

# TAMIL NADU FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

## DEMAND NO.22

### POLICY NOTE 2004-2005

#### I. Introduction

The Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services is the prime agency of the government to prevent, handle and mitigate the negative effects of fires, accidents, floods, landslides and other disasters. In a world where hazards are constantly on the rise due to rapid urbanization, industrialization, threat of terror and the landmass of the Indian sub-continent falling within the earthquake map of the world, the challenges before the Fire and Rescue Services Department have been increasing day by day. The Department has not left any stone unturned to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in handling the most severe emergencies. The Government has also been liberal in sanctioning funds to the Department for procurement of the necessary equipment. The Government sanctioned the procurement of nearly a hundred modern fire-fighting vehicles. These are currently in the process of being procured. The Government also provided funds for the procurement of fire-entry suits, chemical protective suits and fire resistant gloves. Together with technical modernization in terms of equipment, the Department has also focused on appropriate training for its personnel at all levels. The Department is set to emerge as one of the best fire services in the world.

The Fire and Rescue Services Commission appointed by the Government with Mr. Justice K.S. Bakthavatsalam (Retired) as Chairman, Thiru S. Ramani, IPS, Director General of Police, (Training) as Member and Thiru S.K. Dogra, IPS, Director, Fire and Rescue Services as Convenor is to submit a comprehensive report shortly, touching on all aspects of fire fighting and rescue operations. This being the first Commission to have ever been set up in any State in India, the fire services of other States are also eagerly looking forward to the findings of the Commission.

This Government is committed to developing the Fire and Rescue Services into a first-rate service and providing it with the capability to take up the challenges likely to emerge in future. In accordance with this policy, the Disaster Management Authority set up by the Government has given the responsibility of formation and training of Search and Rescue Teams to this Department. A modern Society must equip itself and train its individuals to face sudden disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones and terrorist attacks. This Government believes that the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department, as the prime disaster-management agency, must be equipped for the task and is taking all steps to ensure this.

#### II. Objectives

The Fire and Rescue Services Department is a service-oriented Department. The Fire and Rescue Services Department springs into action the moment there is threat to life or property due to fire, flood, building-collapse or other mishaps. "We Serve to Save" is its motto. The Department also provides services at the time of temple festivals, other big gatherings and situations

involving law and order problems when chances of fires and other mishaps are heightened. To make the Department self-sufficient for rescue operations, the Department has been provided with adequate number of ambulances.

The Fire and Rescue Services Department is the main Agency for the implementation of the laws and rules relating to fire safety. It also acts as the primary source for all statistics, analyses and opinions relating to fires, floods and other calamities.

### **III. Modernisation of Fire and Rescue Services**

The Fire and Rescue Services Department today faces new challenges apart from accidental fires, floods, earthquakes and other natural calamities. The Fire and Rescue Services Department must work hand-in-hand with other agencies such as the Police Department, Revenue Department and the Medical Services in order to deal with other threats such as terrorist attacks, caste and communal clashes etc. The various challenges for which the Fire and Rescue Services Department needs to prepare itself are chemical leaks, fires in multi-storeyed buildings, fires in congested and over-populated urban areas with difficult access, the problems of handling fires by using water as the main agent of fire fighting under conditions of dire scarcity of water etc.,

### **IV. The challenge of Disaster Management**

The State of Tamil Nadu has been traditionally prone to devastation by cyclones, floods and landslides. During past years, the State had to face many such natural disasters. The administrative machinery of the State, including the Fire and Rescue Services Department, has always risen to the occasion to mitigate the devastation to life and property. Now, we face a new and more serious threat. Large areas of Tamil Nadu, including the cities of Chennai and Coimbatore, have been categorized as prone to earthquakes. Keeping in mind the need to be prepared for any eventuality, the Government has constituted a high-level Disaster Management Authority under the chairpersonship of the Chief Secretary, with the Secretaries and other senior officials as members. This Authority has taken up detailed planning for disaster-preparedness and disaster-mitigation.

The role of the Fire and Rescue Services in this disaster management plan has been clearly defined. This Department is designated as the prime agency for rescue in the eventuality of a disaster. The Department has raised Search and Rescue Teams consisting of officers and commandos in each district. These teams are being given special training for handling disasters.

