



**HOME, PROHIBITION AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT
TAMIL NADU FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**

**POLICY NOTE
ON
DEMAND No. 23**

2011-2012

**Selvi J JAYALALITHAA
CHIEF MINISTER**

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**GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
2011**

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I. Introduction

Fire, an element of Nature, is awesome in its power. The use of fire is immense and its need is indispensable. At the same time, fire is dangerous, destructive and disastrous. Occurrences of fire accidents and fire hazards pose a continuous threat and danger to life and property. Irreparable losses, incalculable damages and untold miseries are caused by fire mishaps. In a country like ours, with dwellings made of combustible materials which are easily and cheaply available, fire accidents are frequent. In addition, storage of inflammable liquids such as petrol, diesel, kerosene and gas cylinders, etc adds to the hazard of fire. Under these circumstances, adequate fire protection, not only for the prevention of fire but also for protection of life and property from the fury of fire, have become an imperative need. A well organized Fire and Rescue Services Department contributes greatly to the prevention and control of fire hazards. It

springs into action the moment there is a threat to life or property not only due to fire but also due to natural calamities and man made disasters or other mishaps. Rightly, my Government had a vision much earlier and re-named the Department as “Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department” in July 2001. The Fire and Rescue Services Department in Tamil Nadu has established a reputation for itself as one of the largest and most efficient Fire Services Organizations in the country.

II. Objectives

“*We Serve to Save*” is the motto of the Fire and Rescue Services Department. Apart from fire fighting and rescue operations, the Fire and Rescue Services Department also plays a role in preventing fire in multiple ways, by creating public safety awareness, ensuring strict implementation of laws and rules and by performing an advisory role in all matters relating to fire-safety, Natural Calamities and other mishaps. This Department also performs standby duty at the time of temple festivals, law and order problems and big gatherings where a fire can cause injury to life and

property. The fire-fighting and rescue role of the Department includes ambulance services also.

III. Modernisation of Fire and Rescue Services Department

The Fire and Rescue Services Department today faces new challenges such as terrorist attacks, caste and communal clashes in addition to the traditional tasks of handling accidental fire, floods, earthquakes and other natural calamities. Fire and Rescue Services Department must work hand-in-hand with other agencies such as the Police Department, Revenue Department and the Medical Services to meet the new challenges. Further, rapid urbanization and fast industrialization have changed the very complexion of life in our Society. Chemical leaks, fire in multi-storeyed buildings, congested and over-populated urban areas with difficult access, the problems of handling fire by using water as the main agent under conditions of dire scarcity of drinking water, are the many challenges faced by the Department. To cope with the modern and recent developments the Department is focusing on improving fire fighting and rescue technology.

IV. Disaster Management

Natural calamities like cyclones, floods and landslides are not new to Tamil Nadu. The administrative machinery of the State is fully geared up and tuned to the effective handling of such disasters. The role of the Fire and Rescue Services Department is crucial in disaster management and loss reduction.

My Government, during my earlier tenure as Chief Minister in July 2003 constituted a high-level Disaster Management Authority in which the Director, Fire and Rescue Services was also a member.

V. Organisational and Administrative structure

The Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department works under the administrative control of the Home Department, Government of Tamil Nadu. An IPS Officer in the rank of Director General of Police is the Head of the Department. A Joint Director and Five Regional Deputy Directors, each heading one of the five Regions, assist the Director. In addition, a Deputy Director (Administration) and two Administrative Personal Assistants (viz., Administration and Accounts) also assist the Director. The Regions are divided into

32 Divisions and each Division is under the control of a Divisional Officer. Each Division has 4 to 16 Fire and Rescue Services Stations. There are 299 Fire and Rescue Services Stations throughout the State, apart from 2 exclusive Rescue Stations at Hogenakkal and Kothagiri. A Station Officer is in charge of a Fire and Rescue Services Station. Fire Prevention Wings are available in 13 Divisions. A State Training Centre, located at Tambaram, functions under the control of a Joint Director (Training & Rescue Operations). A Deputy Director and a Divisional Officer assist the Joint Director. This Training Centre conducts training for the personnel of the Department as well as for others, on payment of a nominal fee. A Sniffer Dog Squad with a strength of 6 sniffer dogs for locating persons buried and struggling for survival under the debris of collapsed buildings is also available with the Department. It functions under the control of the State Training Centre. There is a State Workshop in Chennai which is under the supervision of the Joint Director (Training & Rescue Operations).

A Chart showing the organizational structure of the Fire and Rescue Services Department is given in the Annexure.

