EXHIBIT NO.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

22A 6-24-08

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 20, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF PRELIMINARY STAFF RESPONSE TO THE TRIDATA ASSESSMENT OF FIRE DEPARTMENT RESOURCE LOCATIONS, STAFFING AND FACILITES

<u>ISSUE</u>: Receipt of Preliminary Staff Response to the Tridata Assessment of Fire Department Resource Locations, Staffing and Facilities.

<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>: That City Council receive this report. We will schedule a discussion of the report and staff recommendations on Fire facilities at a capital budget work session in the Fall.

Please note that City staff believes the report includes a number of recommendations on fire facilities and staffing that require further study and analysis.

BACKGROUND: In late 2005, as part of the City's continued efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all services, the Fire Department retained TriData, a division of System Planning Corporation, to perform an assessment of Fire Department resource locations, staffing, and facilities. TriData's final report (Attachment B) was published in October 2007. Unfortunately, the fire incident of August 25, 2007, at Alexandria Knolls West (the "Edsall Road" fire incident), the resultant OSHA investigation, and the receipt and review of, and the development of responses to, the comprehensive analysis of the incident by the independent consultant, J. Gordon Routley, has been the primary focus of Department attention. Since receiving the final TriData Report, staff has been able to devote only limited resources to evaluating the TriData recommendations. A more thorough analysis of the Report is planned. The recommendations in the report will be addressed within the Fire Facilities and Staffing Plans to be presented to Council in the fall. As an interim measure, a summary of the Report, a listing of associated recommendations, and preliminary Fire Department responses to Report recommendations follow.

Some of these issues were discussed at the public safety budget work session. The mayor asked that staff forward this report to Council and schedule a fall work session on fire facilities and staffing.

DISCUSSION: The TriData Fire-EMS assessment focused on several key areas: staffing analysis; demand and workload analysis; response time analysis; station and apparatus location analysis; and facilities review. *TriData did not examine Fire-EMS training/education, Fire Department management/administration, Emergency Management, or Code Enforcement.* The Report identifies a number of notable findings:

- According to the Report, paying existing personnel overtime to achieve minimum staffing on fire suppression and EMS units "is more cost effective than adding additional full time employees based on expected vacancies." (TriData, 2007, p.3) Staff needs to review this analysis further before we are prepared to accept this recommendation.
- TriData forecasts a continued increase in fire and EMS service demand, "with EMS demand growing at a faster rate." (TriData, 2007, p.3) Projections suggest the 18,222 emergency incidents dispatched in 2006 will rise to, "somewhere between 20,000 and 24,000 by the year 2020." (TriData, 2007, p.3) The Report characterizes the workload for fire and EMS units as "fairly well dispersed" (TriData, 2007, p.3) throughout the City, with Stations 208 (Paxton Street) and 206 (Seminary) addressing the highest demand. TriData's analysis represents EMS calls (including those where both fire suppression and medic units responded) as "65 percent" (TriData, 2007, p.3) of total fire-EMS service demand. The Report also states that, "Medic units are much busier than fire units and, as a result, we recommend that the city plan for additional medic units in the future." (TriData, 2007, p.3) TriData's fire-EMS response time analysis suggests that, "response travel times are good, but call processing and turnout times need to be improved." (TriData, 2007, p.4)
- The Report generally characterizes existing AFD stations as "well-located," but identifies the need for additional fire stations in Potomac Yard (underway) and the Eisenhower Valley. (TriData, 2007, p.4) TriData specifically identifies Station 203 (Cameron Mills) as needing a medic unit, "to meet the current and projected demand." (TriData, 2007, p.4)
- In addition to building new stations in Potomac Yard (Station 209) and the Eisenhower Valley (Station 210), TriData recommends the rebuilding or renovation of several other facilities that "are outdated and too small for modern equipment." (TriData, 2007, p.4)

This recommendation includes: rebuilding Station 203 (Cameron Mills Road); rebuilding Station 205 (Cameron Street); building an addition on Station 208 (Paxton Street); and rebuilding Station 206 (Seminary Road). TriData estimates the cost of the Fire Station projects, and significant repairs for several other stations, at \$52.9M over 12 years. (TriData, 2007, p.4) Council should be aware that with the exception of Station 203, none of the other rebuilding options have been reviewed in depth by staff, and considerable further staff work is needed before we accept these recommendations. Also, the cost estimates have not been examined in depth by City staff.

