

WILMINGTON - NEW HANOVER  
CHARTER COMMISSION

Fred B. Graham, Chairman  
Timothy Wood, Executive Director

TECHNICAL REPORT  
NUMBER 16

FIRE PROTECTION

To the Committee on  
Public Safety

N.C.  
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v. 16

January, 1971

## PREFACE

The Charter Commission appreciates the assistance of Chief Earl Millinor, Wilmington Fire Department, for providing material contained in this report.

This report will be received initially by the Committee on Public Safety whose members are as follows:

### For the Charter Commission

Kenneth M. Sprunt, Chairman  
H. A. Marks  
Robert T. Chestnut

### For the Citizens Review Committee

Paul Brissette  
Albert Cox, Jr.  
Richard L. Burnett  
Thurston C. Davis  
W. L. Eason  
Gene Humble  
Moses McGill  
Richard A. Shew  
P. J. Watkins

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A. Units of Government Involved

Fire protection is of vital concern to all units of government in New Hanover County. The City of Wilmington has a full time fire department serving the corporate limits, and each of the incorporated beach communities have volunteer fire departments. The unincorporated areas of the county are served by volunteer fire departments located in South Wilmington, Winter Park, Seagate, Myrtle Grove, Ogden, Castle Hayne, and Wrightsboro. Two U. S. Air Force installations in New Hanover County also maintain fire departments to serve the needs of the military installations.

A discussion of volunteer departments is contained in a different section of this report. The following material pertains to the jurisdiction and operation of the Wilmington Fire Department.

B. Legal Jurisdiction

Municipal fire departments, in general, are governed by Articles 11 and 18, Chapter 160, of the N. C. General Statutes. Adoption of a fire code is provided for in G.S. 160-200(41). Local ordinances pertaining to the Wilmington Fire Department are found in Articles 1 and 28 of the City Charter and in Chapters 6, 9 and 10 of the City Code.

C. Operational Jurisdiction

The Wilmington Fire Department responds to any call from inside the corporate limits of the city. The city has written contracts to furnish fire protection to three corporations outside the city limits: E. W. Godwin, Corbett Package Company, and Eastern Rebuilders.

D. Organization for Policy Making

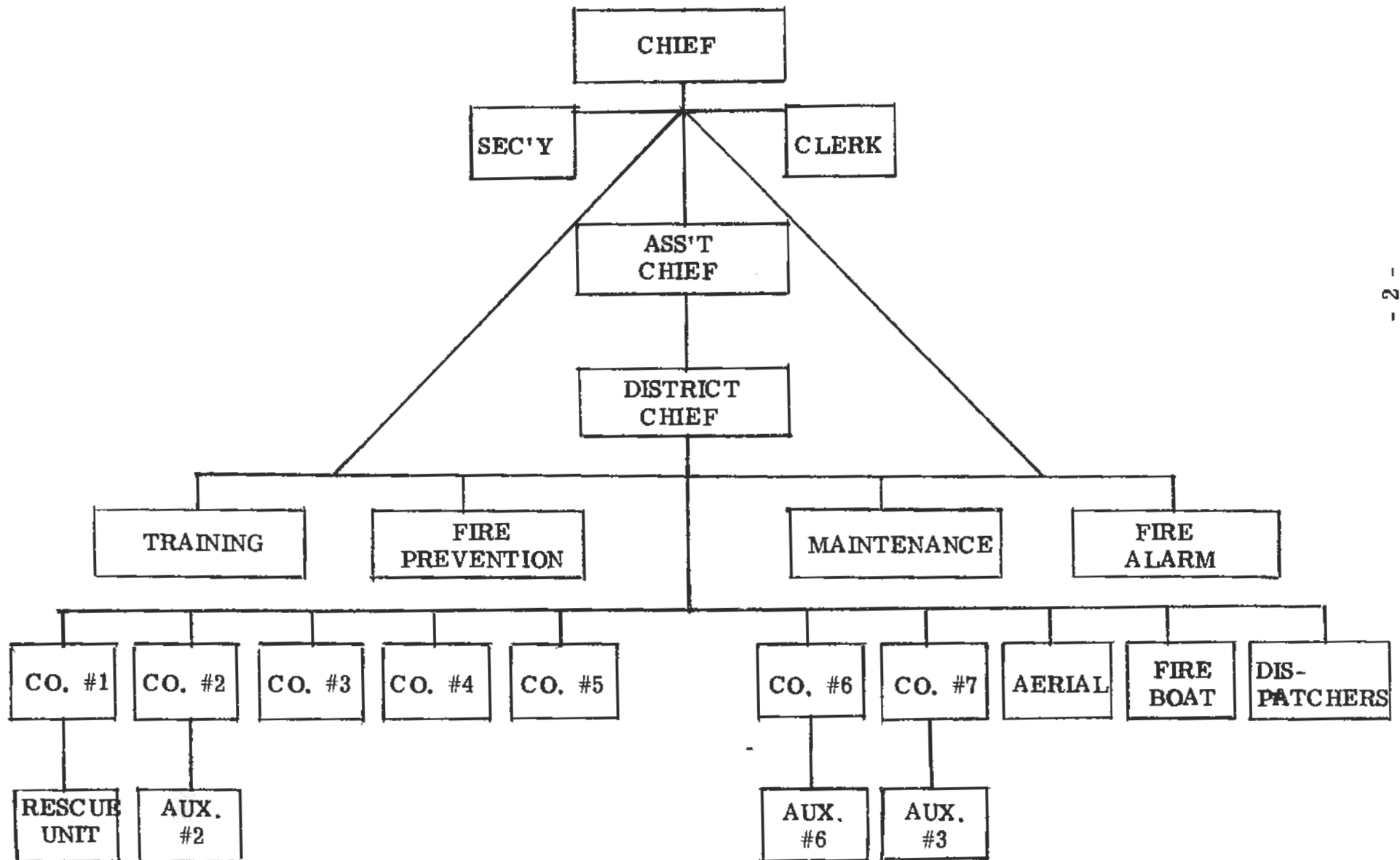
The city council appoints the fire chief pursuant to Section 11.11 of the City Charter. The city manager, as the administrative head of city government is responsible for the administration of all departments including the fire department.

