

PREFACE

Decentralization Support Program (DSP) is an initiative of the Government of Pakistan being implemented with financial support from Asian Development Bank, to carry forward reforms in the area of local governance. DSP's objective is improved local government representation, accountability and efficiency, resulting in improved service delivery.

DSP, Provincial Program Support Office, Punjab has so far formulated 32 Technical Investment Proposals (TIPs) pertaining to different thematic areas of the program. One of these TIPs envisages stakeholder interaction to carry out situation analysis on important topics related to service delivery by local governments and formulation of recommendations on resolving these issues. The seminars also provide DSP with an opportunity to develop more projects through interaction with LG stakeholders. In this connection, DSP, PPSO Punjab has already organized policy dialogues on topics such as Strengthening of CCBs and Promoting DSP-CSO partnership.

The demand for organizing a workshop / seminar on 'Action Plan for Strengthening of Fire Fighting Services in Punjab' was received from Local Government & Rural Development Department, Government of the Punjab. The idea was to invite relevant LG functionaries to discuss the problems being faced by the fire fighting departments of Punjab and elicit recommendations for improving upon the current state of affairs. The participants of the workshop included representatives of Provincial Government and Local Governments, who brought many important issues to the fore. The workshop enabled formulation of some useful recommendations for strengthening of fire fighting services in Punjab. This report provides the proceedings of the workshop held on 21st May, 2005 at Avari, Lahore in an attempt to capture main findings and identify key issues and recommendations on the subject. I sincerely hope that these recommendations will be considered by the Provincial Government while formulating a plan for provision of better services of fire fighting in Punjab.

(Naveed Saleh Siddique)
Provincial Program Director

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***Consultative Workshop on
“Action Plan for Improvement of Fire Fighting Service in Punjab”***

1. Background:

1.1. Fire fighting involves basic procedures such as arriving at the scene of the fire as rapidly as possible; assessing the nature of the fire by determining its intensity and extent, the type and abundance of fuel, the danger of entering the fire area, and the most effective techniques for extinguishing the fire; locating and rescuing endangered persons; containing the fire protecting adjacent areas; ventilating the fire area to allow for the escape of heat and toxic gases; and, finally, extinguishing the fire.

1.2 Prior to August 2001 period, fire fighting services were managed by erstwhile municipal corporations. After the introduction of the new Local Government System this function, like many others, was passed on to the newly establishment local governments. Under Section 54 of Punjab Local Government Ordinance 2001, provision of fire fighting services has been devolved to Town / Tehsil Municipal Administration with the exception of Lahore where this is a function of City District Government (CDG).

1.3 Last few decades have seen tremendous urbanization in Punjab. Take the example of Lahore. This mega city, inhabited by around 7.0 million people, has not only swollen in terms of geographical spread but also witnessed the erection of thousands of high rise buildings including shopping malls, offices, trade centres etc. There are around 14,000 multi-storey buildings in Lahore, most of which have been constructed without proper fire prevention / precaution arrangements¹. The other parts of the province are also witnessing a similar trend of urbanization. On the other hand modernization of fire fighting departments has not taken place. The resources available to fire fighting departments have neither matched fast pace of urbanization nor the inflationary trends. Therefore, the fire fighting departments are not equipped with necessary infrastructure to deal with emergency situations. During the last six months Lahore witnessed fire disasters at some of city's most important commercial and residential places.

¹ Daily Dawn, 25th February, 2005

Despite best efforts by the Fire Fighting Department of City District Government Lahore, loss of life and property could not be awarded. At each incident media and public questioned the capability of the Fire Department to deal with fire emergency situations. The Fire Department of City District Government, Lahore was considered the most well equipped in Punjab. The lack of capacity of this fire fighting machinery raised serious concerns regarding the capability of other fire fighting units in Punjab especially those operating in big cities like Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Multan, Gujranwala, Sialkot and Sargodha etc.