The final Report contains fourteen recommendations, prioritized by the consultant per the following table: (TriData, 2007, p. 107)

Priority	Descriptor	Definition
1	Immediate	This recommendation should be given immediate attention. Action may include either planning or specific activity
2	Important	This recommendation should be addressed within the next one or two fiscal years
3	Strategic	This issue should be addressed as part of the AFD Strategic Plan

Attachment A presents all 14 TriData recommendations, including TriData priorities, and the Fire Department's **preliminary** response to the TriData recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT: TriData estimates the cost of these projects, and significant repairs for several other stations, at \$52.9M over 12 years. (TriData, 2007, p.4) With the exception of the recommendations on the Potomac Yard, Eisenhower Avenue and Cameron Mills fire stations, we consider the other facility recommendations and cost estimates to be very preliminary and in need of further study.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1. Revised Final TriData Report Assessment of Alexandria Fire Department Resource Locations, Staffing, and Facilities Recommendations Matrix
- Attachment 2. Revised Final Report Assessment of Fire Department Resource Locations, Staffing, and Facilities – October 2007

STAFF: Adam Thiel, Fire Chief

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Revised Final TriData Report Assessment of Alexandria Fire Department Resource Locations, Staffing, and Facilities Recommendations Matrix

	N. Carlo	TriData Proposal		Fire Department Response				
Page No.	Rec. No.	TriData Recommendation	TriData Cost Estimate	Accept	Reject	More Analysis	Comment	
22	1.	Make greater use of TeleStaff software by implementing a training program for all officers and ensuring that all human resource and finance software packages are compatible with TeleStaff. <i>Immediate Priority</i> .	N/A	X		X	TeleStaff is a semi-automated software package designed for the scheduling and payroll needs of fire- EMS departments with different shift schedules and Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) compliance requirements. Full implementation of TeleStaff within the Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) depends on the outcome of an effort to synchronize TeleStaff with City time and attendance, payroll and personnel systems. AFD staff is working with City Personnel and Information Technology Services to develop options for addressing this recommendation that can improve efficiency.	

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	Service .	TriData Proposal		Fire Department Response					
Page No.	Rec. No.	TriData Recommendation	TriData Cost Estimate	Accept	Reject	More Analysis	Comment		
28	2.	Continue to use overtime instead of hiring additional personnel to reduce overtime costs. <i>Immediate Priority.</i>	N/A		X	X	TriData's cost effectiveness analysis of Fire-EMS overtime usage, versus over-hiring additional FTEs to maintain minimum operational staffing levels on Fire-EMS response units, is based on 3-year-old (FY2004 and FY2005) data. These historical data do not reflect the current situation facing the AFD as the report predicts, "if the number of overtime staffing days increase more than FY05, adding staff may be more cost effective." (TriData, 2007, p.27) Furthermore, the consultant's analysis is based strictly on cost and discounts other relevant benefits (e.g., succession planning, professional development, and surge capacity), although it acknowledges that, "even if it is not cost effective to add an on-duty position only to reduce overtime, there may be other considerations besides overtime that make the additional position cost		

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effective." (TriData, 2007, p.27) AFD	staff is working with the Office of	Management and Budget (OMB) to	perform a comprehensive cost-	benefit analysis of options (overtime	and over-hire) to efficiently provide	minimum staffing on Fire-EMS	response units.	

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56	3.	Monitor yearly per capita demand by category and analyze data every five years. <i>Strategic Priority</i>	N/A	X		X	AFD staff is working with the City Manager's Office (CMO) to assess options for enhancing the AFD's ability to collect, analyze, report, and use workload data for continually improving the overall Fire-EMS delivery system. Developing a robust in-house planning/analysis capacity (<i>à la</i> the APD's Strategic Response System) is essential for providing efficient and effective City-wide services.		
63	4.	Determine whether the CAD can be modified to create an incident number when the call is first received. <i>Important Priority</i>	N/A	X		X	The limitations of the present Fire computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system were documented in the Edsall Road analysis. The Fire and Police Departments are working together to assess the current CAD system, including the examination of alternative systems and, if needed, proposing options to the current system, in advance of the planned Police/Fire Communications Center co-location in 2011.		

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	1.5	TriData Proposal		Fire Department Response				
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65	5.	Reduce call processing times by 50 percent to meet nationally accepted standards. <i>Important Priority</i>	N/A	X		X	Delays in emergency call processing result from a number of factors, both human and technical, that will be examined in detail as part of the comprehensive emergency communications study being performed by Kimball and Associates for the CMO.	

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66	6.	Reduce unit turnout times by installing a faster alerting system. <i>Important Priority</i>	\$.040M	X		X	Swiftly and effectively alerting fire station Fire-EMS employees, during all hours of the day/night, is an essential component of the AFD's ability to meet established response time goals. Station alerting in City fire stations presently depends upon an unreliable legacy system. The construction of Stations 209 and 210, along with the planned rebuilding and/or renovation of several other fire stations, provides an opportunity to select, install and/or retrofit a contemporary, network-based station alerting system that will have the potential to significantly improve turnout times. This will require an additional capital investment that is not presently contemplated in the FY2009 – FY2014 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) but that will be discussed with the Mayor and Council in tandem with the delivery of the AFD's Facilities Plan in the fall of		

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		TriData Proposal		Fire Department Response				
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68	7.	The AFD should record "vertical" response time (time to arrive at the patient or the fire). <i>Important Priority.</i>	N/A	X		X	Recording vertical response time helps to identify when firefighters and paramedics actually arrive at a patient's bedside or fire location. This data element is important in Alexandria, where a meaningful number of Fire-EMS responses occur in high-rise buildings and where the time for crews to reach upper floors can be significantly delayed. AFD staff will develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for identifying vertical response time whenever possible and/or applicable.	

