 5.18 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department fully comply with its weekly apparatus inspection and serviceability procedure. This inspection is the equivalent of a daily pre-trip inspection as outlined in commercial driver manuals. NFPA 1911, *Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus* (2012 edition), has an appendix in the rear of the standard with suggestions for routine vehicle and component inspection and testing. The weekly inspection should also include an inventory and serviceability check of the tools, equipment, and SCBA that is carried on the apparatus.
- 5.19 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop and maintain complete apparatus and equipment maintenance records for each piece of apparatus and all major equipment regardless of where the preventative maintenance and/or repairs are performed.
- 5.20 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department immediately implement a program of annual pump testing, at intervals no greater than 12 months, in accordance with NFPA and ISO standards. All tests conducted, results including deficiencies noted, and any corrective action taken should be documented. Annual funding should be included in the fire department budget for these tests.

- 5.21 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department immediately implement an annual program of ground ladder testing, at intervals no greater than 12 months, in accordance with NFPA and ISO standards. All tests conducted, results including deficiencies noted, and any corrective action taken should be documented. Annual funding should be included in the fire department budget for these tests.
- 5.22 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department immediately implement a program of annual hose testing, at intervals no greater than 12 months, in accordance with NFPA and ISO standards. All tests conducted, results including deficiencies noted, and any corrective action taken should be documented. Annual funding should be included in the fire department budget for these tests.
- 5.23 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department continue its program of annual SCBA flow testing, at intervals no greater than 12 months, in accordance with NFPA standards and manufacturer's recommendations. All tests conducted, results including deficiencies noted, and any corrective action taken should be documented. Annual funding should be included in the fire department budget for these tests.
- 5.24 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department immediately implement an annual program of SCBA mask fit testing for ALL personnel to comply with NFPA standards and OSHA regulations. All tests conducted, results including deficiencies noted, and any corrective action taken should be documented. Annual funding should be included in the fire department budget for these tests.
- 5.25 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering provide funding for the Deering Fire and Rescue Department to acquire four additional automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) allowing one to be deployed to each major piece of apparatus. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.
- 5.26 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering provide funding for the Deering Fire and Rescue Department to acquire four four-gas combustible gas meters, allowing one to be deployed to each major piece of apparatus (engines), and one to be kept as a spare. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.

CHAPTER 6: WATER SUPPLY

- 6.1 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering strongly consider adopting a municipal regulation requiring the installation of a fire water supply cistern in any new development consisting of three or more homes or for any individual home of larger than a designated square footage.
- 6.2 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering develop a plan to strategically install large (30,000-gallon minimum) underground cisterns on public properties throughout the community, including the fire stations and possibly town hall, public works, etc. The funding to install these cisterns would be included in the town's capital improvement plan. The cost for these cisterns will vary based upon construction costs and to what extent the town's public works department can assist in their installation.
- 6.3 The MRI study team recommends the town consider entering into public/private partnerships with private property owners to facilitate the installation of cisterns on private properties in various locations throughout Deering. As an additional incentive, the town might consider a property tax abatement for the installation of cisterns on private property. Priority installations sites should include, but are not necessarily limited to, the Robin Hill Farm and the large summer camp.
- 6.4 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop a compelling public education program that explains the significant benefits to residents and property owners of installing cisterns for the storage of fire suppression system water supplies on various properties throughout the town.
- 6.5 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop a compelling public education program that includes discussing the benefits of installing residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes. Though New Hampshire's RSAs do not allow residential fire sprinkler systems to be mandated, there is no prohibition for property owners to install them if they determine that it is in their best interest.
- 6.6 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering immediately provide priority funding for the fire department and/or public works department to inspect, perform preventative maintenance, and repairs as necessary, to the existing dry hydrants/standpipes located throughout town to ensure they are fully operational should they be needed for a fire.
- 6.7 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering and the Deering Fire and Rescue Department make it a priority to identify additional suitable locations for dry hydrants

or standpipes throughout the town, and in conjunction with the public works department, or through the formation of public/private partnerships, install as many of them as possible each year based on the highest risk areas and/or year round accessibility and usability.