1.5 Responding to this situation, Chief Minister Punjab directed Local Government and Rural Department, Government of the Punjab to take stock of the situation and prepare an action plan to improve fire fighting services in Punjab. The LG&RD Department, in consultation with Decentralization Support Program, Provincial Program Support Office, Punjab decided to first hold a consultative workshop involving important stakeholders to assess the on ground situation and seek recommendations from the people closely involved in the provision of these services. It was decided to hold the

consultative workshop at Lahore on 21st May, 2005. The list of its participants is at **Appendix-A**.

2. The Objective of the Workshop

The workshop was designed to assess the problems being faced by the fire fighting departments in Punjab especially in following areas and seek their proposed solutions / recommendations from the stakeholders:

- Prevention of Fire
- Human Resource Requirement / Development
- Need for Equipment, Infrastructure & Funds
- Coordination with Partner Agencies
- Role of Public in Fire Emergency
- Other Issues

3. The Design

The workshop was designed to educate the participants and to involve them into a consultative process so as to enable them to express the hindrances in the way of efficient fire fighting services and to recommend solution to the problems spelt out during consultative process.

3.2 The workshop was divided into three sessions. In the first session Minister & Secretary LG&RD Department, Government of Punjab were to express their views on the issue

and to emphasize the commitment of the provincial government to deal with the situation.

3.3. Two presentations were kept in the 2nd session to educate the participants on the roles of different departments in dealing with emergencies and to apprise them of the modern developments in the field. The Civil Defence Department, Government of Pakistan and Punjab Rescue and Ambulance Service were requested to prepare presentations for this purpose. A question / answer session was also planned to bring more clarity on the issues. The participants were also supposed to identify problems in this activity. The final session comprised group work by the participants to indicate more issues and make recommendations. In the end the group leaders were to present their recommendations based upon the group work. The workshop design / agenda is at **Appendix-B**. During the workshop Mr. Mohi-ud-Din Mughal, Assistant Director (Training), Civil Defence Department made a presentation titled “Improvement of Operational Capabilities of Fire Services” (**Appendix-C**). In his presentation he highlighted the roles and responsibilities of different tiers of Government, the

issues impeding effective functioning of fire fighting services and ways to improve the present services. Dr. Rizwan Naseer, Project Director, Punjab Emergency and Ambulance Service also made a presentation on “Preparedness/Response to Deal with Emergency” (**Appendix-D**).

4. Address by Mr. Muhammad Basharat Raja, Minister LG&RD

Mr. Muhammad Basharat Raja, Minister Local Government and Rural Development, Punjab, while speaking



on the occasion, highlighted some important issues impeding enforcement of fire prevention mechanisms in Punjab. He stressed the TMAs to check violation of fire schedules and stop construction of high rise buildings and plazas without fire safety arrangements. He called upon TMA functionaries such as Tehsil Officer (P&C) and Tehsil Officer (I&S) to perform their duties in this regard. He also urged Tehsil

Nazimeen to maintain a close check on TMA staff. He cited certain examples where licenses had been issued to establish gas filling stations and store fireworks in congested populations. The minister also highlighted the importance of improving outdated building by-laws and other rules to ensure construction of buildings in accordance with the safety requirements and modern standards. Mr. Raja also emphasized the need to build the capacity of TMA staff to enable them to understand their functions and responsibilities more clearly. He also underlined the importance of improving infrastructure for fire safety in accordance with international standards. He also assured the participants about commitment of Government of the Punjab to improve the provision of better fire fighting services to all citizens of Punjab.

4.2. In the end Mr. Raja congratulated Decentralization Support Program, PPSO Punjab on holding workshop for discussing improvements in fire fighting services in Punjab.

5. Address by Mr. Naguib Ullah Malik, Secretary LG&RD.

Mr. Naguib Ullah Malik, Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Department, Government of the Punjab said that the fire fighting

services were managed by



municipalities in the previous system, but they simply ignored provision of fire fighting services. As a result the TMAs have inherited very weak fire fighting units. He said that after the recent incidents of fire break out in Lahore, Chief Minister Punjab directed LG&RD Department to take stock of the situation and prepare a plan for improvement of fire fighting services in Punjab. This workshop has therefore been arranged as a first step towards preparation of the action plan. He highlighted the need to adopt the arrangements for fire prevention. He said that high rise buildings in Lahore, constructed during the past few years, do not have necessary arrangements for fire prevention such as availability of fire exits, hydrants and fire extinguishers.

