



Commission on  
Fire Accreditation  
International®

# Accreditation Report

**Grand Junction Fire Department  
625 Ute Avenue  
Grand Junction, CO, 81501  
United States of America**

**This report was prepared on December 30, 2021  
by the  
Commission on Fire Accreditation International**

**This report represents the findings  
of the peer assessment team that visited the  
Grand Junction Fire Department  
on November 14-18, 2021**

**Peer Assessment Team  
Rick Potter, CFO, Team Leader  
Xavier Anderson, Peer Assessor  
Mike Chandler, Peer Assessor  
Jason Frosch, Peer Assessor**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
OBSERVATIONS .....	7
Category 1 — Governance and Administration.....	7
Category 2 — Assessment and Planning .....	7
Category 3 — Goals and Objectives.....	9
Category 4 — Financial Resources.....	10
Category 5 — Community Risk Reduction Program .....	10
Criterion 5A – Prevention Program .....	10
Criterion 5B – Public Education Program .....	11
Criterion 5C – Fire Investigation, Origin and Cause Program .....	11
Criterion 5D – Domestic Preparedness Program .....	12
Criterion 5E – Fire Suppression Program .....	12
Criterion 5F – Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program .....	14
Criterion 5G – Technical Rescue Program .....	15
Criterion 5H – Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Program .....	16
Criterion 5K – Wildland Fire Services Program.....	17
Category 6 — Physical Resources .....	18
Category 7 — Human Resources.....	19
Category 8 — Training and Competency .....	20
Category 9 — Essential Resources .....	21
Criterion 9A – Water Supply .....	21
Criterion 9B – Communication Systems .....	22

Criterion 9C – Administrative Support Services and Office Systems .....	23
Criterion 9D – Information Technology .....	23
Category 10 — External Systems Relationships .....	23
Category 11 — Health and Safety .....	24

## 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 Grand Junction Fire Department is a career organization with 131 uniformed personnel, staffing four engines, two ladder companies, and seven ambulances at six fire stations. All fire suppression vehicles are staffed with a minimum three firefighters and equipped to provide basic life support (BLS). All ambulances are advanced life support (ALS) equipped and staffed with a normal staffing of one certified paramedic/firefighter and one BLS/firefighter. The agency operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with a minimum of 34 personnel. Additionally, the agency has 11 uniformed and 8 civilian members in administration. The number of personnel dedicated to community risk reduction/public fire education is two full-time employees. Four full-time persons are dedicated to fire training.

The city represents 39.64 square miles, located in the Grand Valley in Mesa County, just to the south of the Book Cliffs, north of the Colorado National Monument, and west of the Grand Mesa. The fire response territory is 83.5 miles while the ambulance service area encompasses 649 square miles. The city is part of the former territory which was home to the Ute Indians in the 1800s. The city is about 243 miles west of Denver and 284 miles south-southeast of Salt Lake City, located 20 miles from the Colorado/Utah border. Because of its size, the city is the largest municipality between these two major cities. The 2020 census indicated a population of 64,529.

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) has completed a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Grand Junction Fire Department based upon the tenth edition of *Quality Improvement for the Fire and Emergency Services*. 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 agency's self-assessment

study, identify and make recommendations for improvement, issue a report of findings, and conclude if the department is eligible for an award of accreditation.

The peer assessment team followed CFAI processes and the Grand Junction Fire Department 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 agency status for the Grand Junction Fire Department from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

The peer assessment team observed a strong commitment by the department to the CFAI accreditation process and, in particular, to ensuring appropriate succession training for the accreditation manager position. The assistant accreditation manager along with the past accreditation manager actively supported the current manager through this process. The current accreditation manager has a support team and one of its members will be selected as their replacement for the next accreditation in five years. One member of the department regularly acts as a peer assessor for CFAI however the agency is looking to add two more members to this cadre soon. These approaches ensure continuity, more direct access to quality improvement with similar organizations, and the engagement of a broader spectrum of the department.

The peer assessment team had meetings with the city manager and the president of the firefighters' association. Individually and collectively, they expressed a long-standing interest in the process. There is clearly a commitment to continue to follow and support the implementation of identified opportunities for improvement. The City Council of Grand Junction as well as the Board of Directors for the Grand Junction Rural Fire Protection District formally approved the accreditation process and the agency's documents through resolutions. It can be anticipated that all representatives will be supporters and network participants as the full benefits of going through the self-assessment process are realized and built on in the future.

The peer assessment team identified opportunities for improvement that are provided below. These recommendations flowed from discussions, interviews, and a review of 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 that the agency reevaluate risk classification for identified hazards to capture all categories. [\(CC2B.4\)](#)
2. It is recommended that the agency reevaluate critical tasking for identified hazards to capture all categories in each risk classification. [\(CC2C.4\)](#)

3. It is recommended that the agency work with the Grand Junction Regional Communications Center to ensure call processing baseline performance meets stated objectives of each program. [\(CC2C.5\)](#)
4. It is recommended that the agency review/revise the formal process for notifying the authority having jurisdiction of gaps in operational capabilities and capacity. [\(CC2D.9\)](#)
5. It is recommended that the agency revise data collection process to better establish loss reduction benchmarks. [\(5A.6\)](#)
6. It is recommended that the agency formalize the review process within the existing policy for level fire one investigations. [\(CC5C.2\)](#)
7. It is recommended that the agency complete the continuity of operations plan. [\(5D.6\)](#)
8. It is recommended that the agency continue to pursue opportunities to provide input into the annual review of standing orders and protocols. [\(5F.3\)](#)
9. It is recommended that the agency develop a process for the documentation and delivery of feedback from employee suggestions. [\(7D.4\)](#)
10. It is recommended that the agency revise processes used to identify training needs. [\(CC8A.1\)](#)
11. It is recommended that the agency evaluate training needs for all personnel to ensure qualification meets the applicable national standards for wildland incidents. [\(8A.4\)](#)
12. It is recommended that the agency formalize crew performance evaluation through a validated and documented performance base measurement. [\(CC8B.3\)](#)
13. It is recommended that the agency evaluate instructor requirements to ensure they have qualifications and expertise to meet its needs. [\(CC8C.2\)](#)
14. It is recommended that the agency work with the Grand Junction Regional Communication Center to establish call processing performance measures and document performance. [\(9B.7\)](#)
15. It is recommended that the agency evaluate staffing needs of administrative support services. [\(CC 9C.1\)](#)

The agency demonstrated its acute desire to immediately implement plans to address opportunities for improvement. The best example is that the agency developed a plan with the Grand Junction Regional Communications Center to reduce call processing times. The peer assessment team noted that call processing times were lengthy and more so for certain types of emergency medical services calls. The agency worked with the peer assessment team to identify the types of calls which would benefit the most from a fast dispatch process.