E. Administrative Organization and Level of Staffing

and  
F.

The fire chief is assisted by a staff and division heads. The personnel and organization of the fire department is shown below and in the accompanying chart:

ORGANIZATION CHART  
WILMINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



## ORGANIZATION

|                                   |     |                              |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| Fire Chief                        | (1) | Administrative Head of Dept. |
| 1st. Asst. Chiefs                 | (2) |                              |
| District Chiefs                   | (2) |                              |
| 2nd. Asst. Chief                  | (1) | Training & Property Officer  |
| Training Officer                  | (1) | Captain                      |
| Director of Fire Prevention       | (1) | Captain                      |
| Asst. Director of Fire Prevention | (1) | Lieutenant                   |
| Inspectors                        | (2) |                              |
| Master Mechanic                   | (1) |                              |
| Asst. Mechanic                    | (1) |                              |
| Company Officers                  |     |                              |

## PERSONNEL

Seven engine and one ladder companies are in service in four fire stations. The Fire Boat is on stand-by duty.

There are 104 approved full-paid uniform members and 9 civilian members.

### 1. Fire Fighters

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Chief            | 1  |
| Chief Officers   | 4  |
| Company Officers | 20 |
| Privates         | 71 |

### 2. Fire Prevention

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Captain-Director        | 1        |
| Lieut. --Asst. Director | 1        |
| Inspectors              | 2        |
| Total                   | <u>4</u> |

### 3. Training

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 2nd. Asst. Chief-Director      | 1        |
| Capt. --Asst. Training Officer | 1        |
| Total                          | <u>2</u> |

### 4. Maintenance

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| Mechanic I  | 1        |
| Mechanic II | 1        |
| Total       | <u>2</u> |

### 5. Fire Alarm

|        |          |          |
|--------|----------|----------|
| Supt.  | 1        | Civilian |
| Asst.  | 1        | Civilian |
| Helper | 1        | Civilian |
| Total  | <u>3</u> |          |

### 6. Dispatchers

Four (4) Civilians

### 7. Office

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| Steno I  | Civilian |
| Steno II | Civilian |

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

1. Members of the Board consist of the Chief and Asst. Chiefs (6 members)
2. Departmental policies, rules and regulations, classification and promotion schedules, discipline, personnel problems, etc., are set by this Board, with approval of City Manager.

