

Home, Prohibition and Excise Department

Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services

Policy Note on 2008-2009

Demand No.23

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INTRODUCTION

With growing urbanization and industrialization, the significance of the department of Fire and Rescue Services, is not only restricted to rescuing life and property, but also to emergency relief and rescue of victims of natural and man made calamities. Conscious of the changing needs of a rapidly modernising society, the department is constantly engaged in the task of modernising its operational abilities.

II. OBJECTIVES

2. The Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department is a public service oriented department with the motto of "We Serve to Save". Besides the essential service functions, it has also got statutory, advisory and regulatory roles to play. It has a major role in fire prevention by creating safety-awareness among the public through propaganda and publicity, and by conducting mock drills in schools and colleges. It performs an advisory role to the various licensing authorities during inspection of premises and trades proposed to be licensed by them to ensure fire-safety under various laws and rules. In addition, its services are extended to the Police Department during elections, communal riots, fairs, and festivals etc. The ambulance services available with the Department are used to transport the sick and the injured to hospitals for immediate medical attention. This Department is undertaking standby arrangements during the visits of VIPs and during important conferences and meetings/festivals where huge pandals are erected. Standby arrangements are also provided for private functions on payment of prescribed charges.

III. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

3. The Fire and Rescue Services Department functions under the administrative control of Home, Prohibition & Excise Department of the Government. The Director of Fire and Rescue Services, who is an IPS Officer in the rank of Additional Director General of Police is incharge of the Department. There are five deputy directors to assist the Director, each incharge of a region. The regions are divided into 30 divisions, and each division is under the control of a divisional officer. A new Division "Chennai City Central Division" was formed in July, 2007 by trifurcating Chennai City South Division and Chennai City North Division. Each division under the charge of a Divisional officer, has 4 to 16 Fire and Rescue Service Stations. A state training centre, located at Tambaram and functioning under the control of a Deputy Director designated as Director(Course) organizes and conducts training for the personnel of this Department, as well as for others on a nominal payment. There is also a State Workshop in Chennai which works under the supervision of the Director (Course). The organisational chart showing the organisational structure of the Fire and Rescue Services Department is in the annexure.

IV. INTEGRATED SYSTEMS OF OPERATIONAL APPROACH

4. The basic unit of the department is a Fire and Rescue Services Station. The State has 282 Fire and Rescue Services Stations and 1 Station for Rescue services at Hogenakkal. New Fire and Rescue Services Stations are being started, based on the following criteria:-

- (i) that there is atleast one fire and rescue services station available within a radius of 25 Kilometers;
 - (ii) that each station serves a population of a minimum of 50,000;
- and
- (iii) that it is located in areas with a likelihood of fire hazards with a loss of property not less than Rs.50,000/-;

V. Man Power

5. The Fire and Rescue Services Department has an executive and ministerial strength of 6,647 persons. Divisional Officers, Automobile Engineer (State Workshop), Station Officers, Junior Assistants, Typists, and Steno-Typists are recruited by direct recruitment through Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission. Direct recruitment of Firemen is done by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board. 55 persons selected by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board and 30 persons selected on compassionate grounds were appointed as Firemen from June, 2007 to February, 2008.

VI. INFRASTRUCTURE

a) Vehicles

6. This Department has a number of modern vehicles to deal with fire fighting and rescue operations. The Department has 338 Water Tenders, 82 Ambulances, 13 Small Foam Tenders, 5 Emergency Rescue Tenders, 1 Hydraulic Platform Vehicle, 1 Turn Table Ladder Vehicle, 2 Hydraulic Platform-Cum-Turn Table Ladder Vehicles of 37 metres and 42 metres, 1 Hose Laying Tender, 53 Water Lorries, 1 Wrecker, 2 Mobile Repair Vans, 228 High Range Portable Pumps and 93 Floto Pumps. Apart from this, the department also having support vehicles such as Jeeps, Buses and Motor Cycles. This Government has sanctioned the fabrication of 2 Water Tenders to replace old ones at a cost of Rs.30 lakh and one Small Foam Tender at a cost of Rs.16.69 lakh for Egmore Fire and Rescue Services Station in the year 2007-2008 and these Vehicles are under fabrication. Further, the Government has sanctioned replacement of 5 Ambulances at a cost of Rs.32.25 lakh and purchase of one Ambulance at a cost of Rs.6.45 lakh for Hogenakkal Rescue Station during the year 2007-2008.