The department responded to a total of 16,942 emergencies in 2020 including: 348 fire calls (2.1 percent); 13,407 emergency medical service (EMS) calls (79.1 percent); and 3,187 miscellaneous calls (18.8 percent). Servicing these calls in 2020 resulted in a total of 31,578 unit movements, including 11,164 EMS transports.

In 2015, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) visited the city to rate its public protection classification. The outcome of the visit was a lowering of the public protection classification from Class 4 to Class 2/2X.

The Grand Junction Fire Department has implemented a process to record and publish videos as another medium to educate personnel on the agency's strategic plan, goals, and objectives. Although in the early stages of implementation, this unique approach has merit and should be considered by other agencies to follow in their accreditation process.

## OBSERVATIONS

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department is legally established through Article XX of the Colorado State Constitution as well as Section 31-30-101 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. These documents authorize cities to establish and organize fire departments. The city manager is the chief administrative officer under the city council/manager form of government in Grand Junction. The fire chief has the authority to organize the agency to provide approved programs and services.

The fire chief has served on the executive board for the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Association and is supported by the public safety advisor, an attorney assigned to the Grand Junction City Attorney's Office. This ensures that the agency remains abreast of changes and potential future issues which could legally impact the organization. The city department heads meet weekly, and each department head has a bi-weekly one-on-one meeting with the city manager to discuss issues impacting the organization. The public safety advisor is an attorney from the city attorney's office who is assigned specifically to work with the agency and the police department to ensure legal assistance directly addresses public safety needs.

The peer assessment team was able to verify that the agency's structure aligns with the mission, purposes, goals, strategies, and objectives. This was evidenced by the hiring of 21 personnel in 2020 as well as a new member to the administrative staff which began employment during the site visit. It was also noted that the city administration is supportive of the needs of the agency through an increase of more than \$6 million in the agency's budget for the fiscal year 2022.

The agency is planning on adding personnel in 2022 to staff the new Fire Station 8 which is scheduled to be completed. The additional personnel will help the agency meet its stated mission and goals.

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

The boundaries for the city of Grand Junction, Grand Junction Rural Fire Protection District and the Grand Junction Rural District Redlands Subdistrict are clearly identified and legally adopted. Changes to any of these boundaries is approved by the city council or boards of directors of the respective fire districts. The primary mechanism controlling growth of the districts as well as any annexation into city limits is tied to the sewer system boundaries. If an area is not covered by the sewer system, then it cannot be annexed into the city. Additionally, when an area is being considered for annexation the fire chief and police chief are required to submit impact statements to council identifying what if any would be the impacts on their organizations. Other boundaries with Clifton Fire District and the Lower Valley Fire District are clearly defined as well. Agreements are in place which govern these boundaries and the relationships between the agencies.

The Grand Junction Fire Department's primary coverage area is divided into square-mile planning zones which allows collection and analysis of data related to population densities, geography, socio-economic status, climate, as well as transportation systems to determine capability demands. Critical infrastructures are identified within each planning zone. Deployment needs and decisions related to service provision take into consideration safety and remediation programs which are being provided

in the community by external agencies. The agency has accurately determined the urban and rural population densities in all planning zones and has used this for developing response time standards.

The Grand Junction Fire Department has a documented methodology for assessing and categorizing risk by class and category. The agency used the two-axis methodology for establishing risk level taking into consideration probability and consequence to the agency and the community. Historical data helped determine probability and fire protection systems are accounted for in determining each risk class and category within the planning zones. It was noted by the peer assessment team however that the categorization of risk did not encompass all risk classes and levels. The agency did not develop moderate and maximum risk levels for hazardous materials and technical rescue incidents because no incidents in the previous three years fell into these categories. [It is recommended that the agency reevaluate risk classification for identified hazards to capture all categories.](#)

The Grand Junction Fire Department's deployment practices are based on the assessment of risk by class and category. The peer assessment team verified that the agency uses this information to consider overall response and to ensure consistent and reliable service to all areas of the jurisdiction. Performance monitoring methodology as well as the performance measurement statements are well defined and documented in the agency's *2017-2020 Data Reference Guide*. It was noted by the peer assessment team however that the categorization of risk did not encompass all risk classes and levels. For hazardous materials and technical rescue incidents specifically, the agency had not developed critical tasking for maximum and moderate risk levels and therefore could not determine overall response, consistency, reliability, and resiliency throughout all service areas for all risk levels and categories. [It is recommended that the agency reevaluate critical tasking for identified hazards to capture all categories in each risk classification.](#)

One area noted by the peer assessment team was call processing times which were somewhat longer than the agency's stated objectives. The agency has struggled to get call processing times closer to stated objectives and national standards. [It is recommended that the agency work with the Grand Junction Regional Communications Center to ensure call processing baseline performance meets stated objectives of each program.](#)

Analysis of current deployment performance capabilities has permitted the Grand Junction Fire Department to determine that two additional fire stations are needed to appropriately address services throughout the response area. Areas to the north of the city are experiencing growth as well as traffic corridors have created response challenges which the agency has identified as a priority to be addressed.

