

SCHEDULE F: AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

FORWARD

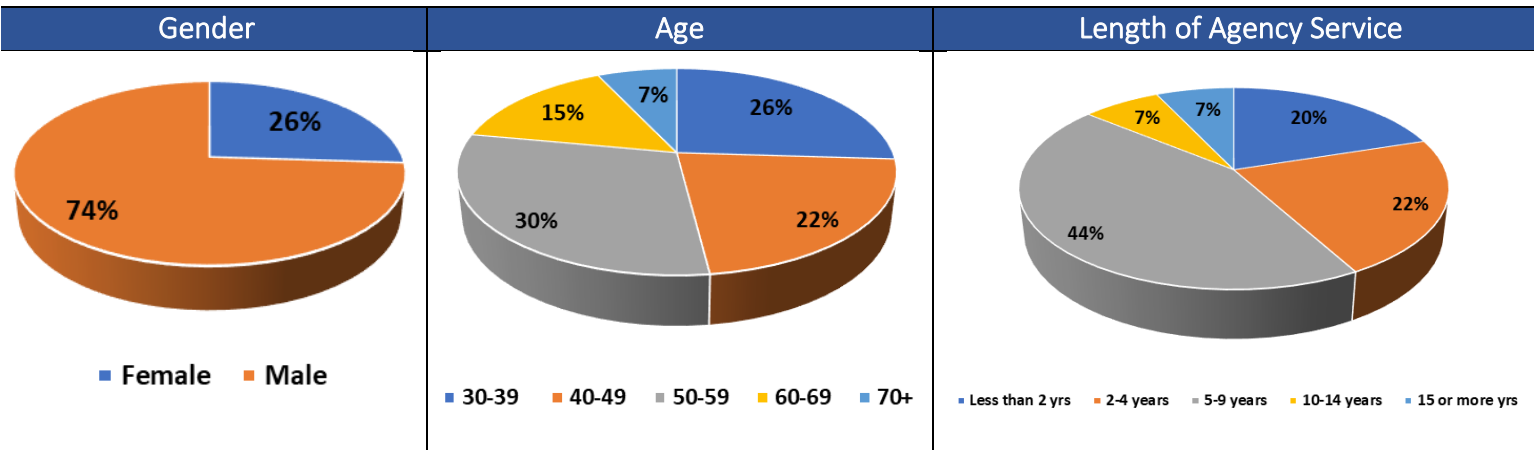
The Texas Commission on Fire Protection Workforce Plan provides an overview of agency staffing information. In addition to meeting its mission and goals, the agency has successfully provided high-quality service with a highly trained and skilled staff. The agency has been able to work smarter and leverage technology to address a significant increase in the demand on the Texas Fire Service while navigating staff turnover due to salary restrictions and retiring staff. The Workforce Plan forecasts staffing goals, workforce skills, demographics and trends required to continue to ensure the high standard of agency operations and services.