b) Equipment

7. For effective fire and rescue management, this Department has been provided with modern equipments like lifting bags, smoke exhausters, poisonous gas detectors, generators and other combi-tools as required. The Department has 8 mechanised fiber boats and 36 inflatable boats for use during floods and cyclones. This Department also possesses 1 helmet type thermal imaging camera, 2 hand-held thermal imaging cameras, 2 life detectors, 2 multi-gas monitors, 81 fire- entry suits, 83 chemical protective suits and 222 pairs of heat resistant gloves. This apart delivery hoses at a cost of Rs.46.60 lakh have been replaced during 2007-2008.

VII. COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

a) Telephones and Wireless sets

8. Timely service is an essential element in fire fighting and rescue operations. Every fire and rescue services station in the State has been provided with a telephone. A toll-free telephone facility with the number '101' is available in certain district headquarters and towns. All the fire and rescue services stations in Chennai city, Thiruvallur District and Kancheepuram District have high band VHF Wireless sets including Walkie-talkies and repeater stations to look after the communication needs. Further, the State headquarters have been connected with all district headquarters and other sensitive places with HF sets. In all, 42 HF sets have been installed and are functional. Government have sanctioned VHF Hi-band Wireless sets of static, mobile and walkie-talkies to modernize the communication system in Chennai city, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram Districts.

b) Response Time

9. Response time is the time taken by the first fire tender to reach the spot of the fire accident. The Department constantly strives to reduce the response time in the event of a fire or rescue situation. In Chennai City, the Department has succeeded in restricting the response time to 10 minutes or less. A separate communication wing and a control room with '101' & '102' telephone connections are available to monitor the response time. All efforts are being made to reduce the response time further in mofussil areas.

c) Departmental Web Site

10. A Web-site for Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department with the address <http://www.tn.nic.in/fireservice> is maintained by National Informatics Centre. The website plays an active role in educating the public about fire-safety and provides information about rules and licence conditions. It is user friendly and contains information needed by the public.

VIII. TRAINING FACILITIES

11. As a public utility service, the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department focuses on improving the quality of training given to its personnel at the entry level, and as well as refresher courses at all levels, so as to keep abreast of the modern developments in rescue techniques and fire fighting technology. These training courses are conducted in a well-maintained State Training Centre at Tambaram. The State Training Centre also conducts training for persons from industries, public sector undertakings and other government organizations from other States and Central Government on nominal payment of fees. The State Training Centre at Tambaram, is equipped with all modern Teaching Aids including an Emergency Rescue Tender, Trolley Type Light Tower Mast, Computers, Chemical Suits, Diving Suits, Multi Media Projector, Mobile Repair Van and Gym Equipment. An all-weather concrete Parade Ground, Smoke chamber and V-Notch tank enable good outdoor training. Spacious classrooms, an excellent library, cut models and a good mess and staying facilities, all add to the quality of training imparted. The Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi has designated the State Training Centre of Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department as one of the Regional Training Centres in our country for conducting courses offered by National Fire Service College, Nagpur. Training was imparted to 411 Persons on various courses, during the year, 2007.

12. In addition, all the Divisions have been provided with computers for improving training facilities and for improvement of the quality of administration. Training on fire fighting is given to the private individuals at Divisional Headquarters. During the year 2007, training was given to 365 private individuals. The Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services State Training Centre has also been notified as State Level Nodal Training Institute for Specialised Search and Rescue Teams under Disaster Management.

IX. CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS FOR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES STATIONS

13. There are 282 Fire and Rescue Stations and 1 Rescue Station at Hogenakkal in the State. Of these, 161 are now functioning in their own buildings, 30 in semi-permanent structures and 92 in rented buildings. Construction of buildings to 8 fire and rescue services stations at a cost of Rs.2 crores has been taken-up in the year 2007-2008.