VI. Operational function

The basic unit of the Department is the Fire and Rescue Services Station. The State has 299 Fire and Rescue Services Stations apart from 2 Rescue Stations at Hogenakkal and Kothagiri. New Fire and Rescue Services Stations are opened wherever necessary, based on the following criteria;

- (i) that there is at least one Fire and Rescue Services Station available within a radius of 25 kilometers;
- (ii) that each Station serves a population of 50,000 and that it is located in areas with a likelihood of fire hazards with a loss of property of Rs.50,000/-.

VII. Human and Material Resources

a) Man Power

The Fire and Rescue Services Department has an executive and ministerial strength of 7,081. The posts of Divisional Officers, Automobile Engineer (State Workshop), Station Officers, Junior Assistants, Typists and Steno-Typists are recruited directly by the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission as per ratio. Direct recruitment of Firemen is done by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board.

This Government, with its commitment to give equal opportunities to women and to remove the gender bias, amended the relevant service rules on 12.10.2001 in its earlier tenure to pave the way for the entry of women into the Force at the levels of Divisional Officer, Station Officer and Firefighter.

Further, this Government issued orders to adopt a common recruitment procedure for selection to the post of Fireman, Jail Warders and Police Constables by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board, in its earlier tenure on 3.10.2001.

b) Vehicles and Equipment

In order to render effective service to the public, the Department has been provided with 348 Water Tenders, 82 Ambulances, 14 Small Foam Tenders, 20 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, 2 Aerial Ladder Platforms of 54 meters, 1 Hose Laying Tender and 55 Water Lorries, 1 Wrecker, 2 Mobile Repair Vans, 228 High Range

Portable pumps and 93 Floto Pumps with sufficient technical staff. Apart from these, the Department also has support vehicles such as Jeeps, Buses, Cars and Motor Cycles.

Modern equipment such as Lifting Bags, Smoke Exhausters, Poisonous Gas Detectors, Generators and other Combi-tools have been provided wherever necessary. For managing floods and cyclones the Department has been provided with 8 Mechanized Fiber Boats and 69 inflatable boats with life buoys and life jackets. The Department also possesses 1 Helmet type Thermal Imaging Camera, 3 Life Detectors, 3 Victim Location Units, 2 Multi-gas Monitors, 81 Fire- Entry Suits, 111 Chemical Protective Suits, 222 pairs of heat resistant gloves, 107 sets of Personal Protective Equipment and 49 Inflatable Emergency Lighting systems.

VIII. Communication facilities

(a) Telephones and Wireless sets

Quick response and timely service are essential in reducing loss in fire accidents etc. For this, mobilisation of men and vehicles within the minimal

time is an imperative need. Hence the Fire and Rescue Services Stations are provided with a telephone connection for prompt response and timely service. Cell phone facility has been provided to the officers above the rank of Station Officer. Further, toll-free telephone facility with number '101' is available in certain District headquarters. All Fire and Rescue Services Stations in Chennai City, Thiruvallur and Kancheepuram Districts have been provided with wireless sets.

(b) Response Time

Response time is the time taken by the first fire tender to reach the spot of the fire accident. The Department is constantly striving hard to bring down the Response Time to the minimum. In Chennai City, the response time generally is less than 6 minutes or even 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 are transmitted quickly so that response time is reduced. All efforts are being taken to reduce the response time further in mofussil areas.

(c) Website

A Website for the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department with the address "<http://www.tnfrs.tn.nic.in>" is maintained by the National Informatics Centre. This website not only highlights the activities of the Department but also acts as a major instrument for educating the public on fire-safety issues.

IX. Training facilities

Training is an essential component to keep the Department Force in a trim and fighting-fit condition. High-quality training is imparted to the new entrants to the Service. The State Training Centre functioning at Tambaram equipped with all modern Teaching Aids to improve the quality of training given to its personnel at all levels, and to keep abreast with the latest developments in the field of Fire-fighting and Rescue techniques. The Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, has designated the State Training Centre of the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services as one of the Regional Training Centres in the Country for conducting courses offered by the National Fire Service College in Nagpur.

The State Training Centre trains not only the fire fighters from 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. Basic firefighting training is given to private individuals at Divisional headquarters for a period of one week on payment of a fee of Rs.1000/- per person. During the year 2010 training had been given to 1031 private individuals and during 2011 till June 947 private individuals have been given basic fire fighting training at Divisional headquarters and a sum of Rs.19.39 lakhs has been collected as training fees.

