Criterion 9D: Information Technology

Information technology resources are in place with adequate staff to efficiently and effectively conduct and manage the agency's information technology functions, such as hardware and software implementation and maintenance and data analysis.

Summary:

The Meridian Fire Department collaborates with the City of Meridian's Information Technology (IT) department. The IT department offers technical support and ensures security for the entire city. Their primary responsibility lies in devising city-wide strategies that align with the Mayor and City Council's strategic focus areas. These strategies incorporate appropriate technology to achieve several goals: reducing government expenses, enhancing operational efficiencies for employees, improving services for citizens, and making government services more accessible in our interconnected world.

The IT department is dedicated to providing friendly and innovative technology services to city employees, elected officials, and the community as a whole. Their team consists of skilled professionals, including support technicians and specialists, software engineers, GIS specialists, and infrastructure experts. Together, they work towards advancing the technological landscape of the city and ensuring its seamless integration with public services.

Performance indicators:

CC 9D.1 **Hardware, software and IT personnel are <u>appropriate for the agency's size, function, complexity and mission.</u>**

Description

The department has adequate hardware, software and Information Technology (IT) personnel to suit the operational needs of the fire department. The department uses the City of Meridian IT department for all of its needs. The City of Meridian IT department has 18 full time staff including 4 technical support specialists. The IT department maintains adequate hardware for all stations and departments and replaces computers and other equipment on a regular schedule. The IT department manages the city's *Windows 10* program and *Office 2019,* which are also updated according to a defined schedule. The IT department meets regularly with the fire chief at quarterly meetings to discuss an IT needs or concerns of the department, and the chief information officer maintains regular communications with the division chief of logistics to address any urgent IT needs of the department. Any IT requests from individual employees can be submitted through the IT help desk function on the intranet or by calling the department directly. The department uses *ESO* for its patient management and NFIRS reporting software, which are managed through the Ada County City Emergency Services System Joint Powers Agreement.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian's IT department has had adequate staff to suit the needs of the city and the fire department. The IT department has maintained an adequate inventory of hardware to supply the fire department with any needed requests, and through cooperative meetings has pre-purchased IT materials for future stations. All hardware and software have been replaced according to standard operating procedures for technology replacement schedules. All IT help desk requests have been resolved promptly.

Plan

The IT department and the chief information officer will continue to have regular meetings with the fire chief and division chief of logistics to analyze and plan for the IT needs of the

department. The IT department will continue to evaluate its own staffing needs as the city grows, including the possibility of adding a fire data analyst to the city's long-term plan.

References

- IT Help Desk Screenshot

- IT Personnel Page Screenshot

- Standard Operating Procedure 10.9 – *Technology Replacement*

9D.2 <u>Software systems are integrated, and policies are in place</u> addressing data governance, data accuracy and data analysis.

Description

The IT department addresses data governance, accuracy and analysis in the City of Meridian's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual,* Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 10.5 - *Information Security*. The IT department has data stewardship over city-specific software such as email and documents. The fire department, as part of the Ada County/City Emergency Services System (ACCESS) Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), uses a shared ESO for all of its patient care records and NFIRS reporting, as well as a shared CAD data system with Ada County Sherriff's Office 911 Dispatch Center. Data governance for ESO and CAD are managed by the JPA and Sherriff's office, respectively. ESO systems are integrated via a cloud-based system that is available on all department computers, mobile data terminals, as well as on all partner agencies systems. The city has an integrated file, email, and office programs system available through *Windows* on all city computers.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian IT department has maintained proper stewardship of the City's data in regards to email and shared document storage systems. The IT department has not had the opportunity to provide significant input into the data governance regarding JPA and CAD data programs, as those programs have been purchased through a JPA agreement.

Plan

The IT department will work with the fire chief to determine how city IT can be brought into decisions regarding the management of patient care, fire reporting, and CAD data and analyze those systems for proper stewardship. The IT department will work with the fire chief to examine the possibility of adding a fire data analyst to the city's long-term plan.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 10.5 - *Information Security*

- Standard Operating Procedure 10.5 - *Information Security*

9D.3   A <u>comprehensive technology plan</u> is in place to update, evaluate and procure hardware and software.

Description

The City of Meridian's Information Technology (IT) Department follows Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 10.9 - Technology Replacement, which defines how and when infrastructure, computers, software, and printers are replaced or updated. The policy states that computers are replaced every 5 years or as needed, software is updated every 6 years or as needed, and infrastructure every 4 years or as needed.

Appraisal

IT reports that the city's replacement schedule has been followed accurately. Due to the speed at which technology has advanced, many replacements or upgrades occurred sooner than the listed schedule.

Plan

The IT department will continue to follow and implement the technology replacement procedure and replace all items according to schedule or sooner if warranted.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 10.9 - *Technology Replacement*

- Standard Operating Procedure 10.9 - *Technology Replacement*

9D.4   A <u>cybersecurity policy is in place</u> to protect the integrity of the infrastructure, including networks, programs and devices, from unauthorized access that could disrupt essential services.

Description

The City of Meridian follows Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 10.5 – *Information Security* and 10.7 – *Security Awareness Training* to protect the information technology (IT) infrastructure of the city and the fire department. In addition to policies, the IT department conducts quarterly and annual security awareness training for all city employees and operates an incident response policy to handle any cybersecurity breaches. The IT department also conducts simulated phishing as part of its training to ensure compliance with security training.

Appraisal

There have been no major security issues or breaches in the City of Meridian's IT in the last 5 years. All personnel have been compliant with security training and are below the national average for simulated phishing breaches.

Plan

The IT department will continue to follow its security policies and procedures and ensure compliance with security training. The IT department will monitor the ever-changing cyber security landscape and update and evolve its policies and procedures as necessary.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 10.5 - *Information Security*

- Standard Operating Procedure 10.5 - *Information Security*

- Standard Operating Policy 10.7 - *Security Awareness Training*

- Standard Operating Procedure 10.7 - *Security Awareness Training*