The Grand Junction City Council formally accepted the agency's community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC) document. Current performance measurements are communicated informally by the fire chief during one-on-one bi-weekly meetings with the city manager addressing immediate areas of concern. The fire chief also meets with the board of directors for the Grand Junction Rural Fire District at least five times per year but usually monthly to keep them informed on operational issues. It was verified by the peer assessment team that the process for formally notifying the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) is included in the budgetary process and that this method may not clearly communicate actual performance versus stated objectives. [It is recommended that the agency review/revise the formal process for notifying the AHJ of gaps in operational capabilities and capacity.](#)

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department developed and published a well-written, purposeful document that exemplified the community-driven strategic planning process recommended by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. This planning process afforded the agency an opportunity to critically assess that its current programs and services were consistent with peer recognized and accepted practices, to identify stakeholder expectations and concerns, and, more importantly, to ensure its mission, vision, and value statements were aligned with this guiding document. Internal stakeholders noted that a revision to its mission, vision, and value statements was required to effectively support agency goals and objectives. The peer assessment team interview process confirmed that the completed plan was aligned with the city's strategic and comprehensive plan.

The Grand Junction Fire Department effectively used multiple processes in the development of its strategic plan that included a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) assessment, stakeholder surveys, and community meetings. A key component in the success of the planning process was the participation of 102 external and 37 internal stakeholders. External stakeholders represented a diverse, cross-section of the community that included citizens, homeowner associations, business owners, city employees, elected officials, and mutual aid fire jurisdictions. The internal stakeholder group was made up of volunteers from each rank within the agency.

The above processes allowed the stakeholders to document a total of 43 weaknesses and 30 threats that had the potential to negatively impact the quality of services and programs provided. The agency used this information to identify 5 strategic initiatives, and 16 objectives with 100 corresponding critical tasks. Each goal was written using the specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound (SMART) process.

The deputy chief of operations serves as the Grand Junction Fire Department accreditation manager. The accreditation manager is responsible for initiating the strategic planning process, development of the strategic plan, and implementation of agency goals and objectives. Staff officers were assigned individual goals that are consistent with their primary duties and are responsible for activities associated with their corresponding objectives and critical tasks. Staff officers were given a degree of autonomy to oversee their assignments accordingly. The agency has implemented the strategic plan performance indicator as the administrative management tool for tracking goal progress and results.

The agency used multiple approaches to ensure personnel were familiar with the strategic planning process and the development of goals and objectives. The strategic plan was provided in both hardcopy and electronic format to agency personnel. Additional approaches included annual meetings with operations personnel, periodic shift meetings held by internal stakeholders, and the annual strategic plan performance indicator report.

The agency has implemented a process to record and publish videos as another medium to educate personnel on the agency's strategic plan, goals, and objectives. Although in the early stages of implementation, this unique approach has merit and should be considered by other agencies in their accreditation process.

The Grand Junction Fire Department used the strategic plan performance indicator as its primary assessment tool. The status of each objective is easily tracked through the completion of objective

critical tasks as reported in the performance measure section. The plan also provides a means of flexibility to make changes to or include additional goals and objectives if warranted.

It was noted by the peer assessment team that the agency has actively worked towards the completion of its goals and objectives. To date, the agency has completed 64 of 100 critical tasks. This progress clearly demonstrates the agency's commitment to organizational improvement through the accreditation process.

## **Category 4 — Financial Resources**

The current budget process gives the fire chief and the administrative staff control over budget development. The process is defined by the city manager and finance department that is developed on an annual basis by a small team within the finance department. There is significant involvement by fire department staff at all levels of the agency especially by those individuals responsible for carrying out a particular portion of the agency's mission, goals, and objectives.

The Grand Junction City Council's *Operating Funds Budget Policy* states that the annual budget must balance between operating revenue and operating expenditures. The first responder tax has been separated into a separate fund and an annual budget for this tax with guidance from the city manager and finance department. The city's 10-year capital plan outlines large projects the city is planning on funding to include stations, and apparatus. This plan is very detailed, but the agency can request additions with justification outside the normal planning cycle. This ability facilitated the purchase of replacement bunker gear and second sets of gear, which had not been planned for previously.

Agency planning has involved broad staff participation in financial planning and resource allocation. The agency's plan for financing reflects sound strategic planning and a commitment to its stated goals and objectives. The agency deems financial support for programs and services appropriate to maintain the number and quality of personnel and other operational costs.

The peer assessment team confirmed that the City of Grand Junction is in receipt of the most currently available Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (certificates) from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada for its Budget and their Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The department has submitted its most recent GFOA certificates as *prima facie* compliance with this criterion.

Financial resources are appropriately allocated to support the established organizational mission, the stated long-term plan, goals, objectives, and to maintain the quality of programs and services. Ongoing financial monitoring helps the agency anticipate any future budget shortfalls and provides needed time to address those issues. An effective fund reserve policy and financial risk management policy work in concert with balanced budget requirements of city policy. All programs and activities are based on the anticipated revenues of a well-managed annual budget process.

## **Category 5 — Community Risk Reduction Program**

### **Criterion 5A — Prevention Program**

Within the Grand Junction Fire Department's community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC), the response area has provided assessment of the community risk based on the hazard

assessment of the structures. The peer assessment team was able to verify that fire prevention and building codes are adopted through city ordinance in coordination with the Grand Junction Building Department to keep all systems congruent. The agency and city building department are currently using the 2018 edition of the *International Fire Code* and *International Building Code* respectively. The agency provided verification to local fire protection laws. A plan review process was described by the agency to the peer assessment team that included partnership with the City Plans Division. The frequency of inspections was identified in the *Fire Prevention Program*.

The current staff are trained and certified to the expected job tasks per the agency job descriptions. There is a plan to increase the quality of the building inspections through an addition of a more robust software, Tyler Technologies *Mobile Eyes*, which is currently being beta tested, the implementation of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) NFPA 1730: *Standard on Organization and Deployment of Fire Prevention Inspection and Code Enforcement, Plan Review, Investigation, and Public Education Operations* (NFPA 1730) staffing modified to fit the agency's current abilities. Based on the current methodology for loss reduction data collection, the agency is not able to reliably set loss reduction benchmarks. [It is recommended that the agency revise data collection process to better establish loss reduction benchmarks.](#) The formal documented program appraisal identifies successes and gaps within the program.