### **V. Organisational Structure and Administrative set-up**

The Fire and Rescue Services Department (FRSD) is functioning under the administrative control of the Home Department. A Director in the cadre of Inspector General of Police heads the Fire and Rescue Services Department. He is assisted by four Deputy Directors, each heading one of the four Regions. Each Region is

divided into divisions, ranging from 4 to 9. The State has a total of 28 Divisions, each under the control of a Divisional Officer. Each Division has 4 to 16 Fire and Rescue Services Stations under its control. Each Fire and Rescue Services Station is under the charge of a Station Officer. 12 Divisions have Fire Prevention Wings. A State Training Centre is also functioning at Thambaram under the control of the Director (Course), who is in the rank of Deputy Director. The State Workshop in Chennai is also under his control.

A chart depicting the organisational structure of the Fire and Rescue Services Department is in Appendix –I.

## **VI. Operational functioning**

The fundamental unit of the Department is the Fire and Rescue Services Station (FRSS). Tamil Nadu has to its credit 280 Fire and Rescue Services Stations. Apart from these, a Rescue Station has now been established at Hogenakkal to provide safety for the tourists. New Fire and Rescue Services Stations are opened wherever necessary, following the criteria that a Fire and Rescue Services Station be available within a radius of 25 Kilometers, a population of 50,000 and the likelihood of fire hazards with a loss of property of Rs.50,000/-.

The Government has issued necessary instructions to the effect that the Fire Brigades in the Public Sector and Private Sector should come to mutual aid in the event of necessity so as to improve the service provided to the people in distress.

## **VII. Infrastructural facilities**

### **a) Man Power**

The executive, operational and administrative strength of the personnel in the Fire and Rescue Services Department is 6606. The break-up details of the manpower post-wise are given in Appendices-II and III. Direct recruitment to the posts of Divisional Officer, Automobile Engineer (State Workshop), Station Officer and Junior Assistant, Typist, Steno-Typist is done by the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission. Direct recruitment of Firemen is done by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board. Between 2002 and 2004, the Government has appointed 1041 candidates selected by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board as Firemen in the existing vacancies.

The Government, with its commitment to giving equal opportunities to women and removing the gender bias, issued orders on 12.10.2001 to amend the relevant Service Rules so as to pave the way for entry of women into the Force and for their appointment at the levels of Divisional Officer, Station Officer and Firefighters. In January, 2003, orders were issued amending the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Rules so as to recruit women for the post of Divisional Officer. Accordingly, two women were directly recruited and appointed as Divisional Officers on 1.8.2003. They have successfully completed their training and have taken charge of their posts.

Further, this Government has also issued orders to adopt a common recruitment procedure for selection to the posts of Firemen, Jail Warders and Police Constables by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board.

### **b) Vehicles and Equipment**

The role of the Fire and Rescue Services Department is crucial during fire, rescue operations and other natural calamities. For the purpose of meeting these objectives 326 Water Tenders, 80 Ambulances, 13 Small Foam Tenders, 5 Emergency Rescue Tenders, 1 Hydraulic Platform (Simon Snorkel of England), 1 Turn Table Ladder (Isuzu-Morita of Japan), 2 Hydraulic Platform-cum-Turn Table Ladders of 37 Metres and 42 Metres of Bronto Skylift from Finland, 1 Hose Laying Tender and 51 Water Lorries, 1 Wrecker, 2 Mobile Repair Vans, 228 High Range Portable pumps and 93 Floto Pumps have been provided. Furthermore, 61 other supporting vehicles have been provided such as cars with wireless equipment, jeeps, buses and motor cycles. Sufficient supporting technical staff have also been provided.

The Government is keen on thoroughly modernizing the Department. The old and worn-out vehicles are being gradually replaced. By way of replacement of these vehicles, the Government sanctioned the procurement of 84 water tenders at a cost of Rs.11.01 crores and 18 water lorries at a cost of Rs.1.88 crores in the financial year 2003-2004. One Ambulance was also purchased at a cost of Rs.5.27 lakhs for Kolli-Hills Fire and Rescue Services Station in the financial year 2003-2004.