5.2. Mr. Malik also underlined the importance of maintaining efficient fire fighting services. He also discussed some of the important issues being

faced by the fire fighting departments, such as outdated vehicles and old aged staff. He said that Chief Minister Punjab has already approved a sizeable grant for improvement of fire fighting department of City District Government, Lahore. He said that these funds will be utilized effectively.

6. Welcome by Mr. Naveed Saleh Siddique, Provincial Program Director, DSP, Punjab

Mr. Naveed Saleh Siddique, Provincial Program Decentralization Support Program welcomed all



participants of the workshop and thanked them for participation in the workshop.

6.2 Mr. Siddique said that under Section 54 of Punjab Local Government Ordinance 2001, fire fighting has been devolved to TMAs. Now it is up to TMA functionaries to ensure effective provision of fire fighting services in their

jurisdiction. As this is a new function for TMAs; therefore they need some hand holding. He said that the workshop was only the first step towards the efforts to strengthen fire fighting services in the province. Mr. Siddique also apprised the participants of the important initiatives being undertaken by DSP. He requested the participants to actively participate in the workshop and forward their suggestions. He assured that these recommendations will be sent by Decentralization Support Program to the Provincial Government.

7. Issues & Recommendations

Important issues and recommendations highlighted during the workshop have been narrated in the following headings:

7.1. Prevention of Fire

There are two important aspects of fire fighting – prevention and disaster



management. The former is more

important and vital as it aims at



minimizing the risk of fire break out and its spread. In the present times many tools have been developed for fire prevention. These tools include provision of separate fire exits, use of less flammable building material, fire alarms, sprinklers, installation of hydrants, water tanks and fire extinguishers etc. The prevention of fire at different buildings and business places (shops, petrol pumps, industries) requires different measures in accordance with the nature of flammable material involved. In accordance with these requirements fire schedules have been developed under the auspices of Civil Defence Department to prevent the incidents of fire break out. It is important that compliance of these schedules is ensured by the concerned agencies.

7.1.2. The participants of the workshop pointed out that fire schedules are

available with the Civil Defence Department at the district level (working under the District Coordination Officer); but there are serious issues with their enforcement especially in the high rise buildings. High rise buildings are being constructed in total disregard of the prevention requirements, even in important cities like Lahore. In the past no attention was paid to this important aspect but after recent incidents of fire break out, the issue has come to fore. Moreover, the general public has little awareness regarding these schedules and their importance. The Civil Defence Department in districts, which is entrusted with responsibility to create awareness for fire prevention and hold trainings, does not have the requisite staff to effectively discharge this function. The problem of staff shortage is exacerbated by the multifarious responsibilities assigned to them. Despite these problems, if the Civil Defence staff identifies violators, it is very difficult to penalize the violators due to cumbersome procedures for prosecution. Additionally the rates of fine are also too little to deter the violators.

7.1.3. The participants were also of the view that the officials like Tehsil Officer (P&C) and Tehsil Officer (I&S) are not



discharging their duties. One of the important functions of TO (P&C) is to clear building designs. He needs to ensure availability of fire prevention arrangements in the building designs. Moreover, the agencies responsible for issuance of completion certificate need to ensure that buildings have been constructed according to building plan. In the past there have been incidents when approvals were given to establish CNG / LPG stations in residential buildings. It was also highlighted that the building by-laws also need to be updated to bring them in conformity with the modern day requirements.