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department has analyzed the risks throughout the community related to specific risk, behaviors, and audience and included the information in the community risk assessment/standards of cover. Specifically, there were 5 elementary schools out of the 22 in the area that were identified where targeted resources should be used for an increased impact. The Grand Junction Fire Department outreach program has a dedicated staff of two who have obtained specialized training to include nationally recognized programs from the National Fire Academy (NFA). The level expertise has allowed the agency to provide staff to instruct public education topics at the NFA.

Prior to the national pandemic, the agency offered targeted education to high-risk audience identified through call frequency and operational identification. A dedicated member of the agency with assistance from an internship would perform on-site visits that offered targeted education. The agency plans to reinstitute this program once inter-residency education becomes safe. The agency has conducted a formal and documented program appraisal on public education and finds value in the structure of the document, the ability to place the programs data in one document, and the assistance the document provides in the analysis of the program annually.

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department 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. The agency is authorized under Grand Junction Municipal Ordinance 4830 to investigate the cause, origin, and circumstance of every fire that occurs within the jurisdiction and uses National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) NFPA 921: *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*, as the guiding document. The agency partners with the Grand Junction Police Department, Mesa County Sheriff's Office, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control to conduct fire investigations when additional expertise is needed. Written agreements with these agencies do not currently exist,

but all departments operate within the authority granted under current Grand Junction Municipal Ordinance. Currently the agency has divided the investigations into level one and level two investigations. Level one investigations are conducted by company officers when the comfort level and complexity do not exceed the capabilities of that investigator. Level two investigations are handled by a certified investigator from within the fire marshal's office. The department is currently staffed with three investigators. Level one investigations are not required by policy to be reviewed by a certified investigator. [It is recommended that the agency formalize the review process within the existing policy for level one fire investigations.](#)

#### **Criterion 5D – Domestic Preparedness Program**

The Grand Junction Fire Department 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. The department works with the Mesa County Emergency Management (MCEM) to operate an all-hazards emergency management program including multi-agency responses. MCEM has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in place as well as a Colorado Homeland Security Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mesa County which includes the northwest homeland security region consisting of 11 counties. MCEM maintains the EOP, and it is reviewed by the local emergency planning committee annually. The Grand Junction Fire Department also fills the emergency management duties for the city of Grand Junction.

The agency's continuity of operational planning effort was interrupted by the corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts were transitioned to pandemic planning. The Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) has not been completed at the time of this report. [It is recommended that the agency complete the continuity of operations plan.](#)

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department provides fire suppression out of six fire stations strategically located throughout the fire response area. Fire suppression is provided not only to the city of Grand Junction, but the agency is also the primary provider of these services to the Grand Junction Rural Fire Protection District.

The agency has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and uses the incident command system (ICS) on all responses within the jurisdiction. The agency uses the *Blue Card Command* training program to prepare incident commanders.

Benchmark statements have been developed for all categories of fire risk within the area protected by the agency. Annual formal appraisals provide a mechanism to identify areas where the agency is not meeting stated deployment objectives.

#### **Performance Gap Analysis**

The following tables represent the agency'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).

2017- 2020 Moderate Risk Fire Suppression Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	9:12	8:00	<b>01:12</b>
		n=29		
1st Due	Rural	14:29	10:00	<b>04:29</b>
		n=12		
ERF	Urban	10:58	12:00	<b>01:02</b>
		n=11		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of moderate risk fire suppression incidents requiring an effective response force (ERF) for 2017-2020 in rural density, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for the ERF is provided in this report.

2017- 2020 High Risk Fire Suppression Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	11:51	8:00	<b>03:51</b>
		n=107		
1st Due	Rural	14:03	10:00	<b>04:03</b>
		n=29		
ERF	Urban	16:07	13:00	<b>03:07</b>
		n=28		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of high-risk fire suppression incidents requiring an effective response force (ERF) for 2017-2020 in rural density, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for the ERF is provided in this report.

2017- 2020 Maximum Risk Fire Suppression Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	8:30	8:00	<b>00:30</b>
		n=34		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of maximum risk fire suppression incidents requiring an effective response force (ERF) for 2017-2020 in urban density, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for the ERF is provided in this report.

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of maximum risk fire suppression incidents for 2017-2020 in rural density, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for the rural population density is provided in this report.

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department operates an emergency medical services (EMS) program providing both advanced life support (ALS) and basic life support (BLS) services through a tiered response system based on risk categorization documented in the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC). The agency is the primary pre-hospital care provider within the Grand Junction Ambulance Service Area (ASA). All sworn personnel are trained to the Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B) level with 32 members currently maintaining Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic (EMT-P) certification. The agency has taken proactive measures to address the potential shortage of paramedics that includes the enrollment of personnel in the EMT-P curriculum and recruitment of candidates that have EMT-P certification.

Except for Station 5, ambulances are placed at each station. Due to call demands, two ambulances have been assigned to Station 2. Engine companies and the shift EMS supervisor respond to moderate and high-risk incidents as part of the effective response force (ERF). The agency maintains a day ambulance for inter-facility transfers to increase unit reliability for emergency response. EMS critical tasking is based on risk categorization and was found to be consistent with recognized standards and practices.

The agency is part of the Mesa County EMS System (MCEMS) and operates under the authority of the medical control director. Standing orders and protocols are in place to direct ALS and BLS patient care procedures. Online and offline medical control direction can be assessed electronically through a web-based link, through a cellular phone application, or via a dedicated phone system number to two area hospital emergency rooms. Standing orders and protocols are reviewed annually by the medical control director with updates completed as necessary. Agency standard operating guidelines are consistent with MCEMS orders and protocols. Agency personnel take annual tests to remain proficient in-patient care procedures.