For effective fire and rescue management, some important Fire and Rescue Services Stations are equipped with modern gadgets like Lifting Bags, Smoke Exhausters, Poisonous Gas Detectors, Generators and other Combi-tools of aid in rescue operations. Further, the Department has been provided with 3 Mechanised Fibre Boats and 8 inflatable boats. Apart from these, in October, 2002, the boats in the possession of the Police Department were ordered to be transferred to the Fire and Rescue Services Department. This Department also possesses 1 Helmet Type Thermal Imaging Camera, 2 Hand-held Thermal Imaging Cameras, 2 Life Detectors and 2 Multigas Monitors.

The Government has sanctioned the procurement of 81 fire-entry suits, 83 chemical protective suits and 222 pairs of heat resistant gloves at a cost of Rs.2 crores.

## **VIII. Communication**

### **a) Telephones and Wireless sets**

Timely service and prompt response are essential in reducing loss in fires etc., For this, prompt mobilisation of men and machine power is an imperative need. Hence the Fire and Rescue Services Stations are provided with a telephone for prompt response and timely service. Further, a toll-free telephone facility with number '101' is available in certain District headquarters towns. In Chennai City, 122 low band VHF Wireless sets including Walkie-talkies and Repeater Stations have been provided.

The State Head Quarters has been connected to all District Head Quarters and some other sensitive places with HF sets. In all, 32 HF sets have been installed and are functional. Further, the Government sanctioned in July, 2002, the procurement of 9 HF sets at a cost of Rs.16.06 lakhs.

### **b) Response Time**

Response time is the time taken by the first Fire Tender to reach the spot of a fire accident. Thanks to the efforts taken by the Department, the response time has been steadily decreasing. In Chennai City the Department has succeeded in containing the response time to a period of 10 minutes or less. A separate Communication Wing and a Control Room with '101' & '102' telephone connection and wireless sets are available in Chennai City, through which messages can be transmitted quickly so that response time is reduced. All efforts are being taken to reduce the response time further.

### **c) Departmental Web Site**

A Website for the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department is maintained by the National Informatics Centre. The website plays an active role in educating the public about fire safety and provides information about rules and licence-conditions. The web site address is <http://www.tn.nic.in/fireservice>. This website not only highlights the activities of the Department but also acts as a major instrument for educating the public about fire-safety issues.

## **IX. Training facilities**

A force of fire-fighters can be professionally competent only if they constantly strive to learn the latest techniques. For this, well-planned training is necessary. The Fire and Rescue Services Department first imparts basic training to the new entrants who join the Service. In order to improve the quality of training given to its personnel at all levels, a modern state-of-the-art training institution has been built at a cost of about Rs.4.50 crores, so as to keep abreast of the modern developments in the field of Fire-fighting Technology and Rescue-techniques. This Training Centre, located at Thambaram, 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 Gymnasium Equipment. An all-weather concrete Parade Ground, Smoke chamber and V-Notch tank enable good out-door training for the trainees. Good classrooms, an excellent library, cut models and good mess and staying facilities, all add to the quality of training imparted. This Training Centre is on par with the National Fire Service College in Nagpur. It trains not only the fire fighters from the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services, but also fire fighters from other States, Public Sector Undertakings, Government institutions and even the public at large on payment of nominal fees.

A Training Allowance of 10% of the basic pay has been sanctioned as an incentive to all personnel engaged in imparting training. In the year 2003, foundational training has been imparted to direct recruit Station Officers, Firemen and two Women Divisional Officers. Training was also imparted to non-fire service

personnel. Firemen selected for the post of Fireman Drivers, and Fireman Drivers selected for the post of Driver Mechanics were also trained at the State Training Centre.

The Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, has designated the State Training Centre of the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department as one of the Regional Training Centres in our country for conducting courses offered by the National Fire Service College, Nagpur. Regular courses for Sub-Officers offered by the National Fire Service College, Nagpur, for the trainees sponsored from various States/Central Government Organisations/ Military and Navy are being conducted at the State Training Centre, Thambaram.