- 6.8 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department, in conjunction with its neighboring fire departments, identify locations within these communities that may be appropriate fill sites for tenders supplying water for fire incidents in certain areas of Deering. These locations can include dry hydrants/standpipes, clear drafting locations, cisterns, and even municipal fire hydrants. Compatibility with threads on connections must be determined, and if necessary, appropriate adapters obtained.
- 6.9 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop a comprehensive list AND a map that shows the location of ALL potential water supply fill sites throughout the town and also, within reason, surrounding communities. This should include all dry hydrants/standpipes, drafting locations, cisterns, fire hydrants, and any other useable sources of water. The list should include pertinent information regarding each location and should be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary.
- 6.10 The MRI study team recommends all water supply sites such as dry hydrants/standpipes, drafting locations, and cisterns should be inspected at least two times per year to ensure they are still functional as designed and installed. Any repairs needed should be completed on a priority basis.
- 6.11 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department review the New Hampshire Fire Mobilization Plan and coordinate a water supply drill through the Capital Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact that would utilize the regional fire tanker/tender task force. The goal of the drill is to document that the fire department can provide 250 gallons per minute (gpm) through tanker shuttle, large-diameter hose relay, or other [alternative water supply](#) system. The water must be available within five minutes of the arrival of the first-due apparatus, and the department must maintain the flow, without interruption, for a minimum of twenty minutes. Another more challenging goal would be to maintain the flow for a full two-hour duration.
- 6.12 The MRI study team recommends that once the drill recommended in 6.10 has been successfully completed and documented, and some other key recommendations implemented, the Town of Deering consider requesting that ISO conduct an updated evaluation of the town and its fire department, for the purpose of seeking a lower Class

8B or better rating, depending upon the length of time the water supply was maintained for. This could possibly result in lowered insurance premiums for certain residents.

- 6.13 The MRI study team recommends that upon report of any structure fire or possible structure fire, such as smoke in a building or dwelling, that at least two additional tankers/tenders be immediately dispatched on the initial assignment through automatic aid. This procedure will ensure that additional water is immediately en route to the scene should it be needed, reducing possible delays in establishing a sustained water supply operation. Once a working fire is confirmed, additional tankers/tenders should be dispatched.

CHAPTER 7: TRAINING AND FIRE PREVENTION

- 7.1 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department conduct a formal training needs assessment for the purpose of determining training program priorities. Part of this needs assessment should be an initial evaluation of the current basic skills proficiency of ALL department personnel.
- 7.2 The MRI study team recommends that based on the results of the needs assessment, the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should begin the development of a comprehensive training program that addresses, but is not limited to, mandatory OSHA training, recommended NFPA training, and every operational mission and responsibility of the department. The training should comply with accepted and/or recommended practices and standards, should include standardized evolutions, and should be consistent with Deering Fire and Rescue Department operations and procedures. This type of training program was previously recommended in the PRIMEX report. Self-contained breathing apparatus proficiency should be stressed, as should preparedness for low-frequency, high-risk emergencies.

Examples of topics for training include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Mandatory training
 - ✓ Blood borne pathogens
 - ✓ SCBA fit testing and refresher training
 - ✓ Sexual harassment
- Basic fire training
 - ✓ Basic engine company operations
 - ✓ Water supply operations

- ✓ Hazardous materials operations
- ✓ Confined space awareness
- ✓ Firefighter safety operations
- ✓ Rapid intervention team/down firefighter training
- ✓ Water rescue
- ✓ Vehicle extrication
- ✓ Lock out/tag out procedures

➤ Administrative and rule training

- ✓ Deering Fire and Rescue Department SOGs

- 7.3 The MRI study team recommends formal training of some type, lasting a minimum of two hours, occur at least monthly and when possible, a weekly training subject be suggested by the department using electronic sources. Additional opportunities for training can be found during related activities such as weekly/monthly apparatus and equipment inspections and building pre-planning activities.
- 7.4 The MRI study team recommends additional, high-intensity training on various subjects, including periodic live fire training, be conducted on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, at a formal fire academy where appropriate training facilities, structures, and props are available. This training could be conducted as a regional endeavor with other neighboring fire departments to give personnel who may normally respond to incidents together the opportunity to train together beforehand.
- 7.5 The MRI study team recommends that to the extent possible, training be delivered and/or conducted utilizing formal, standardized lesson plans that include objectives and performance criterion. However, when this is not possible or practical (a frequent occurrence in the fire service), a detailed description of the training should be included in the narrative section of the training report.
- 7.6 The MRI study team recommends that all training that is conducted, no matter how brief or inconsequential it may seem, MUST result in the completion of a formal training report. Training reports should include the date, the time training commenced, the time duration of the training, the instructor, the officer in charge, the names of all personnel trained, and include a detailed description of the training, or reference the formal lesson plan utilized. All persons trained should sign or initial either a printed hard copy of the training report, or if this is not practical, a sign in sheet should be attached. The officer in charge, and when possible, the instructor, should also sign the hard copy training report. A formal operational procedure on the completion of training reports should be developed. The training module of whatever management software program the

department selects should be utilized for completion of training reports, and to assist with the development of a training database, keeping track of certifications and related lapse dates, etc.