MCEMS mandates patient care reports (PCR) are generated for all contacts that meets the definition of a patient. The PCR is consistent with MCEMS requirements for documenting patient information, chief complaints, treatment provided, and patient disposition. The agency was found to be compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in protecting the privacy of patient information. The agency has implemented policies to prevent unauthorized access, disclosure, and use of protected health information (PHI) to include initial employee training, annual continued educational units for all operations personnel, password protected PCRs, limited access to completed PCRs, and other internal measures deemed necessary by the EMS chief.

The agency has implemented a quality improvement/quality assurance (QI/QA) process to ensure all reporting fields of the PCR have been completed and protocols followed. Each PCR is reviewed by the shift EMS officer. Administrative processes are in place to address deviations from established orders and protocols. The agency is required to complete continuous quality improvement (CQI) reports once per quarter on topics chosen by the medical control director and attend monthly quality assurance meetings to discuss any issues within the EMS system. The agency recently staffed a dedicated full-time position for QI/QA reviews due to service demands. The agency has implemented an annual program appraisal that effectively documented resource needs, outputs, outcomes, and goals for the upcoming year. These appraisals are a valuable tool for both strategic and budgetary planning.

It was also noted during peer assessment team verification that the agency is not included in the annual review of standing orders and protocols by the MCEMS medical director. Although the agency desires to be part of this process, MCEMS has final authority regarding agency participation. [It is recommended that the agency continue to pursue opportunities to provide input into the annual review of standing orders and protocols.](#)

### Performance Gap Analysis

The following tables represent the agency'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).

2017 - 2020 Moderate Risk EMS Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	10:33	8:00	<b>02:33</b>
		n=538		
1st Due	Rural	12:58	10:00	<b>02:58</b>
		n=186		
ERF	Urban	12:47	12:00	<b>00:47</b>
		n=421		
ERF	Rural	14:00	14:00	<b>00:00</b>
		n=129		

2017 - 2020 High Risk EMS Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	8:07	8:00	<b>00:07</b>
		n=27		
ERF	Urban	10:35	12:00	<b>01:25</b>
		n=25		

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of high-risk emergency medical incidents for 2017-2020 in rural density, to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for the rural population density is provided in this report.

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of maximum risk emergency medical incidents for 2017 - 2020 in urban and rural densities to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for maximum risk is provided in this report.

### Criterion 5G – Technical Rescue Program

The Grand Junction Fire Department operates an adequate technical rescue program that is consistent with community risks as documented in the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC). The agency provides technical rescue response to the following disciplines: vehicle extrication, high and low angle rope rescue, confined space, overland search and rescue, ice rescue,

and swift water investigations and rescue. Technical rescue team members are trained to meet technician level competencies identified in National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA)1006: *Standard for Technical Rescuer Personnel Professional Qualifications* (NFPA 1006). There are currently 22 members trained to the technician level. The team is augmented by personnel that have been trained to the awareness and operations level. Team members maintain skill competencies through the completion of a job performance requirement (JPR) task book and annual skill assessments. JPR task books have also been created for awareness and operations personnel.

The agency used critical tasking based on risk categorization to determine resource deployment requirements. Baseline response performance was based upon four years of historical data with benchmark response performance set accordingly as a means of continuous improvement. Baseline and benchmark performance statements are found in the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC). The team maintains an equipment cache that adequately supports program needs. Most of the equipment is kept on the agency's heavy rescue unit; however, each engine has equipment to perform basic "over the edge" rope rescues if needed. The agency is dependent on the Mesa County Sheriff Office to provide a swift water boat for incident mitigation. The agency has implemented an annual program appraisal that effectively documents resource needs, outputs, outcomes, and goals for the upcoming year. These appraisals are a valuable tool for both strategic and budgetary planning.

#### Performance Gap Analysis

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of moderate, high, and maximum technical rescue incidents for 2017 – 2020 in urban and rural densities to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analysis for moderate, high, and maximum risks are provided in this report.

#### Criterion 5H – Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Program

The Grand Junction Fire Department operates an adequate hazardous materials program that is consistent with community risks as documented in the community risk assessment/standards of cover (CRA/SOC). The hazardous materials team is the designated emergency response authority (DERA) for Mesa County as well as the primary responder for Bureau of Land Management areas outside of city limits. The DERA agreement represents a contractual obligation to ensure hazardous material events in the county are reported to the appropriate state agency and private vendor cleanup operations was satisfactorily completed. Technician level personnel are trained to the competencies set forth by National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents* (NFPA 472) and to Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.120. Additional training is conducted through regional courses and through the Security and Emergency Response Training Center (SERTC). There are currently 29 members trained to the technician level. The team is augmented by personnel that are trained to the operations level as part of their fire academy for entry level fire fighters. The state requires team members to recertify every three years through demonstration of identified job performance requirement competency skills.

The agency used critical tasking based on risk categorization to determine resource deployment requirements. Baseline response performance was based upon four years of historical data with benchmark response performance set accordingly as a means of continuous improvement. Baseline and benchmark performance statements are found in the community risk assessment/standards of

cover (CRA/SOC). The team maintains an equipment cache that adequately supports program needs. Equipment is kept on the agency's dedicated response trailer. The agency has implemented an annual program appraisal that effectively documents resource needs, outputs, outcomes, and goals for the upcoming year. These appraisals are a valuable tool for both strategic and budgetary planning.

### Performance Gap Analysis

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of moderate, high, and maximum hazardous materials incidents for 2017 - 2020 in urban and rural densities to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analyses for moderate, high, and maximum risks are provided in this report.

### **Criterion 5K – Wildland Fire Services Program**

The Grand Junction Fire Department maintains and operates an effective wildland program with the goal of controlling and extinguishing various types of grass/brush fires within the city limits. The agency has appropriate resources strategically placed throughout the city to respond to all grass/brush fire emergencies. Six fire stations are located throughout the city limits and these companies' cross staff three brush units and one tender. The agency can staff brush units with emergency call back. For large wildfire incidents, the agency utilizes mutual aid from neighboring federal wildland management agencies, state resources and neighboring. The agency has a good working relationship with the federal dispatch agency and process in place for ordering aircraft for wildland incidents.