G. Objectives of Wilmington Fire Department (Level of Service)

1. Provide Class "A" fire protection and maintain National Board of Fire Underwriters Class 3 rating.\*
2. Analyze Fire Problem
  - a. What will burn, where and how
  - b. Evaluate storage, processing, transportation and handling of chemicals, fertilizer materials, flammable liquids, un-stable and corrosive materials.
  - c. Consider industrial properties, commercial and residential, etc.
  - d. Consider building density and construction.
  - e. Pre-fire plan potential conflagration and major fire problems.
3. Provide a Fire Prevention Bureau with competent leadership and personnel, to educate the public in fire safety, make inspections, enforce codes, and make investigations of fires of suspicious origin.
4. Maintain an adequate fire combat force of aggressive, well trained and motivated professional firemen, equipped with modern fire fighting apparatus, tools, and equipment.
5. Provide a comprehensive training program, with two full-time, well-qualified Training officers
6. Provide a well planned Maintenance program, with two well-qualified mechanics.
7. Provide competent administrative and executive personnel.

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\* Wilmington has received a grade of three from the North Carolina Fire Insurance Rating Bureau. This reflects a high degree of proficiency and is reflected in lower fire insurance rates for property owners in Wilmington. Other cities in North Carolina having fire departments rate "three" include Greensboro and Charlotte. Asheville and High Point, by comparison, have a grade of four. No fire department in North Carolina has a grade lower (better) than three.

FIRE LOSS - JANUARY 1, 1969 - DECEMBER 31, 1969

|                                      |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Estimated Insured Loss               | \$ 328,617.00   |
| Estimated Uninsured Loss             | \$ 35,292.00    |
| Estimated Value of Property Involved | \$76,459,725.00 |
| Total Loss for 1969                  | \$ 355,349.00   |

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|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Total Loss for 1969 | \$ 355,349.00 |
| Total Loss for 1968 | \$ 239,577.00 |

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|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Total Alarms for 1969 | 1,309 |
| Total Alarms for 1968 | 1,258 |

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|  |   |
|--|---|
| Total Number of Fatalities Caused by Fire            | 1 |
| Total Number of Fatalities Caused by Other than Fire | 2 |

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Automobile Fires in 1969

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Total Value | \$229,658.00 |
| Total Loss  | \$ 17,540.00 |



H. Budget and Finance

and

I. Expenditures for the Wilmington Fire Department are supported by the General Fund. The budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971 is shown below.

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Personal Service              | \$824,529.00   |
| Insurance                     | 13,500.00      |
| Supplies & Expense            | 8,000.00       |
| Telephone & Telegraph         | 3,900.00       |
| Fuel and Lights               | 12,000.00      |
| Uniforms                      | 12,000.00      |
| Maint. of Equipment           | 17,500.00      |
| Maint. of Buildings           | 6,000.00       |
| Pension Fund                  | 138,000.00     |
| Physical Exams                | 1,500.00       |
| Civil Service Commission      | 240.00         |
| Mutual Aid Fire Study         | 400.00         |
| Capital Outlay: New Equipment | 9,000.00       |
| Total                         | \$1,046,569.00 |

J. Relationships to Other Agencies

1. The Public Works Department coordinates all city services in assisting the Fire Department in special fire protection problems.
2. The Water Department provides adequate water for fire fighting with proper distribution grid, elevated tanks, spacing of hydrants, maintenance, etc.
3. Building Inspection Department - This division makes a very important contribution to the total fire prevention program through enforcement of the N. C. State Building Code; Minimum Housing Code; inspections; regulation of repairs; demolition of dilapidated buildings, etc.
4. Police Department - The ultimate responsibility of the Fire Department and the Police Department is very closely related. The Police Department assists and protects Firemen during civil problems; handles traffic; investigates fires of suspicious origin, and fires where arson or other un-lawful burning is evident.
5. The City Planning Department - Assists the Fire Department in location and design of fire stations. Planned growth and proper zoning is of tremendous value to fire protection organizations.

K. Relationship to other Units of Government

Mutual Aid

The Wilmington Fire Department and the 48th Interceptor Squadron located at New Hanover County airport have a written agreement for Mutual-Aid. Their large crash unit would be available if needed.