- 7.7 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop a separate training file for each member that can provide a supplement to the member's main personnel file. The training file should, at a minimum, include all course completion certificates, professional certifications, skills performance evaluation sheets and reports, and an annual summary of completed training.
- 7.8 The MRI study team recommends that as part of the development of a new comprehensive training program, the department should implement periodic basic skills proficiency evaluations for ALL personnel. These proficiency evaluations, consisting of standardized evolutions, can be based on recognized standards and benchmarks, in conjunction with performance criterion and benchmarks, established through evaluation of, and based upon, Deering Fire and Rescue Department operations and procedures.
- 7.9 The MRI study team recommends that in order to assist with the large amount of training that needs to be done, and in recognition of their important role in the delivery of training and the success of the program, the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should provide fire instructor training for any members of the department who wish to take it. All officers should be formally certified at Fire Instructor Level I.
- 7.10 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department encourage personnel to seek additional training on their own, and to the financial and practical extent possible, send personnel to outside training opportunities such as the Firehouse Expo in Baltimore, and the Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis. Information gained from this training can then be brought back and delivered to other members of the department. Training reports should be completed for all training, and copies of any certificates earned should be placed in the member's personnel and training files. A training board should be placed in each station where upcoming training opportunities can be posted for all personnel to review. These opportunities should also be posted on the department's website and could be e-mailed to every member once addresses are established.
- 7.11 The MRI study team recommends that fire prevention should be promoted as a key component of the vision of the Deering Fire and Rescue Department and should be a major aspect of its primary mission. Aggressive fire prevention programs are the most efficient and cost-effective way to reduce fire risks, fire loss, and fire deaths and injuries

in the community. To the extent practical, every member of the department should have a responsibility for fire prevention.

- 7.12 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department ensure that periodic inspections (at least annually with semi-annual or quarterly preferred) are conducted on the several major life hazard occupancies located within the town to maintain familiarity and up-to-date fire code compliance.
- 7.13 The MRI study team recommends that the Deering Fire and Rescue Department make it a priority to update its pages on the town's website on a regular basis to provide its customers, and other interested parties, as much information as possible on fire safety, fire prevention, and the department as a whole. This should be a priority for the next chief.
- 7.14 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department consider the use of social media to spread the fire safety message and possibly recruit new, younger members to the department.
- 7.15 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department adopt a year-round public fire safety education program throughout the community, including in the summer camps in town as frequently as possible during their season. A program of this type could provide wide-ranging positive benefits not only to Deering, but to wherever the campers call home. Ready to use programs are available from the United States Fire Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the National Fire Protection Association. Funding for these initiatives may also be available through the Fire Prevention and Safety grant program of the Assistance to Firefighters grants. The town is encouraged to apply for these grants on an annual basis. Other sources of grant funding, both public and private, may be available.
- 7.16 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department reimplement the joint public education programs with the Hillsborough Fire Department at the school in Hillsborough which Deering students attend.
- 7.17 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department consider some door-to-door campaigns in the community. These campaigns can be multi-faceted to deliver fire prevention information, check on smoke detectors and provide free ones if needed, and possibly recruit new members into the department.
- 7.18 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department establish a formal pre-incident planning program. The purpose of a pre-incident planning program is to develop a fire/emergency response plan for buildings in the town. A pre-

fire/incident plan includes data such as the occupancy type, floor plans, construction type, hazards to firefighting, special conditions in the building, apparatus placement plan, water supply plan, forcible entry plan, and ventilation plan. Pre-planning will improve the firefighter knowledge of the specific tactics needed to handle a fire or other emergency at a facility and will alert them to on-site hazards and risks. Pre-fire/incident plans should be reviewed regularly and tested by periodic table-top exercises and on-site drills. In addition, the department should develop a plan to make pre-fire/incident plans accessible on mobile data terminals (notebook/laptop computers) on fire apparatus for use en route to an incident and while on-scene.

CHAPTER 8: COMMUNICATIONS, DISPATCH, AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- 8.1 The MRI study team recommends each Deering fire station is supplied with a personal computer with appropriate software, including Firehouse software for data entry and collection purposes.
- 8.2 The MRI study team recommends the Fire Chief be supplied with a laptop computer with appropriate software, including Firehouse software and the capability to develop pre-fire plans.
- 8.3 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering give consideration to investing in the installation of a second repeater site so that there is redundancy in the communications system in the event of a primary location failure.
- 8.4 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department provide a portable radio to each member of the department for use on emergency incidents. If this is not feasible, at the very minimum the department must ensure that every member wearing SCBA and entering an IDLH atmosphere is equipped with a portable radio. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.
- 8.5 The MRI study team recommends the Town of Deering provide funding for the Deering Fire and Rescue Department to acquire two new thermal imaging cameras, allowing one to be deployed to each station and each major piece of apparatus, and one to be kept as a spare. Funding for this project may be available through the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant programs, and the town is encouraged to apply annually for these grants.
- 8.6 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department develop a plan to install mobile data terminals (MDTs) in all fire apparatus and rescue vehicles. At a minimum, the incident commander at a scene should have access to pre-fire plan

data, building permit data (building plans and current data about renovation and construction projects), real-time weather data, and hazardous materials data. In conjunction with the recommendation for the installation of MDTs, the Deering Fire and Rescue Department should explore possible uses for GIS technology to enhance their operations.