## **X. Workshop**

The Fire and Rescue Services Department is maintaining a State Workshop at Chennai for attending to repairs of Departmental vehicles and equipment. The Automobile Engineer attached to the State Workshop is empowered to accord technical sanction for estimates for repairs to vehicles, between Rs.2500/- and Rs.20,000/-. This greatly cuts down delay in according technical sanction for repairs to Fire Tenders in Workshops.

## **XI. Construction of buildings for Fire and Rescue Services Stations**

There are 280 Fire and Rescue Services Stations (FRSS) in the State. Of these, 111 are now functioning in their own buildings, 42 in Semi-permanent structures in own land and 127 in rented buildings. Apart from these, one Rescue Station is functioning at Hogenakkal in a Government building.

The Government has sanctioned the construction of buildings for 34 Fire and Rescue Services Stations through P.W.D at an estimated cost of Rs.6 crores during the financial years 2001-2002 & 2002-2003 under XI Finance Commission grant. In all, buildings for 31 Stations at Nilakottai, Veppur, Parangipettai, Vettavalam, Rasipuram, Arcot, Srivilliputhur, Sathur, Vathiraiyuruppu, Ponnamaravathi, Nanguneri, Pettai, Valparai, Royapuram, Vyasarpadi, Thambaram, Ponneri, Gingee, Sengottai, Jegadapattinam, Kamudhi, Kanyakumari, Devakottai, Thiruchengodu, Thirumuttam, Thitakudi, Jawathu-Hills, Mannargudi, Gudiyatham, Thirupattur and Nagercoil were completed and handed over by the PWD. The construction of buildings for 3 Stations at Cheranmadevi, Palani and Coimbatore (North) are nearing completion. Further, for the financial year 2003-04, Government also sanctioned construction of buildings for 15 Fire and Rescue Stations at Pennagaram, Attur, Musiri, Uthamapalayam, Pochampalli, Thiruchuzhi, Kollankodu, Valliyur, Sayalkudi, Usilampatti, Peranamallur, Kodumudi, Bhavani, Manamadurai and Thiruvannamalai at a total cost of Rs. 3.56 crores.

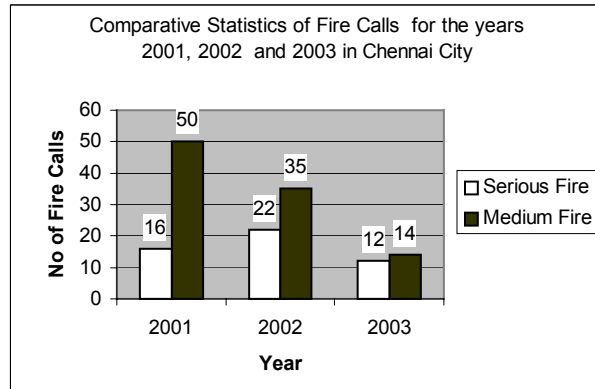
## **XII. WIDE SPHERE OF OPERATION**

### **a) Fire Prevention**

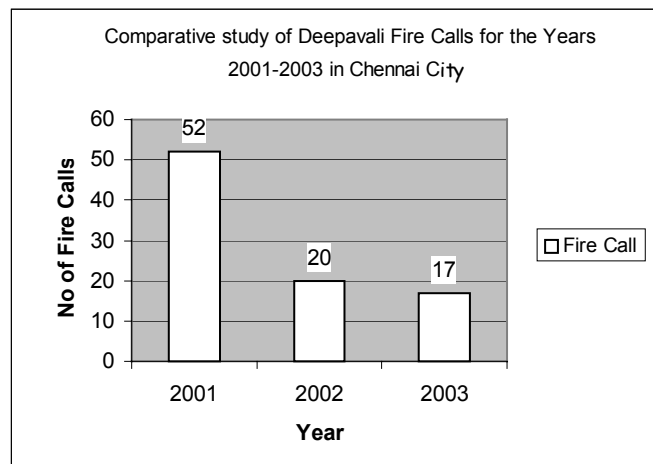
The Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department takes prevention of fires as its primary function. For creation of safety awareness among the members of the Public, the Department has Fire Prevention Wings in 12 Divisions. These Wings

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 the holding of demonstration sessions for the target groups so that they are sensitized to fire-safety and fire prevention methods. In the year 2003, fire prevention education was conducted in 2150 places throughout the State.