X. Workshop

The Fire and Rescue Services Department is maintaining a State Workshop at Chennai for attending to the repairs of Departmental vehicles and equipment. The Automobile Engineer attached to the State Workshop is empowered to accord technical sanction of estimates for repairs to vehicles, up to a ceiling of Rs.20,000/-. This reduces delay in according technical sanction for repairs to Fire Fighting and Rescue Vehicles.

XI. Construction of buildings for Fire and Rescue Services Stations

There are 299 Fire and Rescue Services Stations apart from 2 Rescue Stations in the State. Of these, 174 are now functioning in own buildings, 29 in other organization buildings without rent and 98 in rented buildings.

XII. Wide Sphere of Operations

a) Fire Prevention

“Prevention of Fire” is the prime function of the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department and for this purpose the Department has Fire Prevention Wings in 13 Divisions. These Wings teach fire prevention methods in rural and urban areas to reduce fire risks and hazards. Fire Prevention methods are taught in schools, industries, offices, villages and slums through lectures and demonstrations to sensitize people about fire-safety and fire prevention methods. Training was conducted in 14,588 places in the year 2010 and in 6706 places in 2011 till June throughout the State to educate people on fire prevention methods.

In the wake of the gruesome tragedy at a School in Kumbakonam on 16.07.2004, this

Government in its earlier tenure took various steps to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies. In order to ensure fire safety in Schools, this Government in its earlier tenure had issued orders making it mandatory for Schools to obtain a No Objection Certificate from the concerned jurisdictional Station Officer of the Department, which has been followed by the Department so far. 12077 Schools were inspected by the Station Officers for issue of NOC in the year 2010. Further, 25,112 Schools were inspected up to 2010 to ensure mandatory fire safety.

b) Safety Volunteers:

In order to enlist public co-operation, safety volunteers have been enrolled in all Fire and Rescue Services Stations in the State. With an aim to involving the youth and well meaning citizens in this exercise to engage the public as a support organization for the Fire and Rescue Services Department, the Safety Volunteers Organization is being re-organized as Student Brigade, Fire Safety wardens in all Districts and Citizen for Fire Safety as an apex body at State Level. From Schools, Colleges and the Public, Safety Volunteers have been enrolled to the extent of 11,369, 3,625 and 4,816 respectively.

C) Prevention of Fire in Cinema Halls / Buildings:

Cinema Halls are highly prone to accidents by fire. The Government is seriously committed to ensuring fire safety in cinema theatres. Hence, this Government in its earlier tenure had constituted a Multi-Departmental Committee under the Chairmanship of the District Officer of the Department, to inspect all the cinema theatres in respective District every year. The main idea is to bring the defects noticed in the Cinema Halls to the notice of the licencing authorities for rectification and to ensure fire safety. 931 Cinema Halls were inspected during the calendar year 2010. Apart from Cinema Halls, 23,282 buildings were inspected during the calendar year 2010 under various Acts and Rules from the fire hazard point of view.

d) Commando Forces

A Commando Force was formed in every District by this Government in its earlier tenure and they have been given intensive training in Search and Rescue Operations during disasters and it is in practice.

e) Fire accidents in Slum Areas during Summer Season

To attend to fire accidents in slum areas immediately, without any loss of time in vulnerable areas, a system of patrolling by fire units is being done every year during the summer season from March to August. During this year's summer season 4 fire units were pressed into service on rounds to keep constant vigil over the sensitive slum areas round the clock.

f) Fire Service Day

This Department observes Fire Service Day for a week commencing from 14th April of every year throughout the State. During this period all Fire and Rescue Services Stations in the State organize propaganda campaigns, demonstrations and lectures and conduct essay competitions for school students. Propaganda campaigns are conducted through newspapers, television and radio wherever possible.

g) Fire Calls

18,311 fire calls were received during the year 2010 in which 100 lives were saved apart from saving properties worth about Rs.335.25 crores. In the year

2011 from January to June, a total of 13,738 fire calls were received in which 34 lives were saved, apart from saving properties worth about Rs.579.51 crores. In Chennai City, the services of Metro Water lorries are being utilised to refill the Fire Tenders at the place of fire accidents. This arrangement has greatly helped in saving lives and the valuable property of the public.

h) Rescue Calls

Rescue Calls received 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. 10,960 rescue calls were attended to during the year 2010, in which 5,203 lives were saved. In the year 2011 till June, a total of 5,693 rescue calls were attended to in which 1,415 lives were saved.