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		TriData Proposal		Fire Department Response				
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75	8.	Consider adding a medic unit at Station 203 (Beverly Hills). <i>Immediate Priority</i>	N/A	X		x	The FY2009 – FY2014 CIP for Station 203 (Cameron Mills Road) includes \$9.92M ¹ for renovation. This project is currently slated for completion in FY2015, allowing the addition of an ALS medic unit. The new medic unit will improve service delivery to City residents near Station 203 and reduce the overall demands on the entire EMS system as call volumes increase City-wide. The first- year cost of adding/staffing a medic unit at Station 203 is \$1.154M with a recurring annual cost of \$.894M.	

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¹ All references to FY2009-FY2014 CIP costs are in FY2008 dollars

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		TriData Proposal	Attended to a	Fire Department Response				
Page No.	Rec. No.	TriData Recommendation	TriData Cost Estimate	Accept	Reject	More Analysis	Comment	
80	9.	A. Continue with plans to build a station in Eisenhower Valley. <i>Immediate Priority</i>	N/A	X		X	A. The FY2009 – FY2014 CIP for Station 210 (Eisenhower Valley) budgets \$9.34M for design and construction of a four-bay fire station. Current projections for operational impact include a \$3.37M first-year cost and a \$2.35M recurring annual cost for operations and maintenance, without adjusting for inflation. These projections include costs of staffing for an additional fire engine and ALS medic unit at Station 210, to be completed in FY2012. TriData suggests the first priority for Station 210 is a medic unit; AFD believes existing and future service gaps for Eisenhower Valley residents require an investment in both fire and EMS protection.	
		B. The AFD should build a fire station at Potomac Yard. <i>Immediate Priority</i>	N/A	Х			B. Construction of the Potomac Yard (Station 209) fire station is underway, with projected completion in FY2010.	

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91	10	Fully evaluate all of the available options (and costs) regarding the continued use of Station 202 before moving ahead with the current modernization project. <i>Immediate Priority</i>	N/A	X			The planned renovation of Station 202 (Windsor Avenue) is underway, with completion projected in FY2009	
93	11	Continue with plans to rebuild Station 203 on its present site. <i>Immediate</i> <i>Priority</i>	N/A	X		X	The FY2009 – FY2014 CIP for Station 203 (Cameron Mills) assumes expansion for a new bay and associated improvements at a cost of \$9.92M. Station 203 plans will be discussed with the Mayor and Council in tandem with the delivery of the AFD's Facilities Plan in the fall of 2008.	

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96	12.	Replace Station 205 when Station 203 is completed. Until then, provide routine maintenance to keep the current facility safe and functional. <i>Strategic Priority</i>	\$11.802M	X		X	Station 205 (Cameron Street) was originally constructed in 1949; at almost 60 years old, Station 205 exceeds by a decade the "generally accepted lifecycle (50 years) for a fire station" (TriData, 2007, p.98). Should a decision be made to rebuild Station 205 on its present site, TriData- estimated the cost of rebuilding to be \$11.8M. In the interim, however, a number of immediate repairs are needed to keep Station 205 safe and livable for 24x7x365 occupancy by Fire-EMS personnel. AFD staff is working with General Services to accurately estimate repair costs and identify the need for additional capital facilities maintenance program (CFMP) funds. Station 205 short- and long-term improvements will be discussed with the Mayor and Council in tandem with the delivery of the AFD's Facilities Plan in the fall of 2008.		

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98	13.	Rebuild Station 206 at its current location (or nearby) beginning in 2016 with completion in 2019. <i>Strategic</i> <i>Priority</i>	\$13.0M	X		X	Station 206 (Seminary) was built in 1958. Should a decision be made to rebuild Station 206 on its present site in 2019, TriData-estimated the cost of rebuilding to be \$13.0M. Similar to Station 205, a number of immediate repairs are needed to keep Station 206 safe and livable for 24x7x365 occupancy by Fire-EMS personnel. AFD staff is working with General Services to accurately estimate repair costs and identify the need for additional capital facilities maintenance program (CFMP) funds. Station 206 short- and long-term improvements will be discussed with the Mayor and Council in tandem with the delivery of the AFD's Facilities Plan in the fall of 2008.

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102	14	To improve the functionality of Station 208, add an additional apparatus bay. <i>Strategic Priority</i>	\$3.5M	X		X	Staff concurs with TriData's assessment that an additional apparatus bay should be planned for Station 208 (Paxton Street) at some point in the future. This is a lower priority than addressing the critical facility needs detailed earlier in TriData's report. Station 206 improvements will be discussed with the Mayor and Council in tandem with the delivery of the AFD's Facilities Plan in the fall of 2008.

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