- 8.7 The MRI study team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department place an increased emphasis on evaluating new technology for use in emergency incidents, particularly when it pertains to firefighter/member safety or patient care.

CHAPTER 9: POLICIES, RULES AND REGULATIONS AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- 9.1 The MRI team recommends the board of selectman propose a warrant article at the next Town Meeting that will allow the town to reorganize the fire department pursuant to RSA 154:1 I(b) "A fire chief appointed by the local governing body, or by the town or city manager, if any, with firefighters appointed by the local governing body or manager, upon recommendation of the fire chief;"

This process is allowed under RSA 154:1 IV so that "a town, city, village district or precinct may, by vote of the local legislative body, change the organization of its fire department from one form to another. For municipalities with a town meeting form of government, such a vote shall be taken under an article inserted by the selectmen or by petition in the warrant for the annual meeting, and the change in form shall not take effect until one year following such vote."

- 9.2 The MRI team recommends that a meeting between the board of selectman and the fire department occur. The meeting should be facilitated by a third party to allow all parties to express their opinions and concerns. Because of the uncertainty of the organization of the fire department and the conflict that has occurred, both parties need to work together for the common goal that they both have expressed to our team: "Provide a high level of professional fire, rescue and EMS services to the citizens of Deering."
- 9.3 The MRI team recommends the department review and update the current Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs). The department Rules and Regulations stated that this should occur at least every three years. We recommend that a process is developed that on an annual basis 25% of the SOGs be reviewed, and updated or removed if necessary. Therefore, the task does not get out of hand and allows about twenty (20) SOGs per year to be completed.

- 9.4 The MRI Team recommends the department adopt an updated department SOG regarding hiring practices, and until such time that the department can be reorganized, authorizing the board of selectman to hire firefighters, that the department work with the town administrator to establish minimum hiring standards for new employees, including minimum education requirements, the ability to respond to emergencies, training, etc., driving history, and criminal background. All hiring standards should not be in conflict with federal or state laws, or in conflict with town policies.
- 9.5 MRI recommends developing a hiring practice that requires all applicants that meet the department's attendance, response, and training requirements be required to pass a criminal background check, driving record for all states that the person has lived in the past ten years, and drug screening test. Any costs associated with these should be paid by the applicant. If an applicant is hired, then the cost could be reimbursed to that person.
- 9.6 The MRI team recommends that the Department work with the Town to establish a communication method using electronic media (computers, social media, cell phones, pagers, etc.) to more efficiently and effectively communicate with its members.
- 9.7 The MRI team recommends the department update all computer hardware and software. The system should be used for personnel, equipment, and incident records. There are a number of software programs available that will meet the needs of the department. The software can be purchased and provided on computers at each fire station and allow each chief officer that are provided with a laptop to use the same software for record management, report writing, inspection records, training, etc. This will increase efficiency for those officers, as well as creating records and documents that will assist the department and town in establishing future plans including budget preparation.
- 9.8 The MRI team recommends the department update their website. A fire department's website is an opportunity to communicate with the public and provide information on fire and life safety, as well as information that people may need for obtaining permits, understanding fire codes, and general information about the department. Websites can be designed so that there are both public and private portals. Thus, the website can be used to dispense department information such as training, SOGs, scheduling, and general department information.

CHAPTER 10: OPTIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- 10.1 The MRI team recommends the Town of Deering appoint a part-time fire chief to work twenty-five to thirty hours a week, with a flexible work schedule. The fire chief should

have the capability to respond to both fire and EMS incidents while on duty, as well as perform the necessary administrative duties, fire code inspections, and coordinate activities with both internal departments in Deering, as well as regional emergency services.

- 10.2 The MRI team recommends the Town of Deering consider hiring per-diem/part-time FF/paramedics during daytime hours. These employees would augment the on-call members of the Deering Fire and Rescue Department and possibly the part-time fire chief. Through flexible scheduling, this would allow the town to provide a basic level of service during those periods of time that they are currently having a difficult time responding fire and EMS personnel.
- 10.3 The MRI team recommends the Deering Fire and Rescue Department reach out and attempt to partner with other local departments to develop a regional response plan through expansion of automatic aid for specific areas of the town, especially during daytime hours. This would require Deering to take on added responsibility for some days during the week that they would be responsible for not only their own responses, but would take on additional responsibilities in neighboring towns. Those neighboring towns, if willing to partner with Deering, would then take on additional responsibilities in Deering during those other days of the week.
- 10.4 The MRI team recommends that Deering consider contracting for specific EMS services during daytime hours. These services could be provided through negotiations with other fire departments that abut Deering or possibly a private ambulance service.