X. SERVICES RENDERED

a) Fire Prevention

14. Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department regards prevention of fires as a primary function. For creation of safety awareness among the members of the public, the Department has Fire Prevention Wings in

12 Divisions. These Wings teach fire prevention methods to the rural and urban population so that risks by fire are reduced. Fire Prevention education is being taken up in schools, industries, offices, villages and slums through lectures and holding of demonstration sessions for the target groups so that

they are sensitised to fire safety and fire prevention methods. It is noteworthy to mention that due to intensive fire prevention activities undertaken by all the 12 Fire Prevention Wings during Deepavali festival in the year, 2007, there was neither loss of life nor serious damage caused to property. In the year 2007, Fire Prevention education at public places and educational institutions were conducted in 4,530 places throughout the State. 7 Ambulances have been modified for use as "Theatres on Wheels", in which projectors, CD Players and other equipments such as speakers, switchboards, cables etc., have been provided and they are used to educate the public on fire safety methods in various parts of the State. A mandatory fire safety inspection is being undertaken in schools by the station officers of fire and rescue services department, to ensure adequate provision for entry, exit and emergency exits. During the year 2007, 6,201 Schools were inspected by the station officers for granting NOC. The recognition of safety volunteers organization sponsored by the Fire and Rescue Services Department have been approved by the Government. This will go a long way in promoting the public participation in fire prevention.

15. Intensive training in Search and Rescue operations during disaster has been given to Commando forces raised in each district.

16. This department observes Fire Service Day for a week commencing from 14th April of every year throughout the State in all Fire and Rescue services Stations by organizing the functions wherever possible and also propaganda relates to fire prevention are being made through news papers, televisions and radio.

b) Patrolling in Slum areas during summer Season

17. The 'Slum Fires' during summer seasons are caused mostly due to carelessness and negligence. In order to tackle these fires, a system of patrolling by fire units are being done every year from March to August, so as to monitor all vulnerable places. During last summer season 10 fire units were pressed on rounds to keep a constant vigil over the sensitive slum areas round the clock.

c) Prevention of Fire in Cinema Halls/Buildings

18. Cinema Halls are highly prone to fire accidents. In order to ensure fire safety for the public in Cinema Halls, a Multi Departmental Committee under the head of this departmental officer is conducting inspection of cinema theatres in the State once in a year, and bring to the notice of licencing authorities the violations of licence conditions, if any, for appropriate action. 714 Cinema Halls were inspected during the calendar year 2007. Further, about 17,695 buildings were inspected during the calendar year 2007 under various Acts and Rules from fire service point of view.

d) Fire Calls

19. During 2007, a total of 21,224 fire calls were received in which of the 160 lives under risks 88 lives were saved apart from saving properties worth about Rs.192.41 crores. In Chennai City, the services of Metro Water

lorries are being utilised to refill the Fire Tenders at the place of fire accidents, which helps in continuous fire fighting. This has greatly helped to save lives and public property from destruction by fire.

20. Out of 21,224 fire calls in the year 2007, the serious, medium and small fire calls were 160, 419 and 20, 645 respectively. Further, the serious fire calls and medium fire calls were only 1% and 2% respectively when compared with total number of fire calls.

e) Rescue Calls

21. Rescue Calls received and attended by the fire and rescue services department mostly relate to emergencies like road accidents, train accidents, accidental fall into wells, attack by insects, inhalation of poisonous gases, building collapses and other natural and man made calamities. During the year, 2007, a total of 9,225 rescue calls were received, in which 8,575 lives were under risks, 6,821 lives were saved.

f) Ambulance Calls

22. Ambulances are available in 82 Fire and Rescue Services Stations. Persons injured during fire accidents and other emergencies are swiftly removed to hospitals for immediate medical aid. The sick and the injured are transported to hospital, when summoned, on payment of nominal charges. During the year 2007, ambulances were requisitioned on 1,526 occasions. Of these, the number of paid calls was 1,091. Revenue of Rs.2.44 lakh was realised as hire charges for the paid calls attended to by the Ambulances.

g) Standby on public grounds

23. The Fire and Rescue Services Department vehicles are utilised during the visits of VIPs and during important conferences and meetings/festivals where huge pandals are erected, Fire and Rescue Services vehicles are also utilized for bandobust and standby arrangements. Besides, standby Fire Units are provided for private functions also on payment of charges. During 2007, standby arrangements were undertaken on 2,275 occasions. Of these, the number of paid standby arrangements were 1,469. During 2007, an amount of Rs.38.26 lakh was collected towards standby charges.