Prevention of Fire

1. *Installation of hydrants at appropriate locations*
2. *Water reservoirs in high-rise buildings*
3. *Availability of fire extinguishers in high-rise buildings & awareness to*

public for their use

4. *Fire drills in important buildings*
5. *Building by-laws need to be up dated*
6. *Capacity building of TMA staff regarding their functions & duties*
7. *Accountability of TMA staff in case of violations of building by-laws*
8. *Higher penalties (heavy fines and closure / sealing of buildings) for violators of fire schedules & building by-laws*
9. *General awareness regarding fire prevention arrangements (need for communication campaign)*
10. *Inclusion of topics related to fire prevention in syllabus of primary & secondary classes*
11. *Civil Defence Department of districts needs to be given infrastructure and resources*
12. *Calendar of training to be prepared by Civil Defence Department*



7.1.4. On the recommendation side the participants highlighted the importance of creating general awareness for importance of fire prevention arrangements. The awareness campaign should be aimed at realizing

general public of their responsibility. Some participants suggested including topics related to fire prevention in the syllabus of primary and secondary classes. The importance of creating awareness in relevant TMA staff of their functions was also emphasized. The processes need to be developed to monitor the performance of the TMA staff and make them accountable in case of violation of rules and regulations. It was also emphasized that building by-laws have become outdated and need immediate revision. District Civil Defence Department needs to be given necessary infrastructure and human resources to be able to perform their function more effectively. The staff of Civil Defence Department also needs to prepare a calendar of their activities for creating awareness among different sections of society under a systematic plan. The most important prevention mechanisms for our society include installation of hydrants on the roadside and availability of water reservoirs (particularly overhead reservoirs) to help contain fire in case of break out. Similarly, availability of fire extinguishers etc. needs to be ensured in all buildings, shops etc. In important buildings fire drills need to be arranged periodically. Moreover, the use of extinguishers needs to be taught to general public.

The training will help in containing fire and prevent it from developing into a huge catastrophe. Another important recommendation pertained to imposing higher penalties for violators of fire prevention schedules. The penalties should involve heavy fines and closure or sealing of building till installation of fire prevention mechanisms.

7.2. Human Resource Requirement /Development

Presence of necessary number and quality of human resource is



crucially important for effective functioning of any organization. Therefore issues related to human resource were discussed in detail during the workshop. The participants pointed out that minimum qualification prescribed for a fire fighter is very low. Salaries are also unattractive. The career stagnation also erodes the level of motivation of staff. Therefore, fire fighting departments are not attractive

enough for qualified and motivated individuals. There is no system of pre-service training for fire fighters. Internationally, the fire fighters are imparted pre-service and in-service training to refresh their knowledge. Training educates fire fighters about different types of fires, use of equipment, assessment of nature and extent of fire, disaster management, important aspects of physical fitness, public dealing, basic p of first aid etc. and thus builds their capacity to effectively handle emergency situation without endangering their own lives. There is only one institute (National Institute of Fire Technology, Civil Defence Department, Islamabad) for training of fire fighters. The training modules and other booklets developed by the Civil Defence Department have become outdated. These documents, developed way back in 1960s & 1970s, need revision to modernize them in accordance with modern day requirements. Use of modern equipment needs to be essentially incorporated into these documents. The participants were unanimous that the job of fire fighters involves high risk. Therefore, they should be provided insurance cover to ensure compensation in case of death or injury.

Human Resource Requirement / Development

- 1. System of pre-service & in-service training for fire fighters*
- 2. Need for establishment of a fire training institute in Punjab*
- 3. Up dating of training manuals of National Institute of Fire Technology, Islamabad*
- 4. Better service structure for fire fighters*
- 5. Insurance cover for all fire fighters*
- 6. Minimum qualification for recruitment to different positions in fire fighting departments may be raised*
- 7. Retirement age for fire fighters may be brought down to 45 years*
- 8. System for trimming of staff older than 45*
- 9. No promotion without successful completion of trainings*
- 10. Filling of vacant posts in fire fighting departments*

7.2.2. Another important issue highlighted by the heads of fire fighting departments was that handling of



emergency situations requires high physical fitness. Therefore, only trained young professionals can be certified as good fire fighters, but a large number of fire fighters working in fire fighting

departments have passed the age of 45 years and have become unsuitable for the job. There should be a system of trimming the old staff and infusing more youthful people in the department. The young staff should also be required to participate in physical training to maintain their level of fitness.

