

2019 Facilitation of Strategic Review for the Alaska Fire Service

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Fire Service – Fairbanks, AK



CORE COMPETENCIES

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Consensus Building
- Inter-Departmental Cooperation
- Strategic Planning
- Transition Planning
- Workshop Facilitation

PROJECT SUMMARY

Vision Planning and Consulting (VPC) was selected by the Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Fire Service, for the facilitation of workshops related to: updating the AFS mission and vision statements; developing a Strategic Transition Plan; and developing a more efficient organizational structure to achieve current and future expectations. VPC developed and facilitated the planning process, and developed the Strategic Plan with the goal of transitioning AFS to an organization that meets current and anticipated needs. This project was comprised of three phases that ran concurrently, in order to maximize participation and efficiency.

PROJECT DETAILS

VPC completed a document review to gain a clear understanding of AFS' mission, tasks, and responsibilities. Documents included: the DOI Departmental Manual, Statehood Act 1959, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

VPC identified pertinent policy information, as well as gaps within AFS' organizational structure. VPC worked with AFS to engage with land managers from other agencies who are expected to meet the statutory authority of the law. VPC helped reestablish expectations from these managers and achieve a greater understanding of their priorities. Priorities included: human life and safety; critical infrastructure protection; city/town growth; and environmental issues.

Stakeholders for this phase included: Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. VPC conducted external agency stakeholder group phone interviews to promote open and honest dialogue with these stakeholders and to ensure that long-term expectations are consistent with AFS's delegated authorities. Key topics included: whether fire suppression expectations are being achieved, areas in which AFS can improve, and organizational priorities.

VPC facilitated a four-day workshop in Fairbanks, Alaska that focused on the development of a new mission and vision for AFS. Once these were formulated, VPC facilitated the development of an Optimal Table of Organization for AFS, to meet the expectations of various jurisdictional agencies, consistent with departmental authorities, and with the new mission and vision statements.

VPC identified the roles and responsibilities for each of the organization's groups, sub-groups, and support branches, and reorganized those roles and responsibilities from the viewpoint of rebuilding the organization from scratch. Roles and responsibilities were placed under the most appropriate group or support branch, to help AFS most efficiently and effectively move into the future.

VPC reviewed and integrated expectations from AFS and the stakeholders, to fulfill the AFS mission, delegate authority, and create the type of organization that is needed in order to achieve their Vision. VPC developed a Strategic Transition Plan that addresses the organization as it is now, and how the organization could be. The Plan includes key discussion points from various meetings and workshops, reports, expectations from managers, and addresses implementation and progress metrics.