XI. MOTIVATION AND INCENTIVES

24. The following are the details of awards and welfare measures that are provided to the personnel of Fire and Rescue Services Department:-

a) Awards

In recognition of outstanding devotion to duty, meritorious service, and gallantry exhibited by the Fire and Rescue Services personnel while performing duty, the following medals instituted by the State Government are awarded to the officers and men of the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department :-

(i) The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal (Anna Medal)

The recipients of this medal are eligible for a lumpsum grant ranging from Rs.2000/- to Rs.5000/-. It varies according to the rank of the recipient. For the year 2007, 10 Meritorious Medals were awarded to the Fire and Rescue Services Personnel.

(ii) The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal (Awarded on Pongal Day)

This medal carries with it a cash allowance of Rs.40/- per head per month for fireman and equivalent ranks and Rs.50/- per head per month for leading fireman/ driver- mechanic/fireman driver / fireman mechanic. For the year 2008, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal was awarded to 80 Fire and Rescue Services Personnel.

(iii) The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal for Excellence

This medal is awarded to enthuse the Fire and Rescue Services Personnel to perform their duties more efficiently and spur them to achieve greater heights. 3 Medals are awarded every year, one each to a Station Officer, Leading Fireman and Fireman during Fire Service Day (April 14th). Each Medal is of 22 carat gold weighing 8 grams. Further, the Medal carries a lumpsum grant for the different ranks- i.e. Rs.3000/- for the Station Officer, Rs.2500/- for Leading Fireman and Rs.2000/- for Fireman. These medals are not awarded according to seniority but to those who excel in the performance of their duties.

(iv) Other Medals

Apart from the Awards granted by the State Government, the Fire and Rescue Services personnel are also awarded medals instituted by the Government of India as follows:

- (a) Fire Service Medal for Meritorious Service on the occasion of Independence Day.
- (b) Fire Service Medal for Meritorious Service on the occasion of Republic Day.
- (c) Fire Service Medal for Gallantry.

b) Welfare measures

(i) Fire and Rescue Services Benevolent Fund

The Fire and Rescue Services Benevolent Fund, which is in operation from 1962 was created to render financial help to the members of the fire and rescue services department in distress. It promotes their welfare by granting financial assistance to the members for the following purposes:-

- (1) to purchase nutritious food for themselves and for their dependents who are suffering from chronic diseases such as Tuberculosis, Leprosy, Cancer etc.
- (2) to meet the cost of higher education of their children.

- (3) to provide relief to the families of deceased members.
- (4) to meet the funeral expenses of the members and their dependents.

Every year, the Government grants a sum of Rs.4 lakh to this fund. 5,640 persons were members in this fund and a sum of Rs.10.32 lakh was collected from the members by way of subscription to the fund in the year 2007-2008. Members under this scheme were granted relief totaling about Rs.9.74 lakh from the fund during the year 2007-2008.

(ii) Family Benefit Fund Scheme

An amount of rupees one lakh fifty thousand is being sanctioned to families of employees who die in harness from out of the Family Benefit Fund by Government.

(iii) Ex-gratia Payment

The Fire and Rescue Services Personnel are being given ex-gratia grant as follows:-

(i)	For those who die in harness while on duty;	Rs.5,00,000/-
(ii)	For those who suffer permanent disability, while on duty;	Rs.1,00,000/-

(iii)	For those who are seriously injured while on duty;	Rs.20,000/-
(iv)	For those who suffer minor injuries while on duty;	Rs.10,000/-

(iv) Group Insurance Scheme

A Group Insurance Scheme covering the entire Department from the Director, Fire and Rescue Services, down to fireman (except Ministerial Staff) is in vogue. This scheme offers relief to an extent of Rs.1,00,000/- to the family of the deceased personnel, who die while in duty.