7.2.3. The representatives of TMAs pointed out that the Government has imposed ban on recruitment of staff and due to this ban many sanctioned posts are lying vacant in our fire fighting departments. In this regard request has been submitted to LG&RD Department, Government of the Punjab which has not been replied as yet. At this juncture Additional Secretary (Dev.), LG&RD Department clarified that the ban on recruitment does not apply to jobs related to provision of essential services. Since fire fighting is one of the essential service; there is no ban on recruitment against the vacant posts in fire fighting departments. He also added that a written permission by LG&RD Department will also be sent to all concerned offices.

7.2.4. There was a consensus among the participants that the job structure of fire fighting departments needs to be revised in view of the following recommendation:

- The educational qualification for recruitment as Fire Officers, Deputy Fire Officers, Assistant Fire Officers and lower staff may be raised.
- The job involves high risk; therefore some incentives may be attached to this job in the form of special allowances.
- In service training should be a must.
- The retirement age for all employees of fire fighting departments should be 45 years.
- A provision for insurance cover may also be added to the service rules of fire fighters.
- Senior posts may be added in the organization structure to avoid stagnation in the career of fire fighters.
- Promotion of fire fighters may be linked to successful completion of training courses.

7.2.5. Training of fire fighters is an important function of Civil Defence Department. An action plan for training of all fire fighters needs to be developed by Civil Defence Department, Government of the Punjab and TMAs.

7.3. Need for Equipment, Infrastructure & Funds

In these modern times specialized equipment has been

developed keeping in view the requirements of fire fighters. Fire-fighting vehicles have evolved into highly specialized equipment. Ladder trucks provide access to high rise buildings; snorkel trucks enable firefighters to douse fires from above. In addition, modern fire apparatus includes rescue trucks, mobile laboratories, searchlight cars, double-ended tunnel



engines, smoke ejectors, high-pressure spray trucks, foam trucks, and even coffee wagons. For fires of long duration there are tank trucks to bring extra fire extinguishing material to the pumpers. Moreover personal kit (including fire suits, safety shoes, helmets and wireless communication system etc.) allows fire fighters much more safety and room to deal with the emergency.

7.3.2. It was a common feeling among the workshop participants that the equipment available to fire fighting departments is outdated and insufficient to meet their requirements. One

participant provided a figure that there are only 126 fire fighting vehicles in the whole Punjab out of which 15 are in Lahore. Most of these vehicles, purchased in 1980s, are too old to provide adequate service. The fire fighting departments do not even have funds for repair and maintenance of these vehicles. The need of modern equipment is not limited to fire fighting vehicles alone. Other important tools of a fire fighters kit such as gas masks, fire fighting suits, smoke ejectors, snorkel trucks etc. are not available in sufficient quantity either. The participants quoted the example of fire at Shaheed-e-Millat Secretariat which could not be doused due to non-availability of ladder trucks. Mr. Javed Latif, Additional Secretary (Development), LG&RD Department added that as fire fighting was one of the functions of TMA under PLGO, therefore they must keep provision for this in their budgets. Another important issue highlighted during the workshop



was related to purchase procedure for

fire fighting equipment. It was observed by the participants that purchase procedures are cumbersome due to which it is really difficult to purchase fire fighting equipment. It was also pointed out by the participants that there are only a few firms that provide fire fighting equipment in the country.

7.3.3. The need for providing a universal telephone number was also



discussed during the workshop. At present there is no such number which could be contacted for provision of all emergencies services.

7.3.4. Budget constraints and lack of interest by the leadership in making allocations for fire fighting was also termed as a major reason for poor state of equipment.