The agency has recently taken several positive steps, partnering with county, state, and federal agencies, to enhance their wildland mitigation program. The agency conducts an annual program appraisal of the wildland fire services program to ensure that the programs personnel, training, and equipment are meeting the agency's goals and objectives. The agency requires that wildland team personnel meet the minimum requirements outlined by the National Wildland Coordinating Group (NWCG) standards.

The agency has a current wildland risk with a current partnership with the county and non-governmental agency (NGO) partners. The agency is currently looking for funding to start large landscape fuel reduction mitigation projects.

### Performance Gap Analysis

The following table represent the agency'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).

2017 - 2020 Moderate Risk Wildland Fire Response Times				
1st/ERF	Urban/Rural	Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	13:14 n=53	10:00	<b>03:14</b>
1st Due	Rural	14:11 n=38	10:00	<b>04:11</b>
ERF	Urban	15:43 n=25	12:00	<b>03:43</b>
ERF	Rural	16:45 n=16	13:00	<b>03:45</b>

It was verified and validated by the peer assessment team that the Grand Junction Fire Department had a statistically insignificant number of high, and maximum wildland fire incidents for 2017 - 2020 in urban and rural densities to provide a sufficient data set to study. Therefore, no performance gap analyses for high, and maximum risks are provided in this report.

## **Category 6 — Physical Resources**

With the implementation of the First Responder Tax, the Grand Junction Fire Department was able to purchase resources and construct new distribution points to align with the agency goals and strategic plan. The agency has a system for physical facility improvements and new constructions that involve the governing body, administration, and input from additional internal stakeholders. The fire station layout used by the agency is improved as each new station is built based on operational needs and in station staff feedback. There is currently a replacement station in the build phase, Station 3; a new station in the property preparation phase, Station 8; and a new station in the property acquisition phase, Station 7. Each station project has an agency project manager assigned to the station builds.

The peer assessment team verified that facilities have adequate storage space, are clean and in good repair, and maintenance has a planned methodology through documented monthly inspections. All stations have a separate storage area for structural firefighting gear. The logistic technician conducts documented monthly station inspections for maintenance and safety that are reported up the chain of command. Grand Junction Fire Department facilities comply with federal, state, and local regulations with the verified presence of vehicle exhaust systems, fire alarm systems, and sprinkler systems.

The apparatus types are appropriate for the operational needs, support staff, and special services. The Grand Junction Fire Department has included evidence of studies for apparatus placement to satisfy the communities need. The agency has a replacement schedule that includes input from the employees. During the build process of hazard specific equipment such as brush trucks, agency operational staff who are subject matter experts of that discipline, such as members of the wildland firefighting team, are initially consulted for apparatus layout. From there the apparatus build process is forwarded to the *Apparatus Committee*, which also includes agency members from various ranks, for final review.

The Grand Junction Fire Department has an established maintenance program managed by the Grand Junction City Fleet Maintenance Department. The agency apparatus have designated maintenance bays with available overflow bays when needed. There are two designated members of the fleet maintenance staff who are trained specifically for the maintenance of the fire apparatus. In August of

2021, these two members attended training from the manufacturer the agency is currently purchasing from. The reserve fleet has met the needs of the agency though some apparatus needs replaced. The agency is striving to have all reserve vehicles fully equipped to support a smoother transition when a primary apparatus is under repair. The fleet maintenance department uses *Faster Fleet* software to track maintenance costs, unit down for maintenance time, mileage, and preventive maintenance to report data driven unit replacement recommendations.

The Grand Junction Fire Department demonstrated tools and equipment are distributed appropriately and meet the operational needs of the agency. With the inclusion of the new position of logistics technician, the agency plans to move the emergency medical services (EMS) supplies from Station 5 to administration to improve distribution. The maintenance, testing, and inspections are conducted by personnel trained to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards such as the logistic officer and the trained engineers who conduct the pump and hose testing. The agency is currently in beta testing of Vector Solutions' *Check-It* as the inventory and maintenance tracking system to be implemented in January of 2022 which will replace the current paper system. Supplies and materials for specific functions and specialized program are stored in the distribution point of the operational teams for ease of access.

The Grand Junction Fire Department has identified and distributed the safety equipment such as structural firefighting personnel protective equipment (PPE) and emergency medical services (EMS) PPE to appropriate personnel. A plan has been established to supply operational members with a second set of structural firefighting PPE in 2022. Each station is equipped with an extractor. When routine inspections find potential issues, the logistic technician is notified and determines if an advanced inspection or repair is needed by the independent service provider.

## **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. The city of Grand Junction has a centralized human resources function with adequate staff who are responsible for the oversight and development of employee recruitment and selection, employee and labor relations, compensation and benefits, and workers compensation for all city departments. General human resources administration practices are in place and are consistent with local, state/provincial, and federal statutory and regulatory requirements.

The peer assessment team verified that the city of Grand Junction has systems in place to attract, select, retain, and promote qualified personnel in accordance with applicable local, state/provincial, and federal statutory requirements. The city of Grand Junction's Human Resources Department, in partnership with the fire department, oversees the processes for all new hire, lateral hire, and promotional opportunities for the agency. The fire department has implemented a best practice process in partnership with human resources to serve as subject matter experts when developing qualified applicant lists. This best practice has led to a larger applicant pool and selection of more qualified candidates. Systems are in place guiding the recognition and announcement of open positions within the agency. The city and the agency actively participate in multi-faceted recruitment and retention activities. The agency's screening and qualifying devices are job-related and meet federal, state, and local requirements. The city of Grand Junction is an equal opportunity employer and continues to employ, attract, and promote qualified individuals without prejudice.