i) Paid Calls and Ambulance Calls

Ambulances are available in 81 Fire and Rescue Services Stations and one Rescue Services Station in

Hogenakkal. 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 2010 ambulances were provided on 1,159 occasions on requisition. Of these, the number of paid calls was 1,054. Revenue of Rs.3.19 lakhs was realised as hire charges for the paid calls attended to by the Ambulances.

j) Standby on public grounds

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 stand-by arrangements. Besides, stand-by of fire units are provided for private functions also on payment of charges. During 2010, standby arrangements were undertaken on 2,717 occasions. Of these, the number of standby arrangements made on payment of charges was 1,903. An amount of Rs.46.38 lakhs was collected towards standby charges during the year 2010.

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 meritorious Service and Gallantry exhibited by the Fire and Rescue Services personnel while performing their duty the following medals have been instituted by the State Government and awarded to the officers and men of the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department:-

1) 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 2010, 10 Meritorious Medals and 9 Gallantry Medals were awarded to the Fire and Rescue Services Personnel.

2) 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. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal is being awarded to 120 Fire and Rescue Services Personnel every year.

3) The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Fire Service Medal for Excellence.

This medal has been instituted by this Government in its earlier tenure 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 to achieve greater heights. Three Medals are awarded every year, one each to a Station Officer, Leading Fireman and Fireman and equivalent ranks 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 and equivalent ranks, Rs.2500/- for Leading Fireman

and equivalent ranks and Rs.2000/- for Fireman and equivalent ranks. These medals are given to those who excel in the performance of their duties and not according to seniority.

4) 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 Independence Day.
- (b) Fire Service Medal for Meritorious Service on Republic Day.
- (c) Fire Service Medal for Gallantry.

XIV. Welfare measures

1) Fire and Rescue Services Benevolent Fund

The Fire and Rescue Services Benevolent Fund, which is in operation from 1962 was created to render financial assistance 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:-

- (a) to purchase nutritious food for themselves and for their dependents who are suffering from chronic diseases such as Tuberculosis, Leprosy, Cancer etc.
- (b) to meet the cost of higher education of their children.
- (c) to provide relief to the families of deceased members.
- (d) to meet the funeral expenses of the members and their dependents.

The Government grants a sum of Rs.12 lakhs every year to this fund. At present 5,426 persons are covered by this scheme. A sum of Rs.22.83 lakhs was collected from the members by way of subscription to the Fund in the year 2010. Members under this scheme were granted relief totalling about Rs.40.65 lakhs from the fund during the year 2010.

2) Family Benefit Fund Scheme

An amount of Rs.1,50,000/- is sanctioned to the families of employees who die in harness from the Family Benefit Fund.

3) Ex-gratia Payment

The Fire and Rescue Services personnel are being given ex-gratia grant and this Government during its earlier tenure in November 2001, has increased the ex-gratia grant as follows:-

(a)	For those who die in harness while on duty	Rs.2,00,000/- to Rs.5,00,000/-
(b)	For those who suffer permanent disability, while on duty	Rs.50,000/- to Rs.1,00,000/-
(c)	For those who are seriously injured while on duty	Rs.10,000/- to Rs.20,000/-
(d)	For those who suffer Minor injuries while on duty	Rs.5,000/- to Rs.10,000/-

4) 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.

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 subsidized rates under the Food Subsidy Scheme. For this purpose the Government spends an average about Rs.56.28 lakhs on this scheme every year.

6) Construction of quarters

To enhance operational efficiency and for mobilizing the personnel during emergencies, it is necessary to provide quarters for the Fire and Rescue Services personnel near the Fire and Rescue Services Stations. Except Ministerial staff, all the officers and

men of the Department are eligible for rent-free quarters as a service condition. At present 1,073 quarters are available. The construction of quarters will be accelerated so as to spur and quicken the pace of providing quarters to all the Fire and Rescue Services personnel in a phased manner.

XV. New Initiatives

Under Part II schemes for the year 2011-2012, the following schemes have been approved by the Government for implementation at a total cost of Rs.105.70 lakhs.

- a) Procurement of 6 Jeeps, 3 Cars and 2 Motor Cycles in the place of old ones at a cost of Rs.45.10 lakhs.
- b) Procurement of 2 small Foam Tenders to replace the old ones at a cost of Rs.48.00 lakhs.
- c) Procurement of 28 Computers with Printer and accessories in the place of old ones at a cost of Rs.12.60 lakhs.