Need for Equipment, Infrastructure and Funds

1. *Mandatory, non-lapsable allocation of 5% of development funds of TMA*

- for modernization of fire fighting equipment*
2. *Provision of equipment to TMAs in accordance with standardized requirements*
3. *Provision of fire fighting vehicles by Provincial Government as a one time initiative*
4. *Provision of Rapid Response Vehicles to major cities*
5. *Installation of fire stations & hydrants near markets under CCBs*
6. *WASA tube wells may be used as hydrants*
7. *Universal telephone number in country for emergency services*
8. *Modernization of control rooms of fire fighting services*
9. *Simplification of purchase procedures for fire fighting equipment*
10. *Rate contracts with suppliers to ensure speedy purchase of equipment*
11. *Import duty on fire fighting equipment may be abolished*
12. *Setting up of more fire stations*
13. *Establishment of model fire fighting station & its replication*

7.3.5. Lack of infrastructure for fire fighting is a major reason for poor delivery of services. The non-availability of hydrants has already been discussed. The number of fire stations is insufficient. In a metropolitan city like Lahore, with a population of about 7.0 million, there are only 13 fire stations as against a requirement of about 35 fire stations. Due to this their response time is very high. Additionally due to non-availability of hydrants, slow vehicles and traffic problems it is very difficult for fire fighters to deal with large fires.

Without proper equipment not only our life will be at risk but the fire fighters and others will feel helpless.

7.3.6. Another problem related to fire fighting equipment is presence of a few suppliers of fire fighting equipment. It has been learnt from various sources that only a few agencies supply fire fighting equipment in the country. Such monopolization causes issues in the purchase of fire fighting / prevention related equipments. The Government either needs to go for international purchase of fire fighting equipment or encourage more suppliers in the field.

7.3.7. Some very useful suggestions were received during the workshop to deal with issues related to equipment. It was intimated by a participant that the equipment requirements of a fire station have been standardized. All stations may be provided equipment in accordance with these standards. However, the standardization needs to be done in view of level of urbanization as the standard can not be the same for Lahore and Jaranwala. There should at least be three categories of standardization and even then these standards may serve as minimum requirements. The final decision may be taken by a Committee to rationalize equipment needs in accordance with the

local requirements. This would mean, for example, that even if the standardization does not specifically provide for purchase of ladder trucks for Lahore, a responsible committee of City District Government may decide to purchase ladder trucks if it feels this as a necessary requirement in view of large number of high rise building in the country. Similarly the TMAs and CDG, Lahore also needs to provide complete safety kits to all fire fighters.

7.3.8. In the past the equipment requirement has been badly ignored. As a one time initiative the Provincial Government, may like to prepare an estimate of number and types of vehicles required by all fire fighting departments in Punjab and may provide them to all TMAs etc.

7.3.9. The life of fire vehicles, like other vehicles, also needs to be fixed by the Government, after which the vehicle should be condemned and the



replacement should be allowed. This will allow TMAs to replace old vehicles.

7.3.10. The representatives of Civil Defence Department intimated that a foreign firm has produced very light and cheap equipment for fire fighting. The firm will be making demonstrations in Lahore in July 2005. He requested the representatives of TMAs to attend the demonstration as it would be very useful.

7.3.11. In order to simplify the purchase procedure it was suggested that Government may finalize rate contracts with suppliers of fire fighting equipment. This will allow fire fighting departments to purchase equipment without delay. The participants also requested the federal government that the import duty on equipment for fire fighting should be waived.

7.3.12. Regarding the scarcity of fire stations, the undivided response was to increase the number of fire stations in accordance with internationally accepted standard of one fire station for a population of 200,000. Moreover, purchase of Rapid Response Vehicles (RRPs) may be allowed at least in the big cities. This will reduce the response time of fire fighting departments. The installation of hydrants at appropriate

locations i.e. near markets and high rise buildings can also be helpful in reduction of response time. It was also suggested by a participant that the WASA tube wells which are operational in all parts of Punjab can also be used as hydrants. This will also help fire fighters in reducing their response time. Fire stations and hydrants can also be established using Citizens' Community Boards especially near large markets. The representative of CDG Lahore also intimated that a model fire fighting station is being established at Lahore, and after its successful completion others may be able to replicate the same.

7.3.13. The problem of non-availability of funds can be dealt with by making mandatory on TMAs to allocate at least 5% of their development budget for modernization of fire fighting equipment. This should be non-lapsable allocation and in case of non-utilization it should be carried forward to next year as is the practice for budget allocation for CCBs. Other avenues for public private partnership also need to be explored.

