

Regionalization of Fire Districts

Outcomes of Small Departments Joining Larger Organizations

Questions for Small Fire Departments that have merged or used a “Contract for Services” model.

AGENCY: Renton Valley Fire Authority

1. Did you merge with another Fire Department or contract for services?

King County Fire District 40 - Contract for Services

King County Fire District 25 – RFA Member

City of Renton – RFA Member

2. When did that happen?

Year 2016 RFA formed. Services provided to KCFD 40 since 2008

3. What were some of the reasons you chose that action?

King County Fire District 25 and the City of Renton have had a long-standing partnership beginning in 1993. Services are provided by the Renton RFA. The three board members of KCFD 25 serve on the RFA board along with three Renton city council members. KCFD 40 is represented by one non-voting member. KCFD 40 contracted for services in 2008. The contract was renegotiated in 2018. The primary reason for joining the RFA appears to be area city annexations and the resulting reduction in revenue to the Fire District. King County Fire District 40 just completed a renegotiation of the service contract with the RRFA. This is a long term agreement.

4. Did you get the services you needed? Why or why not?

Yes No

There was some dissatisfaction with the contract costing model by the KCFD 40 Fire Commissioners. The district contracted for a consultant study conducted by ESCI. After a review of KCFD 40 options the study, completed in July of 2020, recommended KCFD 40 re-enter negotiations with the Renton RFA with the assistance of a third-party facilitator. The full study can be found at <https://www.fd40.com/documents/>

Per the Renton Fire Chief, KCFD 40 engaged with the RRFA and a long term agreement has been reached for provision of fire and EMS services. I have calls in to KCFD 40 Fire Commissioners but have not yet received a reply.

5. What were some of the challenges?

Costs and cost allocation.

6. Are you satisfied with the input your agency has regarding the provision of services?

Yes No

I am awaiting a reply from KCFD 40 and 25 Commissioners but from the information I have so far all parties are satisfied with the service delivered.

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7. Are you satisfied with the cost of the services you are receiving?

Yes No

While the KCFD 40 Commissioners renegotiated the agreement with the Renton RFA per the ESCI study the current effective tax rate is in the lower range for fire districts in the area at \$1.56 per \$1,000 AV. The Renton RFA tax rate is \$1.62 per \$1,000 AV. (2019 data)

8. Would you take the same action again?

Yes No

King County FD 25 and the City of Renton are satisfied. Both are voting members of the RFA. The Fire Commissioners for KCFD 40 are now more engaged with the RRFA board and the fire chief. KCFD 40 did explore other service delivery options via the ESCI study and chose to remain with the RRFA as it is currently the only really viable alternative.