CONCLUSION

This Department is rendering yeoman service to the public in saving human lives and properties from devastating fires, natural calamities and man-made disasters. The Department, as the prime agency of the Government, renders prevention activities to achieve effective fire loss control in the Nation's Economy. In today's Society, with rapid industrialization and urbanization, hazards are growing day-by-day and the Department also constantly strives hard to prepare itself to meet the challenges of the present trend and needs.

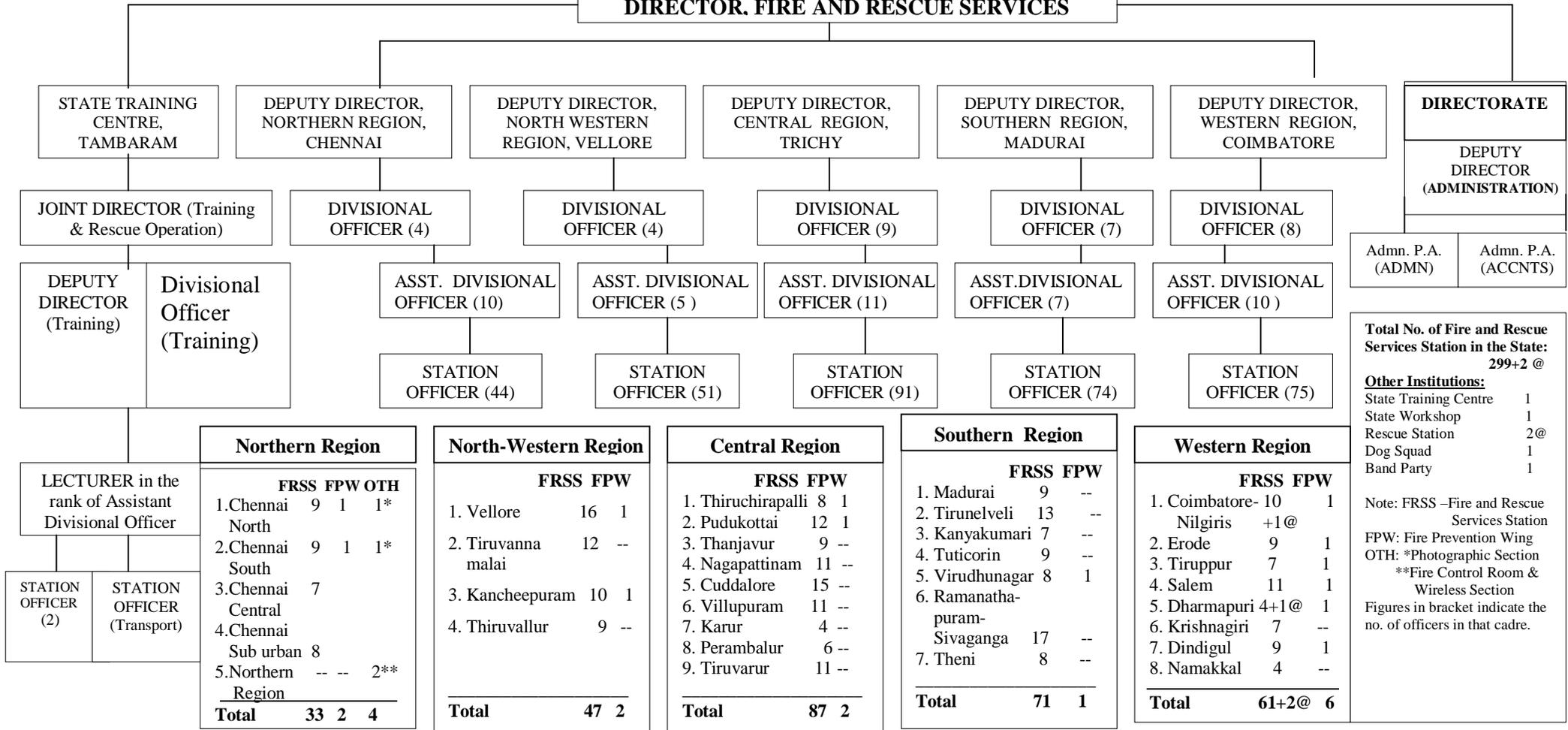
J JAYALALITHAA
CHIEF MINISTER

ANNEXURE

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

ORGANISATIONAL CHART

DIRECTOR, FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES



Total No. of Fire and Rescue Services Station in the State: 299+2 @

Other Institutions:

State Training Centre	1
State Workshop	1
Rescue Station	2@
Dog Squad	1
Band Party	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.