OVERVIEW

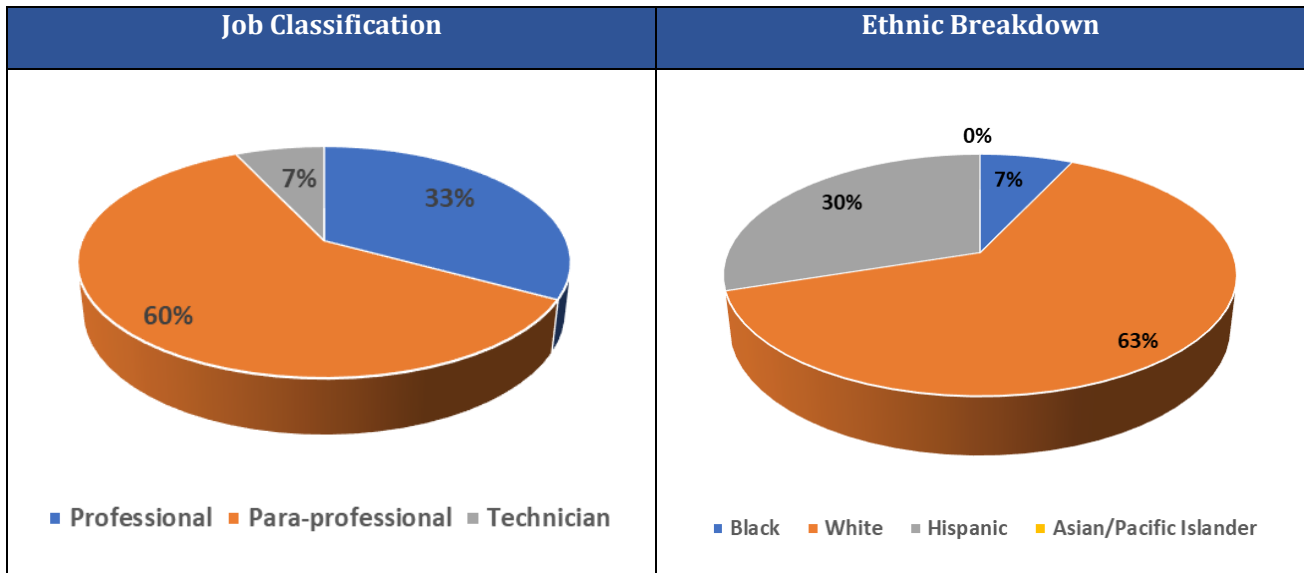
The agency currently employs 27, full-time individuals. To continuously meet our high standards of performance, most staff members are required to work multiple job functions. The Commission has seen a significant increase in workload in the last 5 years. This is due to an increasing population with a rising need of fire services throughout the state. Advances in internal technology and staff training has allowed the agency to provide quality customer service to its stakeholders with moderate changes in staffing. Recent developments related to the pandemic and budget cuts had the agency implement additional measures with telework provisions and a review of the agency operations. The current strategic goal is aligned to support the agency workforce, including training, communications, agency environment, and succession and retention planning.

CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The following charts reflect the agency’s workforce as of August 2021. The agency’s workforce comprises 26% females and 74% males. The agency’s staff consists of 74% aged 40 years or higher while 52% are aged 50 or more. About 42% of employees have less than five year’s agency service. This warrants training programs to ensure our employees maintain professional growth and development.



A total of 29 full-time positions are allowed by legislative rule. Due to budget restraints, only 27 of these positions are filled. Using EEO definitions, currently there are: officials and administrators—1; professionals—9; para-professional—16 and technicians—2. Fire Service experience and expertise is crucial to the agency’s Compliance Division therefore it is vital that the agency employs professional fire fighters to cover fire departments’ compliance inspections. Due to increasing demand of fire service throughout the state, the agency added an extra region. In return the need for Firefighter professionals increased from 6 to 7 to achieve performance measures. Also, with ever-changing population and needs of the Texas fire service, the agency recently hired an individual with a master’s degree in Education with a concentration in Adult Education and Training, to oversee and maintain present and future curriculum opportunities for stakeholders. The ethnic distribution of the staff is 63% White, 30% Hispanic, and 7% Black.



Employee Turnover

For fiscal year 2021, workforce demographics show that on average agency employees had 7 years with the agency. To address turnover the agency is focusing on employee retention, succession planning, and performance improvement issues. The two-year average turnover rate is nearly 14%.

Retirement Eligibility

According to agency projections, an estimated 30% of agency employees will be eligible to retire between the fiscal years 2021 and 2026. The agency is implementing a career ladder program and is working on a retention and succession program. This will also address overall staffing and workload issues too with the potential change.

Critical Workforce Skills

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection values its human capital as its most important asset. Commission employees possess highly desirable skill sets which are critical to accomplishing the mission of the agency. These skills include written and oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, expertise related to fire service standards, technical skills related to state systems, and information technology skills.

FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE: DEMAND ANALYSIS

Expected Workforce Changes

The Texas Commission on Fire Protection will experience many of the workforce changes seen across the country impacted by an aging population. The agency expects that these factors may shrink the pool of qualified employees requiring greater recruiting efforts and more job skills training for new and current employees. Due to the consistent increase in population of Texas, the agency also expects continued growth in testing, certifications, and overall need for the Texas Fire Service which would greatly impact the agency’s ability to deliver on its mission with current staffing levels.

To mitigate the shrinkage of qualified candidates and to meet current recruiting trends, the agency has executed a new telecommute policy. Studies have shown that employees are looking for a flexible work schedule and a better work/life balance. The agency will benefit from lower staff turnover. Statistics show that 46% of the employers with a telecommuting policy, even well before COVID, report that it directly impacts the

reduction in attrition in the workplace. The costs involved with attrition are significant. To accommodate this new policy, the agency will need to shift from desktop computers to laptops for our current situation dictates that the employee must use their personal computers in order to work from home.