7.4. Coordination with Partner Agencies

A number of agencies such as fire fighting departments, ambulance services, bomb disposal staff and police

may be required to work in tandem at an emergency site. There is a need to make best preparations to deal with emergencies. Internationally one universal telephone is required to be dialed for provision of all required services. The participants of workshop recommended that a coordination office needs to be established at district level which would not only intimate all concerned agencies regarding the emergency occurrence of but would also coordinate their activities. This office may also ask hospital authorities to make prior arrangements for patients being rushed to hospital for treatment. This will help in providing early treatment to all emergency patients. It is also essential there should be a universal telephone number for this office in whole country.

7.5. Role of Public

General public also has an important role in ensuring fire safety arrangements. The public needs to ensure compliance of fire schedules. The shopkeepers need to have fire extinguishers in their shops. Similarly the people living in multi-storey apartments should insist on getting fire safety arrangements in their buildings. If any one is dealing in fire hazard materials without permission of the

concerned authorities, the public needs to point it out.

7.5.2. Similarly the public needs to be aware of their role in case of emergency situations. There have been incidents of fire breakout when general public impeded the working of fire fighters, as happened in case of fire at Ichhra.

7.5.3. The participants recommended that to enhance public awareness a campaign needs to be initiated on electronic media. Similarly the inclusion of topics / chapters related to fire fighting may be included in the syllabus of all classes.

7.6. Other Issues

There is no system of fire investigation in our country, and due to non-existence of such a system we do not exactly know the reason for fire break out. Similarly, some people may use the excuse of fire to claim huge amounts of insurance money. Therefore, the participants agreed that a fire investigation wing may also be set up to investigate fire incidents. The participants of workshop also recommended that volunteers may be registered in each city for fire fighting. They may also be given some incentive to ensure their interest in the job.

Similarly, the efforts of fire fighters need to be recognized. Each year there should be ceremonies for appreciating the work of those fire fighters who performed exceptionally well during the year.

7.6.2 The participants also emphasized on developing Standard Operating Procedure for emergency handling for guidance of the concerned agencies.

8. Conclusion

The fire fighting service has been badly neglected in the past. No



serious attempt has been made to invest into this service to keep it abreast with the pace of urbanization. The present state of affairs can not be continued further and this important municipal responsibility of fire fighting cannot be shrugged any longer by the local government. At the same time the improvements need to be brought within the limited resources, and there is also

the need to understand that provision of modern equipment, provision of better incentives for employees and capacity building of staff should be the main ingredients of action plan. The performance of Motorway Police and Punjab Rescue and Ambulance Service owe a lot to provision of modern equipment, better incentives and training. Therefore, it can be said that without investing in any institution good results can not be expected.

8.2. There is no doubt that fire fighting departments need to be equipped with modern tools keeping in view the local requirements. The big cities with a large number of high rise buildings need to have ladder trucks to prevent any major tragedy. Similarly, Rapid Response Vehicles are the important need of the hour. Provision of safety equipment to all fire fighters is very important. A study needs to be conducted to determine hardware requirements of all TMAs and CDG Lahore. The Government may in the first phase arrange for the provision of equipment to TMAs at ex-divisional headquarters. The requirements of other TMAs can be met at later stages in a phased manner.

8.3. In order to build the capacity of fire fighting departments to deal

effectively with fire disasters, proper system of training needs to be developed. The training manuals and other documents need to be revised in accordance with modern developments and international best practices. It needs to be made certain that every fire fighter gets proper training on his entry into service and attends refresher courses during his career. If called upon the resources available to Decentralization Support Program could be utilized for improvement of training material and organizing trainings for fire fighters. The above two steps need to be taken in conjunction with some monetary incentives for fire fighters.

8.5. At the TMA level there is the need to ensure observance of fire safety regulations in the existing buildings. Similarly, no new building should be constructed without proper fire safety arrangement. The licenses for businesses involving fire works, gas filling stations and other flammable material should only be issued after fulfilling legal requirements. The officials not delivering on these accounts should be immediately brought to task.