

Date: January 30, 2026

To: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Item No. 2(B)(4)
March 3, 2026

From: Daniella Levine Cava *Daniella Levine Cava*
Mayor

Subject: Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Response Times and Plans for Improvement –
Directive 251751

This report is in response to Resolution R-985-25 sponsored by Commissioner Natalie Milian Orbis, Co-Sponsored by Commissioner Roberto J. Gonzalez and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on October 9, 2025. The resolution directs the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to (1) evaluate the response times for emergency services provided by the County throughout Miami-Dade County; (2) develop methods for improving such response times, and (3) provide a report detailing such findings to this Board within 90 days of the effective date of this resolution.

Executive Summary

This report presents an evaluation of Miami-Dade Fire Rescue's (MDFR) countywide emergency response times and identifies strategies for improvement. It highlights that emergency response time is not a singular measure, but rather the cumulative result of multiple intervals involving various agencies, systems, and operational processes.

MDFR continues to maintain average response times under eight (8) minutes for life-threatening and structure fire incidents within the Urban Development Boundary (UDB), despite a 21% increase in incident volume in the last five years and substantial population growth. Further, MDFR has achieved measurable improvements through the strategic deployment of 20 new service units, two additional fire stations, and targeted operational enhancements throughout the County.

This fiscal year, MDFR plans to place an additional 10 units in service and open two new fire-rescue stations to improve response times and increase unit availability. Future planning efforts are focused on closing anticipated geographical service gaps through technological advancements, operational efficiencies and interdepartmental coordination. MDFR is currently assessing and pursuing potential properties to construct new fire-rescue stations in 11 identified priority areas.

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Overview

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue is one of the largest, most capable fire-rescue departments in the nation with a complement of response vehicles and command personnel that provide a depth of service unparalleled in the Southeast United States. MDFR is an all-hazards fire-rescue department with a multitude of response programs established to mitigate different types of emergency incidents, including fire suppression, emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials, dive rescue, ocean rescue, air rescue, urban search and rescue, aircraft firefighting and rescue, and marine shipboard firefighting and rescue. MDFR has a service territory of 1,907 square miles, encompassing unincorporated Miami-Dade County and 29 municipalities, with a resident population of nearly 1.9 million. Daily, MDFR has more than 500 firefighters on-duty who staff 173 frontline units operating across 72 fire-rescue stations, including dedicated resources at PortMiami and Miami International Airport (MIA).

MDFR Emergency Response Times

MDFR’s average response times to its most emergent incident types, life-threatening and structure fire incidents, have consistently remained below eight (8) minutes inside the densely populated Urban Development Boundary (UDB), despite a 21% increase in total incidents over the last five years and substantial population growth. Further, MDFR has achieved measurable improvements through the strategic deployment of new service units, opening of additional fire stations, and targeted operational enhancements throughout the County. Response time increases were effectively mitigated through the strategic implementation of 22 new services (two stations and 20 units), in the last five years:

- East Medley Station 83 (September 2025)
- Dolphin Station 68 (April 2024)
- Rescues 71, 77, 13, 74, 17, 61, 63, 60, 41
- Engines 70, 69, 71, 77
- Ladders 18, 83
- Basic Life Support Transports Units (BTU) 2, 58, 22, 70
- Water Tender 1 (at Homestead Fire-Rescue Station 16)

Fire-rescue response time is not a single time; it is the sum of multiple intervals involving separate agencies and processes. Each component contributes to the total response time between when a 911 call is received by the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) and when first responders arrive on-scene. Because agencies may report different components of this time continuum, comparing total response times between jurisdictions or against National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) benchmarks can be misleading unless the same components are included.

Component	Definition	Responsible Entity
Call Processing (PSAP)	Time interval between when the 911 call is received by the PSAP when the call is electronically transferred to MDFR.	Miami-Dade Sheriff’s Office (MDSO)
Dispatch Time	Time interval between when MDFR receives the call to when the appropriate unit is dispatched.	MDFR
Turnout Time	Time interval between when unit personnel are alerted to respond to when unit personnel are enroute to the incident location.	MDFR
Travel Time	Time from departure from the station to arrival on scene.	MDFR
Total Response Time	Sum of the above components.	Shared

For performance monitoring purposes, MDFR tracks each response time component independently. When reporting total average response time, MDFR reports from the time MDFR receives the call electronically from MDSO to the first unit arrival. Average response times are analyzed by incident type countywide and by population density (inside/outside the UDB). In FY 2024-25, MDFR’s average countywide response times to most emergent incidents, inside the UDB, were 7:52 minutes for life-threatening and 6:25 minutes for structure fires.

Strategies to Improve Countywide Response Times

This fiscal year, MDFR plans to tactically place 10 units in service throughout the County, as well as open two new fire-rescue stations, to improve response times and increase unit availability:

- Quarter 1
 - One Engine at Westwood Lake Fire-Rescue Station 41
 - Two EMS Field Supervisors
- Quarter 2
 - Eureka Fire-Rescue Station 71 – Engine Relocation
 - Two Rescue Units
- Quarter 3
 - Two Suppression Units
- Quarter 4
 - Miccosukee Fire-Rescue Station 84 with one Suppression Unit
 - One Rescue Unit
 - Two BTUs

In addition to the operational service enhancements listed above, MDFR is implementing proactive strategies to increase efficiency and mitigate the impact of population growth and increasing service demand on response times as follows.