There are 10 Volunteer Fire Departments in the county, and the Wilmington Department has a verbal Mutual-Aid agreement with all of them.

L. Evaluation of Needs of the Wilmington Fire Department

The Wilmington Fire Department is recognized by the American Insurance Association, the N. C. Fire Insurance Rating Bureau; the N. C. Department of Insurance and rated in performance and efficiency as high as any department in the State.

The Department has adequate personnel, well trained and equipped.

A new 100' Aerial ladder truck was purchased March, 1970, to be delivered approximately October, 1971.

The city has purchased two lots for new fire stations in the annexed area, but funds are not available for the construction of these Sub-Stations at the present time.

These Stations are desperately needed to provide adequate fire protection for these areas.

A shorter work week must be considered for the Fire Department, as a 72 hour work week is not consistent with National and State trends. A 56 hour work week is desirable - a shorter work week would require additional personnel.

M. Volunteer Fire Departments

There are ten volunteer fire departments in New Hanover County, seven of which serve unincorporated areas. Each of the three incorporated beach communities have volunteer fire departments whose statutory authority is contained in Articles 11 and 18 of General Statutes Chapter 160.

County fire departments, fire marshals, and fire prevention codes are provided for in G.S. 153-9(39)-(39B). While New Hanover County has exercised its authority to support volunteer fire departments, it has not established any full time departments, and has no paid employee supervising or coordinating activities of the volunteer departments.

The writer of this report has been unable to determine with any degree of certainty, if the title of County Fire Marshal is held by any employee of New Hanover County. Based on available information, it appears that no such position has been created, and that, in general, fire prevention codes are not enforced in the county. The sole exception appears to be the inspection of county schools for fire and electrical hazards by the county electrical inspector.

There appears to be little in the way of policy making or administrative supervision of rural volunteer fire departments in New Hanover County. All departments, however, have been approved for fire insurance rating purposes and serve districts approved by the North Carolina Fire Insurance Rating Bureau. [Note: NCFIRB is not an agency of state government. The bureau represents the interests of insurance companies underwriting fire insurance policies.]

The rural volunteer departments are incorporated as non-profit organizations. They hold title to their own buildings and equipment, and the county government has no legal control over their activities. Any department could decline to answer fire calls, and the only recourse of the county government would be to discontinue appropriations to that department.

Rural Volunteer Fire Departments obtain operating funds from (a) appropriations by New Hanover County Board of Commissioners, and (b) various fund raising drives conducted by the respective departments. County appropriations to rural volunteer fire departments by New Hanover County for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971 are as follows:

| <u>Department</u>     | <u>Appropriation</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Castle Hayne          | \$5,308.58           |
| Myrtle Grove          | 5,308.58             |
| Ogden                 | 5,308.58             |
| Seagate               | 5,308.58             |
| South Wilmington      | 5,308.58             |
| Winter Park           | 5,548.58             |
| Wrightsboro           | 5,308.58             |
| 1] Ogden Rescue Squad | 5,310.00             |

Financial support of volunteer fire departments is provided by the towns of Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, and Wrightsville Beach as follows:

| <u>Department</u>  | <u>Appropriation</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Carolina Beach     | \$25,015.02 [2       |
| Kure Beach         | 1,628.00             |
| Wrightsville Beach | 38,550.00 [3         |

1] Not considered in this report.

2] Includes additional appropriation of \$10,000 for purchase of fire truck.

3] Includes salaries, overtime, court-pay, supplies and uniforms for four police officers who double as firemen.

Since there is no person in the county responsible for fire services other than the chiefs of the various volunteer departments, it is somewhat difficult to determine the present and future needs of fire protection services in New Hanover County.

This fact alone would seem to indicate to an untrained observer that rapidly urbanizing areas of the county have dangerously insufficient fire protection. This statement is in no way intended to discredit the valuable contributions made by volunteer fire departments whose personnel work for no remuneration and are on call at all times.

There is a need for some full-time paid firemen in the county. This need is especially acute during normal working hours when many firemen are at work, often several miles from their stations.

There is an urgent need for a centralized communication and reporting center.

Other needs are apparent but less urgent than those indicated above.