(v) Food Subsidy Scheme

Food articles such as rice, wheat, rava/maida, toor-dal and black gramdal etc., are supplied to the Fire and Rescue Services Personnel up to the rank of Assistant Divisional Officer at subsidised rates under the Food Subsidy Scheme. On an average, the Government spends about Rs.56.00 lakh on this scheme every year.

(vi) Construction of Quarters

To maintain operational efficiency and for quick mobilisation during fire and other emergencies, it is essential to provide quarters for the fire and rescue services personnel near the Fire and Rescue Services Stations and all the officers and personnel of this department are eligible for rent- free quarters as a service condition. In order to augment providing of quarters for the Fire and Rescue Services personnel, this Government have sanctioned the construction of 200 quarters by Tamil Nadu Police Housing Corporation Ltd., for the personnel at Palladam, Pettai, Pennagaram, Rajapalayam, Kallakurichi, Arani, Ponneri, Ponnamaravathi, Tirupur, Udumalaipet, Erode and Chidambaram at a total cost of Rs.988.24 lakh and the construction works are in progress. On implementation of this scheme, this will augment providing of quarters for the Fire and Rescue Services personnel and will go a long way in enhancing their operational efficiency. The construction of quarters for the fire and rescue services personnel will be accelerated in the future also.

(vii) Risk Allowances

The Government have enhanced the risk allowance paid to the personnel from the rank of Fireman to Assistant Divisional Officer from Rs.40/- per month to Rs.120/- per month and for the Divisional Officer from Rs.60/- per month to Rs.140/- per month with effect from September, 2006.

XII. NEW INITIATIVES

25. Under Part II Schemes for the year 2008-2009, the following schemes have been approved for implementation at a total cost of Rs.102.07 Lakh:-

- (1) Procurement of 2 Water Lorries at a cost of Rs.29.37 lakh;
- (2) Procurement of 5 Ambulances at a cost of Rs.23.50 lakh;
- (3) Procurement of 1 Car, 3 Jeeps and 3 Motor Cycles at a cost of Rs.19.60 lakh;
- (4) Procurement of one Small Foam Tender at a cost of Rs.18.40 lakh;
- (5) Procurement of 2 Air-Compressors to refill Breathing Apparatus Sets at a cost of Rs.11.20 lakh;

CONCLUSION

26. The Fire and Rescue Services Department in Tamil Nadu, by virtue of its outstanding performance and achievements over a period of time, has earned a reputation for itself as one of the largest and most efficient organizations in the country. It consisting of technically trained and competent personnel who are devoted to saving life and property of the citizens of Tamil Nadu from fire and other natural calamities and disasters. It will be the

