



# YORK AREA UNITED FIRE AND RESCUE

## *Office of the Fire Chief*

Robert H. McCoy, Jr., Fire Chief

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### Intergovernmental Cooperation Testimony

The York Area United Fire and Rescue (YAUFR) was formed in 2008 through the cooperative efforts of Spring Garden Township and Springettsbury Township. The formation of YAUFR created the first Regional Combination Fire Department in Pennsylvania.

The concept of YAUFR began in 2003 and finally became operational in 2008. In the first two years, the Department operated under the YAUFR name with the firefighters covered under their original and separate township collective bargaining agreements and pension plans.

In 2010, we were able to finally negotiate the first joint contract between YAUFR and its firefighters, thereby allowing the firefighters to serve the entire regional territory versus their home municipality. As part of the first YAUFR contract, all existing employees maintained their current benefits, while new hires were placed in a Defined Contribution Pension Plan.

The Department has realized many successes over the past five years:

- The merger of two unions.
- The successful enactment of the first joint labor agreement.
- The preservation of benefits for all existing employees.
- YAUFR serves as an independent entity with separate health insurance, pensions, Workers Compensation, etc.
- YAUFR is funded through annual contributions of its participating municipalities.
- A fund balance policy has been established which institutes a maximum general fund balance that the Department may maintain. All funds exceeding that level must be returned to the municipalities.

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(717) 718-2383 Fax 718-0837

[www.yaufr.com](http://www.yaufr.com)

*Pennsylvania's First Regional Combination Fire Department*

- The annual YAUFRR budget must be approved by 75% of participating municipalities.
- YAUFRR provides management services to Manchester Township for \$48,000 per year, thereby allowing Manchester, Springettsbury and Spring Garden Townships to be served by one Chief, enhancing service and management while reducing costs.
- The Fire Commission is made up of representatives from all participating municipalities.

The Department also encountered many difficulties throughout its development:

- The operating of one Department under two separate labor agreements.
- The management of three separate pension plans (2 Defined Contribution and 1 Defined Benefit).
- The operation as an unincorporated association under a charter agreement. There is no regional entity code for Intergovernmental Cooperation entities providing merged serves such as YAUFRR.
- There is no legal pathway for municipal governments to transfer employees to a regional entity.
- Collective Bargaining with multiple unions may prevent municipalities from seeking intergovernmental cooperation.

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Fire Chief

Robert McCoy was hired on February 11, 2008, as the first Fire Chief for the York Area United Fire and Rescue (YAUFR), serving Spring Garden and Springettsbury Township.

He has worked extensively on creating the First Regional Combination Fire Department in Pennsylvania with YAUFR. Additionally, in 2010, Robert became Fire Chief for Manchester Township through a joint services agreement while Manchester Township explores merging with YAUFR.

Robert retired as Deputy Fire Chief of the Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department (Maryland) after 25 years of combined volunteer and career service.

His experience in his previous position included management of the Emergency Operations Command which consisted of 44 Fire Stations, 2000 career and volunteer members, and was the 10<sup>th</sup> busiest department in the Nation.

He also served as Co-Chairman of the National Capitol Region's Council of Governments Senior Operations Committee. The purpose of this committee was to improve regional relationships and response procedures within the Maryland, DC and Northern Virginia Departments.

Robert is a certified Chief Fire Officer (CFO) through the Commission of Professional Credentialing. He also holds a Bachelor's Degree in Occupational Safety and Health/Fire Science and is pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

He has been married for 29 years, has 3 grown daughters and currently resides in York Township, Pennsylvania.