#### Facilities, equipment, and manpower

The following table provides a summary of volunteer fire departments in New Hanover County:

NEW HANOVER COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

| DEPARTMENT              | ACTIVE FIREMEN   | MAJOR EQUIPMENT   | PUMP CAPACITY (gpm)             | BOOSTER TANK CAPACITY(gals)       | STATION LOCATION                                  | TYPE FIRE ALARM  |
|-------------------------|------------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>South Wilmington</u> | 18<br>volunteers | 1959 International Pumper<br>1953 Ford Tanker<br>1952 Dodge Wood Truck  | 500<br>150<br>250               | 640<br>1050<br>360                | 102<br>Marion<br>Drive                            | Siren at station<br>Telephone answer-<br>ing service                                       |
| <u>Castle Hayne</u>     | 25<br>volunteers | 1958 Chevrolet Pumper<br>1964 Ford Pumper<br>1948 Ford Pumper<br>1962 Chevrolet Auxiliary   | 500<br>250<br>150<br>100        | 800<br>500<br>1000<br>200         | US 117<br>and<br>Skipper<br>Road                  | 1 siren at station<br>2 at other locations<br>Telephone emer-<br>gency reporting<br>system |
| <u>Myrtle Grove</u>     | 35<br>volunteers | 1966 International Pumper<br>1963 International Pumper<br>1948 International Pumper<br>1952 Dodge Woods Truck<br>1951 Dodge Woods Truck | 500<br>500<br>100<br>100<br>100 | 1000<br>1000<br>750<br>380<br>380 | Myrtle<br>Grove<br>Junction<br>US 421 &<br>NC 132 | 1 siren at station<br>2 at other locations<br>Telephone emer-<br>gency reporting<br>system |
| <u>Ogden</u>            | 22<br>volunteers | 1963 Ford Pumper<br>1947 International Pumper<br>1952 Dodge Woods Truck<br>1953 Dodge Woods Truck                                       | 500<br>750<br>200<br>200        | 1080<br>1000<br>380<br>380        | US 17<br>at<br>Ogden                              | Siren at station<br>Telephone emer-<br>gency reporting<br>system                           |
| <u>Seagate</u>          | 24<br>volunteers | 1946 G M C Pumper<br>1951 International Pumper  | 500<br>500                      | 1000<br>750                       | 6102<br>Oleander<br>Drive                         | Siren at station<br>Telephone at station<br>with 2 extensions                              |
| <u>Winter Park</u>      | 28<br>volunteers | 1961 Chevrolet Pumper<br>1965 Chevrolet Pumper  | 500<br>500                      | 750<br>585                        | 4601<br>Park Ave.                                 | Siren at station<br>Telephone answer-<br>ing service                                       |
| <u>Wrightsboro</u>      | 29<br>volunteers | 1966 Chevrolet Pumper<br>1952 Dodge Woods Truck<br>1956 International Pumper<br>1969 Chevrolet Pumper                                   | 500<br>60<br>500<br>750         | 500<br>150<br>2000<br>750         | 100' East<br>of US 117<br>at Wrights-<br>boro Rd  | Siren at station<br>Telephone emer-<br>gency reporting<br>system                           |

NEW HANOVER COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS (continued)

| DEPARTMENT                | ACTIVE FIREMEN   | MAJOR EQUIPMENT  | PUMP CAP. (gpm)    | BOOSTER TANK CAPACITY(gals) | STATION LOCATION  | TYPE FIRE ALARM                         |
|---------------------------|--|--|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| <u>Wrightsville Beach</u> | 19 volunteers<br>(4 police officers serve as fire truck drivers) | 1965 Ford triple combination<br>1945 Mack triple combination                   | 750<br>600         | 500<br>260                  | 400 Waynick Blvd. | Telephone emergency reporting system    |
| <u>Carolina Beach</u>     | 2 full time<br>31 volunteers                                     | 1944 American LaFrance Pumper<br>1952 International Pumper<br>1969 Ford Pumper | 750<br>600<br>1200 | 250<br>600<br>600           | City Hall         | Siren at station and one other location |
| <u>Kure Beach</u>         | 19 volunteers  | 1961 Dodge Pumper  | 750                | 500                         | Town Hall         | Siren at station                        |

NOTE: Data for rural volunteer fire departments taken from 1969 annual report to the N. C. Fire Insurance Rating Bureau.  
Data for beach communities supplied by the respective towns.