The steps taken in Chennai City for the prevention of fires have yielded dramatic results. The following graph shows a significant decline in the number of serious and medium fires in Chennai City during the past 3 years.



Deepavali was once the nightmare of the fire-fighters. Now, the preventive steps taken by the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department have made Deepavali practically a hazard-free festival. This is evident from the following graph:



The decline in the number of serious and medium fires is a testimony to the effectiveness of the preventive propaganda done by the Department. One of the most effective steps taken by the Department in the direction of educating the public has been the establishment of a 'Theatre on Wheels'. This mobile theatre is a van converted into a mobile theatre with the help of which educative movies prepared by the Department are shown to the public. The Theatre on Wheels has helped to carry the safety-awareness drive to every nook and corner of Chennai City.

### **b) Out Posts**

To tackle fires quickly in slums during summer, out-posts were opened. Similar outposts with high capacity synthetic or collapsible water tanks, portable fire pumps with hoses and wireless sets have been installed in slums at 12 places in Chennai City during this summer. These out-posts are being manned round the clock and are constantly keeping vigil in these sensitive areas.

### **c) Prevention of Fire in Cinema Halls/Buildings**

Cinema Halls are highly prone to fire accidents. The Government is seriously committed to ensuring fire safety in cinema theatres. Hence, the Government has constituted a Multi-Departmental Committee under the chairmanship of the Director, Fire and Rescue Services, to inspect cinema theatres in the State once in a year and to bring to the notice of the licencing authorities violations of licence conditions, if any, for appropriate action. 1038 Cinema Halls were inspected during the calendar year 2003. Further, about 16,000 buildings were inspected during the calendar year 2003 under various Acts and Rules from the Fire Service point of view.

### **d) Fire Calls**

During 2003, a total of 16,109 Fire calls were received. 89 lives were lost in fires and 177 lives were saved. The properties lost were worth Rs.24.58 crores and properties saved were worth Rs.122 crores. In Chennai City, the services of Metro Water lorries are being utilized to refill the Fire Tenders at the place of fire accidents, which helps in efficient and continuous fire fighting. This has greatly helped to save lives and public properties from destruction by fire.

This Department has started the exercise of creating specialized teams for various tasks and is also giving due emphasis to drills. The result has been significant improvement in its fire-fighting and rescue activities. The improvement in fire-fighting due to the practice of these drills has brought about promptness in handling fire-accidents, and many fires which had the potential of becoming serious or medium fires ended up as simple fires. A comparison of the past three year's statistics in Chennai City would indicate how there has been significant improvement in the figures of serious and medium fires: -

<b>Year</b>	<b>Serious</b>	<b>Medium</b>
<b>2001</b>	16	50
<b>2002</b>	22	35
<b>2003</b>	12	14

### **e) Rescue Calls**



Rescue Calls received and attended to by the Tamil Nadu 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. In the last two years (i.e.) 2002 and 2003, there were 4881 and 5219 rescue calls respectively. 3,903 human lives were saved in the rescue calls in the year 2003.

#### **f) Paid Calls and Ambulance Calls**

Ambulances are available in 80 Fire and Rescue Services Stations, including one new Ambulance sanctioned for Kolli Hills Fire and Rescue Services Station. Persons injured during fire accidents and other emergencies are taken 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 2003 the ambulances were requisitioned on 1590 occasions. Of these, the number of paid calls was 1271. Revenue of Rs.2.62 lakhs was realised as hire charges for the paid calls attended to by the Ambulances.

#### **g) Standby on public grounds**

The Fire and Rescue Services Department vehicles are utilized during the visits of VIPs and during important conferences and meetings / festivals where huge pandals are erected. Besides, stand-by Fire Units are provided for private functions also on payment of charges. During 2003 an amount of Rs.32.85 lakhs was collected as stand-by charges.