Personnel policies and procedures are in place, documented, and guiding both administrative and personnel behavior. The human resources department has established fair and uniform procedures to administer the city's employment-related policies and programs. The director of human resources, city attorney and the city manager have provided policy oversight in consultation with department directors. The city's policy and procedures have been effective in establishing and directing administrative procedures and practices related to employment. The agency and the human resources department have ensured recruitment, selection and promotional processes, applications, assessments, physical exams, background checks, and other screening devices have remained job-related while meeting current legal requirements as indicated with the existing policies.

A system and practices for providing employee/member compensation are in place. The employee compensation system is managed by the human resources department following all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

The city of Grand Junction requires all new and promoted members to serve six months of probation in their role per the city of Grand Junction *Employee Personnel Policy Manual*. Probationary periods for all new and promoted members are administered and evaluated by their respective immediate supervisor. New members who join the agency at the rank of firefighter must satisfy a twelve-month, probationary period. Provided the employee's performance is satisfactory at the end of the trial period, they will continue employment. The city of Grand Junction reviews and updates its employee handbook as needed to be compliant with current local, state, and federal employment requirements.

The agency currently receives employee feedback or suggestions by formal implemented form and informal means however members of the agency do not receive any feedback on their suggestions. [It is recommended that the agency develop a process for the documentation and delivery of feedback from employee suggestions.](#)

The city of Grand Junction produces and publishes a classification and compensation schedule along with the benefits provided to employees; these represent a total compensation package. The human resources department conducts an initial benefits orientation for new hires. Benefit information is available to all members on the city of Grand Junction intranet page. Additionally, the city's human resources department conducts an annual fair for updated information to existing employees.

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department identifies foundational training needs through the established requirements for certifications from the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control and the Colorado Health Facilities & Emergency Medical Services Division. With the expansion of the agency, the emphasis has been placed on the training of the recruit firefighters with a limitation on the resources placed towards the incumbent firefighters. Through the job descriptions, the minimum level of training and education requirements are established. The peer assessment team noted that the agency did not use/understand Insurance Services Office training requirements for personnel and facilities. [It is recommended that the agency revise processes used to identify training needs.](#)

The agency only requires that wildland team personnel meet the minimum requirements outlined by the National Wildland Coordinating Group (NWCG) standards however all members will potentially respond to urban interface incidents within the response territory. [It is recommended that the agency evaluate training needs for all personnel to ensure qualification meets the applicable national standards for wildland incidents.](#)

The Grand Junction Fire Department, using *Target Solutions*, has begun a foundational process of ensuring personnel are appropriately trained. Through *Target Solutions* and a shared calendar from *Microsoft Office 365 Outlook Calendar*, the agency supplies a training schedule. The agency has a developed feedback form to determine the reliability of the training conducted. The use of *Target Solutions* satisfies the training record management needs of the agency. A formal appraisal of the training program is performed yearly.

When initially reviewing the documents, it was observed that the agency evaluates the individual and crew performance on the minimum industry and national standard. During the site visit, the peer assessment team observed the evaluations are based on the minimum requirements for the employees to maintain certifications however crew evaluations are less formal. [It is recommended that the agency formalize crew performance evaluation through a validated and documented performance base measurement.](#)

The training facility and apparatus support the needs of the Grand Junction Fire Department. There is a plan to completely outfit the training apparatus to mirror the operational apparatus. The training apparatus follows the same functional testing for pump and hose testing as the operational fleet. The agency has an established training division which consists of two training officers assigned to an administrative schedule supervised by the battalion chief of administration. During the fire academy, additional instructors are assigned to assist with the training of new employees. The agency has added an emergency medical services (EMS) officer to assist in the EMS education portion of the program. The training officers currently hold agency minimum teaching requirements per the job description. The training materials used are current based on third party provisions of *Target Solutions* and *Resource One*. The agency has a process in place to update the training curriculum to meet agency needs. The agency does not have a current inventory of the training equipment and resources. The agency has a plan to implement a training inventory management system in February 2022. The agency training materials are evaluated at least annually to reflect the industry best practices.

Instructors assigned during the academy are not required to meet any specific certifications. [It is recommended that the agency evaluate instructor requirements to ensure they have qualifications and expertise to meet its needs.](#)

## **Category 9 — Essential Resources**

### **Criterion 9A — Water Supply**

The Grand Junction Water Department provides and maintains a water system infrastructure that adequately meets domestic and fire suppression requirements in both volume and pressure. Available water volume and pressures are used as part of the agency's community risk assessment and pre-planning programs. The agency follows the International Fire Code (IFC) 2018 edition to determine minimum flow rates for all new construction and occupancy modifications. The fire prevention division works closely with city agencies and contractors to ensure minimum flow rates are met.

The water department maintains the Juanita reservoir and two four-million-gallon storage tanks to supply a looped water system. There are approximately 1,206 hydrants that may be used during fire suppression operations. Hydrant location and flow rates are provided on apparatus mobile data terminals. The agency has the capability to draft water from identified static sources in areas where

no hydrants are available. The agency provides annual training in water drafting, water shuttle, and water relay operations. The city's water system is connected to the Ute Water Conservation District and Clifton Water Department as part of the drought response information program (DRIP) should low water conditions exist.

The water department is responsible for hydrant inspections, flow testing, and general maintenance that is consistent with National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) NFPA 25: *Standard for the Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems* (NFPA 25). The city received a score of 33.41 out of a possible 40 points in the Insurance Services Office evaluation last conducted in July of 2015.

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

The Grand Junction Regional Communication Center (GJRCC) is the regional public safety answering point (PSAP) for Mesa County. The communication center was constructed in 2016 and has significantly upgraded its capabilities through dispatching software as well as modernizing communications center hardware. Software upgrades included computer aided dispatch (CAD) integration with geographical mapping displays, *RapidSOS* to track incoming calls, and emergency medical dispatch (EMD) that categorizes and prioritizes medical incidents. Hardware upgrades included a new phone and recording system. Dispatcher consoles were arranged in a semi-symmetric format that allows access to dispatching equipment and printers. Each console features an ergonomic design.