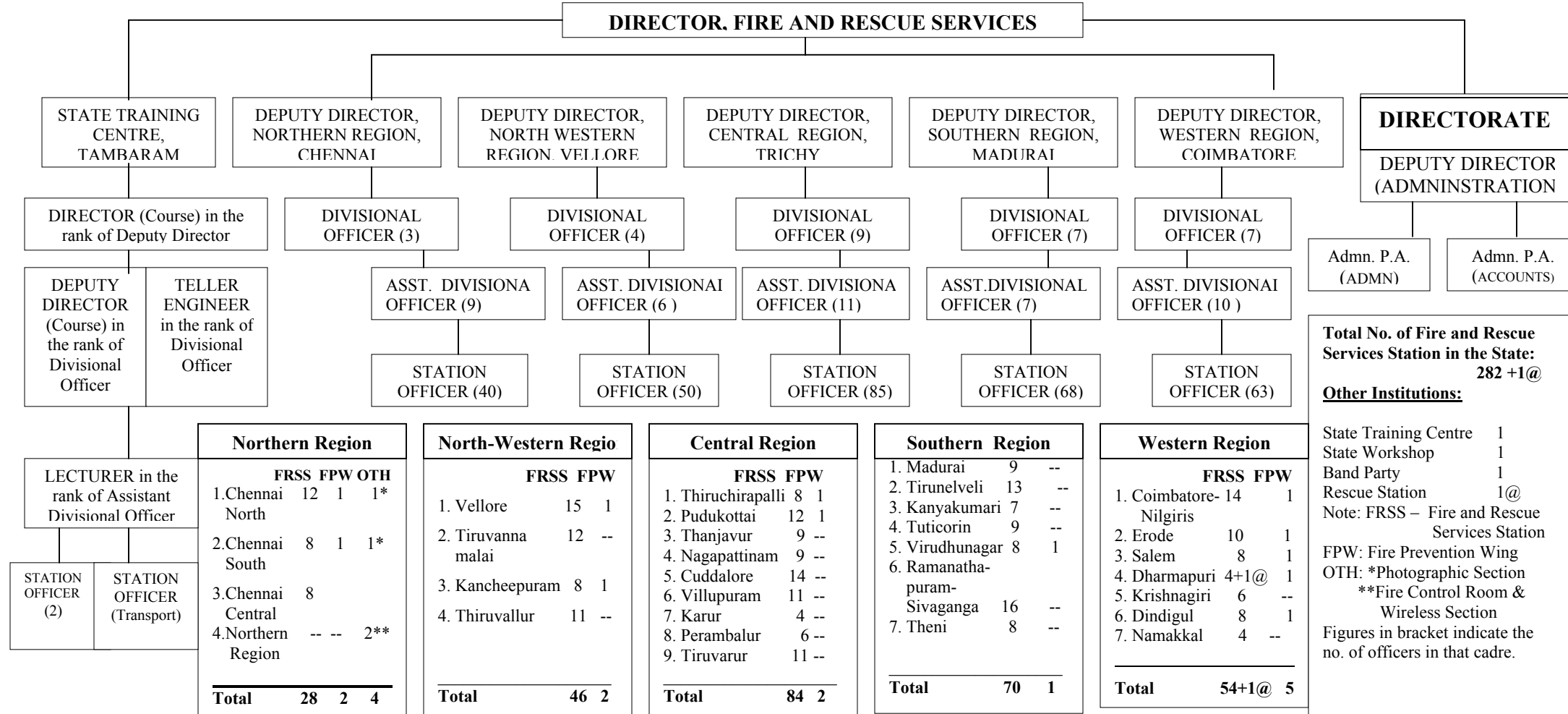
endeavour of this Government, not only to maintain the high standard already attained by this department but also to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the personnel of the department by modernising its style of functioning.

M.KARUNANIDHI
CHIEF MINISTER

ANNEXURE

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Total No. of Fire and Rescue Services Station in the State: 282 +1@

Other Institutions:

State Training Centre	1
State Workshop	1
Band Party	1
Rescue Station	1@

Note: FRSS – Fire and Rescue Services Station
 FPW: Fire Prevention Wing
 OTH: *Photographic Section
 **Fire Control Room & Wireless Section
 Figures in bracket indicate the no. of officers in that cadre.

Northern Region			
	FRSS	FPW	OTH
1.Chennai North	12	1	1*
2.Chennai South	8	1	1*
3.Chennai Central	8		
4.Northern Region	--	--	2**
Total	28	2	4

North-Western Regio		
	FRSS	FPW
1. Vellore	15	1
2. Tiruvanna malai	12	--
3. Kancheepuram	8	1
4. Thiruvallur	11	--
Total	46	2

Central Region		
	FRSS	FPW
1. Thiruchirapalli	8	1
2. Pudukottai	12	1
3. Thanjavur	9	--
4. Nagapattinam	9	--
5. Cuddalore	14	--
6. Villupuram	11	--
7. Karur	4	--
8. Perambalur	6	--
9. Tiruvarur	11	--
Total	84	2

Southern Region		
	FRSS	FPW
1. Madurai	9	--
2. Tirunelveli	13	--
3. Kanyakumari	7	--
4. Tuticorin	9	--
5. Virudhunagar	8	1
6. Ramanathapuram-Sivaganga	16	--
7. Theni	8	--
Total	70	1

Western Region		
	FRSS	FPW
1. Coimbatore-Nilgiris	14	1
2. Erode	10	1
3. Salem	8	1
4. Dharmapuri	4+1@	1
5. Krishnagiri	6	--
6. Dindigul	8	1
7. Namakkal	4	--
Total	54+1@	5