One of the noteworthy standby arrangements made by the Fire and Rescue Services Department was during the Mahamakham festival, 2004, at Kumbakonam. The work done by the Department was highly appreciated by the Public and the media. About 20 water tenders, 1 Emergency Rescue Tender and 20 Ambulances with 90 Officers and 392 men were pressed into service to afford safety to the Public during the festival. During the peak days ie. from 3.3.2004 to 7.3.2004, about 155 Commandos of this Department who are specially trained to handle any kind of task were drafted for duty exclusively to provide deployment around the Mahamakham tank and Ponthamarai Tank.

### **XIII. Motivation and Incentives**

To motivate the personnel of the Fire and Rescue Services Department to perform their duties more efficiently and to achieve the desired goals and objectives, the following awards and welfare measures are being provided:-

#### **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 lump sum grant ranging from Rs.2000/- to Rs.5000/-. It varies according to the rank of the recipient. For the year 2003, 8 Meritorious Medals were awarded to the Fire and Rescue Services Personnel.

**(ii) The Tamilnadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal** (given away 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 2004, 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 has been instituted by Government in July, 2001, in order to spot and encourage excellence and to enthuse the Fire and Rescue Services Personnel to perform their duties more efficiently and spur them on 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 14<sup>th</sup>). Each Medal is of 22 carat gold weighing 8 grams. Further, the Medal carries a lump sum 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 given according to seniority but to those who excel in the performance of their duties.

(iv) 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**

**1. Fire and Rescue Services Benevolent Fund**

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

1. to purchase nutritious food for themselves and for their dependants 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 dependants.

At present, 5549 persons are covered by the Fund. A sum of Rs. 6.70 lakhs was collected from the members by way of subscription to the Fund. Members under this scheme were granted relief totalling about Rs. 5 lakhs from the fund during the year 2003. The Government has already issued orders enhancing the Government's grant to the fund from Rs. 3 lakhs to Rs. 4 lakhs.

## **2. Family Benefit Fund Scheme**

An amount of Rs.1,00,000/- each is given by the Government from the Family Benefit Fund to its employees who die in harness.

## **3. 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/-

## **4. Group Insurance Scheme**

In order to help the families of Fire and Rescue Services personnel who die while on duty, a Group Insurance Scheme covering the entire Department from the Director, Fire and Rescue Services, down to fireman (except Ministerial Staff) has been introduced. This scheme offers relief to an extent of Rs.1,00,000/- to the family of the deceased personnel.

## **5. Food Subsidy Scheme**

Food articles such as rice, wheat, rava/maida, palmolein, toor-dal and black gram dal 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 50 lakhs on this scheme per year.

## **6. Construction of quarters**

To have operational efficiency and for quick mobilization during emergencies, it is essential to provide quarters for the Fire and Rescue Services personnel near the Fire and Rescue Services Stations. The Government had earlier decided to sanction 100 quarters for Fire and Rescue Services Personnel every year to be constructed by the Tamil Nadu Police Housing Corporation. The Government has

since issued orders to increase the number of quarters to be constructed annually from 100 to 200 from 2001-2002 onwards. This will quicken the pace of providing quarters for the Fire and Rescue Services personnel.

#### **XIV. New Initiatives**

##### **(a) Implemented Schemes**

Realising the need to improve the quality of service rendered to the people and also the welfare of the personnel of the Department, the Government has taken the following steps to improve the functioning of the Department:-

- (1) Government sanctioned the procurement of 84 Water Tenders in the financial year 2003-04 at a cost of Rs. 11.01 crores towards replacement of old vehicles.
- (2) In G.O.Ms.No.479, Home (Pol.XVII) Department Dated 02.06.2003, Government sanctioned Rs.14.20 lakhs for providing Rain Water Harvesting Structures in 142 buildings owned by this Department.
- (3) In G.O.Ms.No.485, Home (Pol.XVII) Department Dated 03.06.2003, the Government has sanctioned construction of buildings for 15 Fire and Rescue Services Stations at a cost of Rs. 356.40 lakhs during the financial year 2003-04.
- (4) In G.O.Ms.No. 1046, Home (Pol.XVII) Department Dated 03.11.2003 the Government has issued orders extending the concession of payment of last drawn pay of deceased Fire and Rescue Services personnel killed in heroic action while on duty as Family Pension to their legal heirs till the normal date of superannuation as in the case of the Police and Prison Departments.