The communications center is capable of inter-agency communications interoperability through the Colorado state digital trunked radio system. Dedicated agency channels are established to allow seamless communications during mutual aid responses. The center has the capability to transfer all E-911 calls to other PSAP facilities. The center has designated the Garfield County Emergency Communications Center as the primary backup PSAP in the event of an emergency or power failure. Enhanced 911 features include system fail-safes and redundancies such as uninterrupted electrical power supplies and multiple servers for all system programs. Routine maintenance is performed on equipment on a weekly basis that meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1221: *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*. The center also maintains a mobile dispatching center as a backup should the center experience a major failure.

The GJRCC has a staffing level of 55 personnel that includes a center manager, 9 shift supervisors, 1 quality assurance analyst, and 44 communication specialists. Shift staffing is typically 1 supervisor and 14 dispatchers; however, the center has set a minimum staffing level of 4 to 8 dispatchers depending on call volume, time of day, and other factors that impact staffing needs. The center has clearly defined training requirements for new employees that consist of 5 phases of training that takes approximately 9 to 12 months to complete. New dispatchers are also required to complete the 24-hour International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) EMD certification course. Dispatchers must recertify every 2 years with 24 hours of continuing dispatch education. The peer assessment team noted that the GJRCC scored 9.15 out of a possible 10 points in the Insurance Services Office evaluation last conducted in July of 2015.

There are no formal agreements between the communication center and the fire department regarding call processing response time expectations. [It is recommended that the agency work with the Grand Junction Regional Communication Center to establish call processing performance measures and document performance.](#)

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department maintains an administrative staff that adequately supports agency needs. Command staff job functions and areas of responsibility have been clearly identified in the agency's job descriptions to include administrative and operational support, training, fire prevention, community outreach, inspections and preplans, fire investigation, and administrative assistant job duties. The agency has made use of volunteers for public reception and other agency outreach functions. The agency maintains record management systems to document incident reports, training, and inspection and pre-plans.

The agency has recognized the need to evaluate current staffing requirements to address organizational growth, increasing demands for emergency services, and to meet community expectations in the delivery of services and programs. To illustrate these needs, the agency hired a quality improvement/quality assurance (QI/QA) specialist to review incident reports for completion of required fields, adherence to standing orders and protocol, and correct billing information due to increased EMS service demands. The agency has yet to determine if staffing needs are appropriate. [It is recommended that the agency evaluate staffing needs of administrative support services.](#)

#### **Criterion 9D – Information Technology**

The Grand Junction Information Technology (IT) division maintains an administrative staff that adequately supports city and fire department needs. The IT division currently has 26 specialists. IT job functions and areas of responsibility have been clearly identified in the division's job descriptions to include the evaluation, recommendation, purchasing, and installation of software programs and system integrations. Additional duties also include the maintenance, repair, and replacement of hardware (e.g., computers, laptops, mobile devices). The division has implemented a comprehensive replacement schedule for all hardware as well as the transition from record management systems that no longer meets agency requirements.

The *Information Security Committee* is responsible for the city's cybersecurity efforts to provide oversight for information security, policies, and operational procedures. The division recently hired an information security officer to manage the division's new security operations center that constantly monitors city and agency systems for illegal activities, system compromises, and the center's backup and redundancy systems.

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

The Grand Junction Fire Department's strategic planning process for 2020 through 2024 has a renewed focus on external relationships. The emphasis is being placed on mutual aid agreements and automatic aid agreements which will impact the cost effectiveness and mission of the agency. The agency's borders with Clifton Fire Protection District as well as the Lower Valley Fire Protection District are very irregular and automatic aid agreements would benefit all agencies immensely. Several agreements are already in place, but the planning process has identified areas for

improvement which the agency is pursuing and plans to have those agreements finalized before the end of 2021.

Agreements between the Grand Junction Fire Department and several external agencies support the agency's programs. The agency has agreements, for the provision of hazardous materials response, with Mesa County, and the United States Department of Interior National Park Service (NPS) as well as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The agency is the designated emergency response authority (DERA) for the county, and it also provides hazardous materials response at the technician level for the NPS Colorado National Monument and the BLM areas north of the city. Emergency medical transport services outside of the primary service area are provided throughout portions of Mesa County through a resolution with the County. The peer assessment team verified that all agreements are current and reviewed by the deputy fire chiefs yearly in July and updated as needed.

### **Category 11 — Health and Safety**

It was evident to the peer assessment team that health, wellness, and safety are priorities for the City of Grand Junction and the Grand Junction Fire Department. The risk manager is a full-time position assigned within the human resources department and oversees all health, wellness, safety, and loss control activities across city departments. The risk manager aids and cooperates with the agency's *Health and Wellness Program* and works directly with the agency's deputy fire chief of administration. The agency participates in the city-wide *Accident Review Committee* which reviews all accidents or near misses occurring within the organization.

The emergency medical service (EMS) chief is the official designated infectious control officer (DICO) for the agency. If a member has an exposure the DICO is notified, and the information is forwarded to the risk manager for review. Additionally, the agency is a member of the Colorado Heart Trust and Cancer Trust Funds programs. Other programs and activities focused on member health and wellbeing include financial wellness resources, a peer support team, as well as participating in the Colorado Intergovernmental Risk Sharing Agency (CIRSA) worker's compensation and training programs. The agency has started to order new apparatus designed with the clean cab concept in mind and is attempting to fund a second set of personal protective gear for every member to reduce exposure to carcinogens.

The Grand Junction Fire Department Standard Operating Procedure 113.0 *Medical Evaluations*, establish the policy governing annual physicals, fitness evaluations and rehabilitative physicals. All members of the agency are required to have a physical when hired and annually throughout the length of employment with the city of Grand Junction. The city of Grand Junction provides a health clinic, called Sage Clinic, for all city employees which also provides physician services to oversee the fit for duty programs. The *Health and Wellness Program* also provides for facilities at each of the fire stations for members to maintain fitness levels. The health insurance program provided to all members incorporates premium reduction as well as monetary bonuses for those who meet identified risk reduction criteria. The facilities, services, and programs provided by the agency support the overall health and wellness of the members in the organization.