N. Special Problems Under a Single Government

In the event a single government is established consideration would have to be given to several problems as follows:

1. Communications

Communications systems would have to be integrated. It may be desirable to have all fire calls reported to a single number.

2. Training

Training facilities and the use of instructors should be consolidated. At the present time each volunteer fire department arranges its own training schedule.

3. Insurance rates

Fire departments of the incorporated towns and the rural volunteer fire departments have been recognized for fire insurance rate purposes by the North Carolina Fire Insurance Rating Bureau. These rates are based on the proficiency of the fire departments located within the present legal boundaries. The Charter Commission must coordinate any proposed changes with the Fire Rating Bureau. Failure to do so could result in higher fire insurance premiums throughout the municipalities and the county.

4. Retirement

Provision must be made for the continuation or merger of the various pension, retirement and relief funds.

O. Alternative Organizational Arrangements Under a Single Government

1. Continuation of existing arrangements

Under the first alternative, fire protection services would closely parallel existing arrangements. The Wilmington Fire Department would serve the urban service district while volunteer fire departments would serve the general service district. Persons living in the urban service district would pay higher taxes for fire services in order to maintain a high level of fire protection.

2. Partial integration of fire protection services

Under this plan a "Director of Fire Services" would be appointed to supervise activities in both urban and general service districts.

He would function as a combination fire chief - fire marshal for the entire county. Volunteer fire departments would be implemented by one or more full time (paid) firemen on duty at each volunteer department station. Communications systems would be centralized.

3. Total consolidation and upgrading

Under this plan the Wilmington Fire Department would be used as a nucleus to expand service to all areas of New Hanover County and to maintain the highest fire protection rating possible. [Note: This approach would be enormously expensive and is probably not economically feasible]

4. Contract service

This plan envisions constant upgrading of volunteer departments utilizing a contractual arrangement with the governing body agreeing to provide specified financial support in return for an established level of fire protection for a given area. This would be similar in concept to existing arrangements but would involve hiring a county fire administrator to provide closer supervision and coordination of volunteer fire departments.

5. Police-Fire integrated patrols

This plan visualizes full time fire protection in high value urban areas but utilizes a combination police-fire patrol in the less densely populated residential areas. There are many possible combinations available under this plan. One policeman and one fireman could work as a two-man team utilizing vehicles capable of serving as law enforcement cars and simultaneously capable of carrying basic fire tools. All combinations would rely on fire equipment manned by a combination full-time and volunteer engine company.

Another alternative would be to cross-train police and firemen and create public safety officers capable of performing in dual capacities. The integrated service method should be studied carefully due to readily apparent potential problems such as:

- a. The eventuality of a crime and fire in the same patrol area simultaneously.
- b. Scheduling problems due to appearance in court.
- c. Leaving the patrol area to book a suspect.
- d. Lack of enthusiasm from existing police officers and firemen.



- e. Emergency civil disturbances requiring all available police officers, fire fighting equipment and firemen.

It should be noted that some communities in the United States have adopted integrated police-fire patrols with varying degrees of success.

#### QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION

What should be the organizational arrangement for fire services in the consolidated government--

- a. Separation of city and volunteer departments ?
- b. Partial integration of services ?
- c. Total consolidation and upgrading ?
- d. Contract service ?
- e. Police-fire integrated patrols ?
- f. Other ?

WILMINGTON - NEW HANOVER  
" CHARTER COMMISSION

Fred B. Graham, Chairman  
Timothy Wood, Executive Director

ADDENDUM to  
TECHNICAL REPORT  
NUMBER 16

RURAL FIRE PROTECTION

To the Committee on  
Public Safety

July, 1971

## PREFACE

This addendum has been prepared at the request of New Hanover County Volunteer Fire Department representatives.

Statements and opinions contained in this addendum are based on an oral presentation to the Committee on Public Safety by Mr. Horace D. Murray, Chairman, New Hanover County Inspection Committee, and member, Wrightsboro Volunteer Fire Department.

The format of this addendum is the same as that used in Technical Report No. 16.

A. Units of Government Involved

New Hanover County

B. Legal Jurisdiction

G. S. 153.9 par. 39 - Public subscription fire departments

C. Operational Jurisdiction

Unincorporated areas of New Hanover County.