Future Workforce Skills Needed

To meet increased demands, the agency will use employee teams to boost productivity through streamlined processes and increased use of automation. Communication and interpersonal skills will be critical to the team approach. Technical and critical thinking skills will be necessary for balancing priorities and finding more innovative ways to meet productive demands. In addition to the competencies listed before, additional skills will be essential for future positions:

- Process analysis and improvement.
- Project management.
- Performance management.
- Strategic planning.
- Business process creation and revision.

Key to maintaining a motivated, vibrant, and professional workforce is the development of a comprehensive personnel development plan. This plan will be comprised of:

- A cross-training program to address the changing needs of the agency.
- A professional improvement component targeting work skills and workplace enhancements.
- Educational and skills training.
- Overall employee performance improvement.
- Creating a career trajectory plan for each staff member.

In the case of employees who must have and maintain certifications issued by the agency to perform their assigned duties, continuing education will be included in this plan and will be compliant with rules and regulations the agency enforces on its stakeholders. The plan will also address other continuing education requirements of non-certified personnel.

The plan will become a part of the agency's Employee Guide. Participation will be available to all employees. Funding for this plan will be included in the biennial budget process.

Anticipated Impact on Workforce

Due to the increase in statewide population and decrease in budget, the agency has reclassified and reassigned some positions within the organization following the implementation of technology and productivity improvements adopted by the agency over the last couple of years. The agency will continue to monitor these shifts in the organization for efficacy.

To better prepare its workforce for both anticipated and unexpected changes, the agency recently implemented an employee succession plan wherein personnel learn to perform the duties of their co-workers in the same work group and general classification. In addition to cross-training employees, the agency plans to adapt a career ladder plan to sustain customer service with the anticipated retirements within the next 5-6 years. The goal of this plan is to provide a smooth transition and continuation of essential agency functions when an employee's service is interrupted, regardless of the reason. Cross-training of personnel will expand across agency sections as the workload and position classifications allow. This will provide even more organizational flexibility in the agency and more professional development opportunities for employees. This plan is especially important considering the small workforce utilized by the agency, where the loss of a single key employee can have a significant impact on productivity and work quality.

Additional employees will likely be needed in the future to address the demand placed on the agency due to population growth. This will enhance professionalism and the ability to meet the needs of the communities the fire service protects. With population growth, the demand on the fire service will certainly result in more personnel being added to existing fire departments, and in the creation of new entities regulated by the commission. The fire service also continues to aggressively press ahead to advance the education, training, and expertise of its personnel. As such, it is incumbent upon the commission to help lead in this trend by offering as many credentialing opportunities as possible.

Finally, some changes occurring in the recent past through legislative action have contributed to the workload of the agency. Until now, the agency has been able to absorb the increased work with existing staff. However, with any new legislative action that increases the workload, consideration must be given to increasing the number of FTEs appropriated for the agency's mission.

Critical Functions That Must Be Performed to Achieve the Strategic Plan

All current functions of the agency are critical to achievement of the strategic plan. As business processes are redesigned, the agency expects essential job functions to change or shift in importance for some positions. As discussed in other areas of this plan, as the agency matures, adapts, and grows to meet the demands of the stakeholders, the overall needs of the agency will lead to adjustments in the workforce and functional groups. Through partnerships with other state agencies and stakeholders, the agency will continue to realign its structure to reflect expanding and expected needs resulting from greater levels of cooperation.

Gap Analysis

Current employees do not lack the skills necessary to perform their essential job functions. However, as the agency redesigns business processes and loses employees through attrition, some positions could change significantly, requiring targeted recruiting and/or skills training.

Strategy Development

To meet workforce needs brought about by increased customer demands, business process redesigns, and employee attrition, the agency will:

- Ensure its organizational structure reflects efficient use of its personnel resources.
- Update position descriptions as necessary.
- Provide individualized job skills training that targets essential job functions.
- Provide individualized professional training to meet anticipated skill requirements.
- Utilize a rigorous recruiting and selection process to fill vacant or newly created positions with highly qualified candidates.
- Involve employees in the design and improvement of business processes.
- Increase employee satisfaction and performance through ethical, fair, and performance-oriented employment practices.
- Strategy survey – annual customer satisfaction – increase respondents.