



Fact Sheet

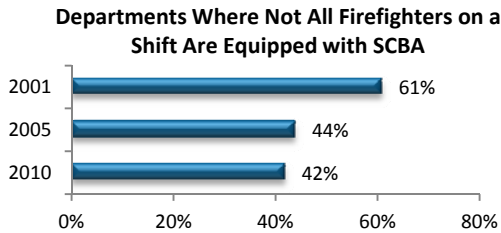
Alabama Fire Service Needs Assessment

There has been substantial progress in reducing many fire department needs, although more remains to be done.

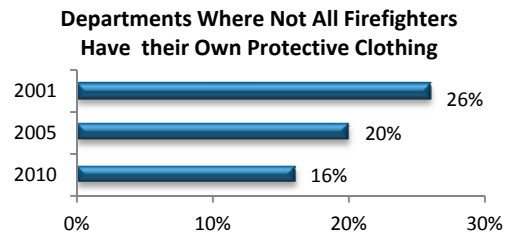
Protective Equipment and Clothing

The 2010 percentage of Alabama departments **without enough equipment to equip all personnel** (or all personnel on a shift, as appropriate) was:

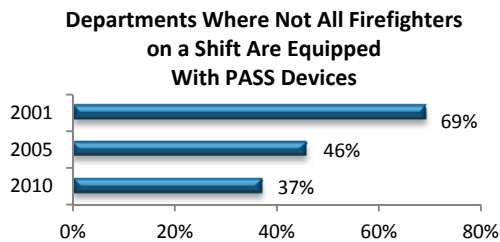
- 42% for **self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)**, compared to 61% in 2001 and 44% in 2005;



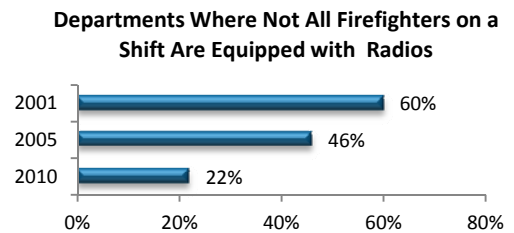
- 16% for **personal protective clothing**, compared to 26% in 2001 and 20% in 2005; and



- 37% for **personal alert safety system devices (PASS)**, compared to 69% in 2001 and 46% in 2005;



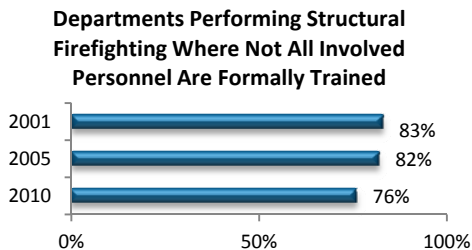
- 22% for **portable radios**, compared to 60% in 2001 and 46% in 2005.



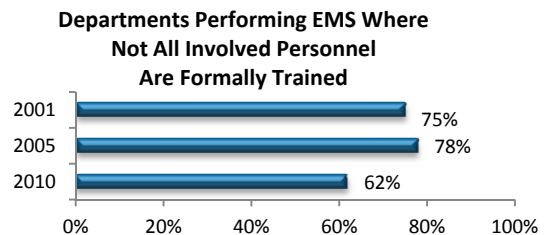
Training

In many fire departments, **not all involved personnel have been formally trained** in their emergency response duties. The 2010 percentage of Alabama departments in which not all involved personnel have been formally trained was:

- 76% for **structural firefighting**, compared to 83% in 2001 and 82% in 2005; and



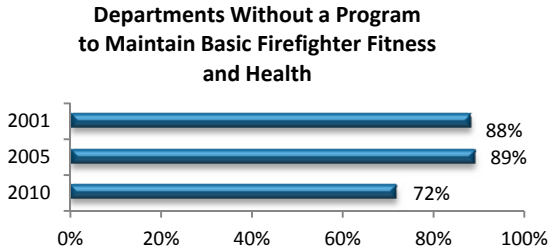
- 62% for **emergency medical service (EMS)**, compared to 75% in 2001 and 78% in 2005.



Fitness and Health

In many fire departments, **there is no program to maintain basic firefighter fitness and health.** The 2010 percentage of Alabama departments with no such program was:

- 72%, compared to 88% in 2001 and 89% in 2005.



Unusually Challenging Incidents

There has been little or no progress in increasing the ability of fire departments to handle **various unusually challenging incidents** with local trained personnel and specialized equipment alone:

- Provide technical rescue and EMS at a **structural collapse** involving 50 occupants; and
- Provide hazardous material response and EMS at an incident involving **chemical or biological agents** and with 10 injuries.
- **Wildland/urban interface (WUI) fire** affecting 500 acres; and
- Mitigation of a **major developing flood**.

However, there has been progress in the percentage of departments having written agreements for working with others. The 2010 percentage of Alabama departments with **no** such written agreement was:

- 72% for structural collapse, compared to 82% in 2001 and 83% in 2005;
- 72% for chemical or biological incidents, compared to 85% in 2001 and 79% in 2005;
- 49% for wildland/urban interface fires, compared to 77% in 2001 and 79% in 2005; and
- 49% for developing major flood, compared to 88% in 2001 and 78% in 2005.

Success requires more written agreements, with each participating department knowing its role, providing resources needed to play its role, and helping test the plan in simulations and rehearsals.

Stations and Apparatus

Some stations lack specific features, which are required by current standards but were not required when stations were constructed. Some stations are old enough that a variety of persistent or recurring problems are to be expected and replacement might be better and even cheaper. Some departments are using old fire apparatus.

- 42% of Alabama fire departments do not have backup power for their fire stations.
- 72% of Alabama fire departments do not have exhaust emission control for their fire stations.
- 24% of the fire stations in Alabama are over 40 years old.
- 9% of Alabama fire department engines and pumpers are at least 30 years old.

Cautions on interpretation

Trends. For some states and most needs assessment survey questions, even large changes from one survey to another will not be statistically significant. Be cautious in interpreting results as trends.

State-to-state comparisons. States where a large share of departments serve small communities will tend to have greater needs according to the measures used here than states where a small share of departments serve small communities. State-to-state comparisons must be viewed with caution, particularly if the states have very different mixes of urban and rural communities.

How rural is Alabama? The survey for Alabama was based on the following responses:

- 14 of the 25 departments protecting populations of 25,000 or more;
- 19 of the 57 departments protecting populations of 10,000 to 24,999; and
- 81 of the 792 departments protecting populations of less than 10,000.

Access the full state report, other state reports and the national reports at <http://www.nfpa.org/needsassessment>.