D. Organization for Policy Making

Each volunteer fire department operates as a non-profit corporation. A board of directors provides policy direction for each fire department. Representatives from each fire department serve on an Inspection Committee which serves as a coordinating body.

E. Administrative Organization and Level of Staffing

and

F. Each fire department has a chief and such administrative officers as deemed necessary by the Board of Directors. The organization of each department is similar to that of the Wilmington Fire Department.

There are approximately 200 volunteer firefighters in New Hanover County, 40 support personnel including dispatchers, and approximately 200 members of the Ladies Auxiliary.

G. Objectives of Volunteer Fire Departments

1. To provide class "A" fire protection services to unincorporated areas of New Hanover County and to maintain a class 9-A rating.
2. To analyze the fire problem.
3. To provide fire prevention services on a voluntary basis. [Note: New Hanover County does not currently have a fire code.]
4. To maintain fire combat forces.
5. To provide training compatible with the needs of each department.
6. Maintain equipment in peak operating efficiency as directed by the various boards of directors.

H. Budget and Finance

and

I.

The total budget for all volunteer fire departments (excluding the beach communities) is \$32,156 for the fiscal year 1971-1972. The amount of

\$41, 144 is provided by New Hanover County in return for contract fire protection services. The remainder is raised by individual departments through various types of solicitations and fund drives.

J. Relationship to Other Agencies

The sheriff provides protection in times of civil disturbances. Each department has traffic control squads who coordinate their activities with the Sheriff's Department and State Highway Patrol.

The Wilmington-New Hanover Planning Department cooperates with departments in providing maps and other information.

There is no public utilities department in the county. It was recognized that additional water sources in the county would be of great benefit to the departments.

K. Mutual Aid

A verbal mutual aid plan is in effect between all volunteer fire departments and the Wilmington Fire Department.

L. Evaluation of Needs

1. There is a need for qualified volunteer firefighters.
2. Equipment needs are determined by each department on an individual basis.

M. Comments on Volunteer Fire Department

Section of Technical Report No. 16

1. New Hanover County had a fire department with one piece of equipment in the 1950's. This department has been disbanded and volunteer departments now provide county-wide coverage.
2. New Hanover County does not have a fire marshal.
3. Schools in unincorporated areas of New Hanover County are inspected annually by volunteer fire departments during fire prevention week.
4. Administrative coordination is provided by each department's corporate committee and by the inspection committee.
5. Each volunteer fire department has a 9 - A rating.
6. The oral presentation indicated basic disagreement with a statement in Technical Report No. 16 which states: "Any department could decline to answer fire calls."

7. County appropriations to volunteer fire departments provide approximately 45 per cent of volunteer fire department budgets.
8. Corporate boards of each department determine present and future needs of the department.
9. Volunteer fire department representatives question the statement that "urbanizing areas of the county have dangerously insufficient fire protection." [Note: This statement was predicated on the fact that unincorporated areas do not have water mains or fire hydrants.]
10. Volunteer fire department representatives question the statement that "there is a need for some full-time paid firemen in the county." Representatives feel that the introduction of paid firemen into volunteer departments will destroy the volunteer concept.
11. Volunteer fire department representatives disagree with the statement that "There is an urgent need for a centralized communication and reporting center." Representatives feel that the current system is adequate and that centralization of reporting would slow down response time.
12. Representatives stated that the equipment chart on page 10 of Technical Report No. 16 reflects only the basic equipment needed to meet 9 - A certification and that departments have considerably more equipment on hand.

In summary, New Hanover County Volunteer Fire Departments have:

- 17 pumpers
- 1 pumper tanker
- 2 tankers
- 11 auxiliary units

#### N. Special Problems under a Single Government

1. Communications.  
Representatives again question the need for a centralized Communications system.
2. Training.  
Representatives feel that the level of training is adequate.
3. Insurance Rates.  
Probably would not be affected.
4. Retirement.  
Fireman's Relief Fund is paid from funds collected by the State and returned to local departments to provide relief for firemen injured

in line of duty. Membership in the State Firemen Association qualifies members for participation in retirement programs. This would not be affected by consolidation.

O. Alternative Organizational Arrangements

Volunteer firemen representatives feel strongly that a continuation of existing arrangements would be desirable under a consolidated government and that other alternatives outlined in Technical Report No. 16 would not be feasible.