**(b) Under Part II Schemes for the year 2004-05 – The following would be taken up: -**

1. The Government has provided a sum of Rs. 35 lakhs under Part II Schemes for 2004-05 towards procurement of computers, digital gadgets etc. for the Headquarters Office and Office of the Divisional Officer for improving training facilities and for improvement of the quality of administration.
2. The Government has provided a sum of Rs. 25.99 lakhs being the principal and interest amount towards procurement of 10 water tenders in the place of old ones by availing of GIC loan for the year 2004-2005.

**(c) Steps in the aftermath of the Kumbakonam Tragedy**

The gruesome and tragic fire accident which took place in an Aided Private School at Kumbakonam in Thanjavur District on 16.7.2004 in which the lives of 94 young children were lost has left all of us deeply shocked and anguished. It poses a challenge for all of us and highlights the hazards due to fire that linger in a society that is fast modernizing.

This Government has taken the challenge seriously and issued instructions to take the following steps on a war-footing in order to prevent any recurrence of such a tragedy.

- 1) A mandatory fire safety inspection by the Fire and Rescue Services Department shall be undertaken in all schools. It will be ensured that all schools have adequate provision for entry, exit and emergency exit.
- 2) Mandatory Fire Drills shall be carried out twice a year under the supervision of the Fire and Rescue Services Department through local Fire Stations.
- 3) The Fire and Rescue Services Department will organize a Crash Training Course for teachers on how to handle any fire exigency and also to undertake fire safety drills. The Fire and Rescue Services Department will be provided with Educational Films in Compact Discs to educate the public on fire safety measures.
- 4) A provision for obtaining No Objection Certificate by the schools from the Fire and Rescue Services authorities will be made mandatory. The Government will take a very serious view and punish those officials who are negligent in enforcing these provisions or show slackness in supervision.

**XV. Conclusion**

In today's Society of rapid industrialization and urbanization, disaster management has become a policy challenge. Under the circumstances, the Fire and Rescue Services Department, as the prime agency of the Government for prevention as well as management of mishaps, has a key role to play. With strong

support and guidance from Government, the Department has been striving to fulfill its mandate.

The Department has achieved success in reducing the number of serious and medium fires in Chennai City. The use of novel and innovative measures, such as the Theatre on Wheels by the Department, to bring about public awareness, have yielded good results. To give a further boost to these efforts, the Government has this year decided to sanction computers, digital video cameras and digital still cameras.

With the Government continuing to provide the necessary support and guidance, the Department is confident of meeting the challenges ahead, and ensuring that disasters are prevented as far as humanly possible, and when they cannot be prevented, managed with as little loss to lives and property as possible.

**J JAYALALITHAA**  
**Chief Minister**

<b>APPENDIX-II</b>		
<b>EXECUTIVE POSTS</b>		
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Post</b>	<b>Total No. of Post</b>
1.	Director	1
2.	Deputy Director	4
3.	Director (course)- in the rank of Deputy Director	1
4.	Deputy Director (Course) - in the rank of Divisional Officer	1
5.	Teller Engineer- in the rank of Divisional Officer	1
6.	Divisional Officer	29
7.	Automobile Engineer	1
8.	Assistant Divisional Officer	43
9.	Lecturer- in the rank of Assistant Divisional Officer	1
10.	Station Officer	308

11.	Station Officer (Transport)	13
12.	Assistant Station Officer	16
13.	Leading Fireman	719
14.	Driver Mechanic	249
15.	Fireman Driver / Fireman Mechanic	1032
16.	Fireman & Other equivalent ranks	3869
<b>Total</b>		<b>6288</b>

<b>APPENDIX-III</b>		
<b>MINISTERIAL POSTS</b>		
<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Name of the Post</b>	<b>Total No. of Post</b>
1.	Deputy Director( Administration)	1
2.	Administrative Personal Assistant to the Director	2
3.	Administrative Officer	1
4.	Superintendent	33
5.	Assistant	92
6.	Steno Typist	6
7.	Junior Assistant	62
8.	Typist	33
9.	Record Assistant and Record Clerk	31
10.	Office Assistants / Menials	57
<b>Total</b>		<b>318</b>