Technological Advances

- Upgrade 15-year-old Station Alerting System, which receives data signals from dispatch and provides nearly instantaneous, automated dispatching to fire and EMS personnel over multiple channels.
- Deploy the new Hexagon Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System by the end of the second quarter of FY 2026-27. This CAD replaces the existing Motorola CAD which has been in place for more than 20 years. Implementation will provide advanced technologies such as real-time vehicle mapping, next-generation mobile data terminals, and improved incident command situational awareness.
- Explore the use of geofencing instead of depressing the enroute button in the apparatus to more accurately track response times.
- Implement a CAD-to-CAD hub allowing dispatch centers countywide to communicate electronically, decreasing call handling time.

Interdepartmental Coordination

- Implement emergency vehicle preemption (EVP) system on priority intersections in collaboration with the Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) Traffic Signal and Signs (TS&S) to reduce response delays and prevent accidents involving fire-rescue apparatus. MDFR is currently working to pilot this technological advancement program in the East Kendall Station 13 territory before installing and activating the preemption technology in other territories in FY 2026-27.
- Review Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) protocols in collaboration with MDSO to determine if high acuity medical emergencies can be transferred from the PSAP to MDFR earlier in the call handling process.

- Continue to work with MDSO to ensure the accuracy of PSAP response time data transferred to MDFR’s CAD.

Operational Efficiency

- Acquire two additional high-axel response vehicles, bringing MDFR’s total to six, in the second quarter of FY 2025-26 to reduce response times and ensure uninterrupted emergency response during severe weather events. These units are specially equipped to navigate flooded areas, ensuring that rescue operations can be conducted safely, efficiently, effectively.

Future planning efforts in reducing response times are also focused on addressing geographical service gaps, risk-based deployment, and improved service delivery. MDFR is actively searching for property to construct new stations in the 11 areas identified in the Table below. These are areas in which the Department has identified coverage gaps, experienced increases in service demand and/or anticipates development and population growth. **Attachment I** contains a map of MDFR’s existing, planned, and land search areas. Because vacant parcels are limited in many of these areas, MDFR is proactively engaging with developers to be part of proposed projects. MDFR has also reassessed its station design criteria to allow for smaller parcels and integration with mixed use developments.

Land Search Area	Property Location Perimeters
A	Palmetto Expressway and NW 47 Avenue
B	Palmetto Expressway and NW 12 Avenue
C	Flagler Street and SW 82 Avenue
D	SW 97 Avenue between SW 104 Street and 120 Street
E	SW 117 Avenue and SW 168 Street
F	Krome Avenue and SW 140 Street
H	Krome Avenue and SW 88 Street
I	SW 72 Street between SW 137 Avenue and 147 Avenue
J	SW 167 Avenue and SW 45 Street
K	SW 268 Street and US1
L	Krome Ave and SW 184 Street

*Land Search Area G was previously assigned to the Miccosukee area

As of December 1, 2025, MDFR is in the acquisition process for a vacant parcel in area “A” and is awaiting the completion of a sales agreement by the People and Internal Operations Department (PIOD) and County Attorney’s Office (CAO). Once received, MDFR and PIOD will perform due diligence to continue with the acquisition process. The department is also working with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) to potentially construct a fire-rescue station in the area of “E” adjacent to Miami Heights Elementary.

Independent Verification

In May 2025, MDFR’s response times and response time reporting methodology was independently verified and validated by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) Commission of Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) Peer Assessment Team, confirming that MDFR’s deployment model and performance tracking align with best practices and effectively address community risk. As required by the CPSE, MDFR’s Community Risk Assessment/ Standard of Cover (CRA/SOC) submitted for accreditation in 2025 provided actual response times

to structure fires, medical and specialty incidents for fiscal years 2019 through 2024. Response times are also submitted and reviewed by CPSE through the Annual Compliance Report. The Peer Assessment Team specifically noted MDRF's diligence in "ensuring data accuracy and transparency, with documented methodologies and an internal policy on managing outliers, reinforcing the credibility of the agency's reporting and performance metrics." The May 28, 2025, CFAI Accreditation Report indicated that "The agency has assessed and provided evidence that its current deployment methods for emergency services appropriately address the risk in its service area. Its response strategy has evolved to ensure that its deployment practices have maintained and/or made continuous improvements in the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of its operations, notwithstanding any external influences beyond its control." On August 5, 2025, the CFAI unanimously voted to award MDRF accreditation status for a fourth consecutive time.

The Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO), is an independent organization that evaluates the structure fire suppression capabilities of fire departments across the United States. ISO performs its assessment using a standardized evaluation system grounded in nationally recognized best practices to assign a "Class," Public Protection Classification (PPC®), numerical grade from 1 to 10, with Class 1 representing superior property fire protection for a community. The review of the Fire Department accounts for 50% of the total classification and focuses on a fire department's first alarm response and initial attack to minimize potential loss. ISO's March 2024 PPC Summary report, effective July 1, 2024, disclosed that the department earned 50.25 (91%) of the maximum 55.5 points. Additionally, Emergency Communications, which evaluates how well the communications center receives and dispatches fire alarms, received 9.93 (99%) of the obtainable 10 points and Water Supply, which assesses the adequacy of the water supply system, earned 37.85 (95%) of the available 40 points. As a result, MDRF achieved the coveted status as a Class 1/1x status from ISO.

MDRF is the first department in the country with a response territory of greater than 1,000 square miles and population over one million to obtain a Class 1/1X rating. Further, MDRF joins only eight other metropolitan fire departments in the country that serve a population of one million or greater to achieve a Class 1 rating. Additionally, MDRF is one of only 125 fire-rescue agencies nationwide to hold both an ISO Class 1 rating and accreditation from CFAI.

Through data-driven management, strategic investments, and adherence to professional best practices, MDRF delivers timely and effective emergency response to a growing and diverse community. MDRF remains committed to transparency, accountability, and excellence in all aspects of service delivery.

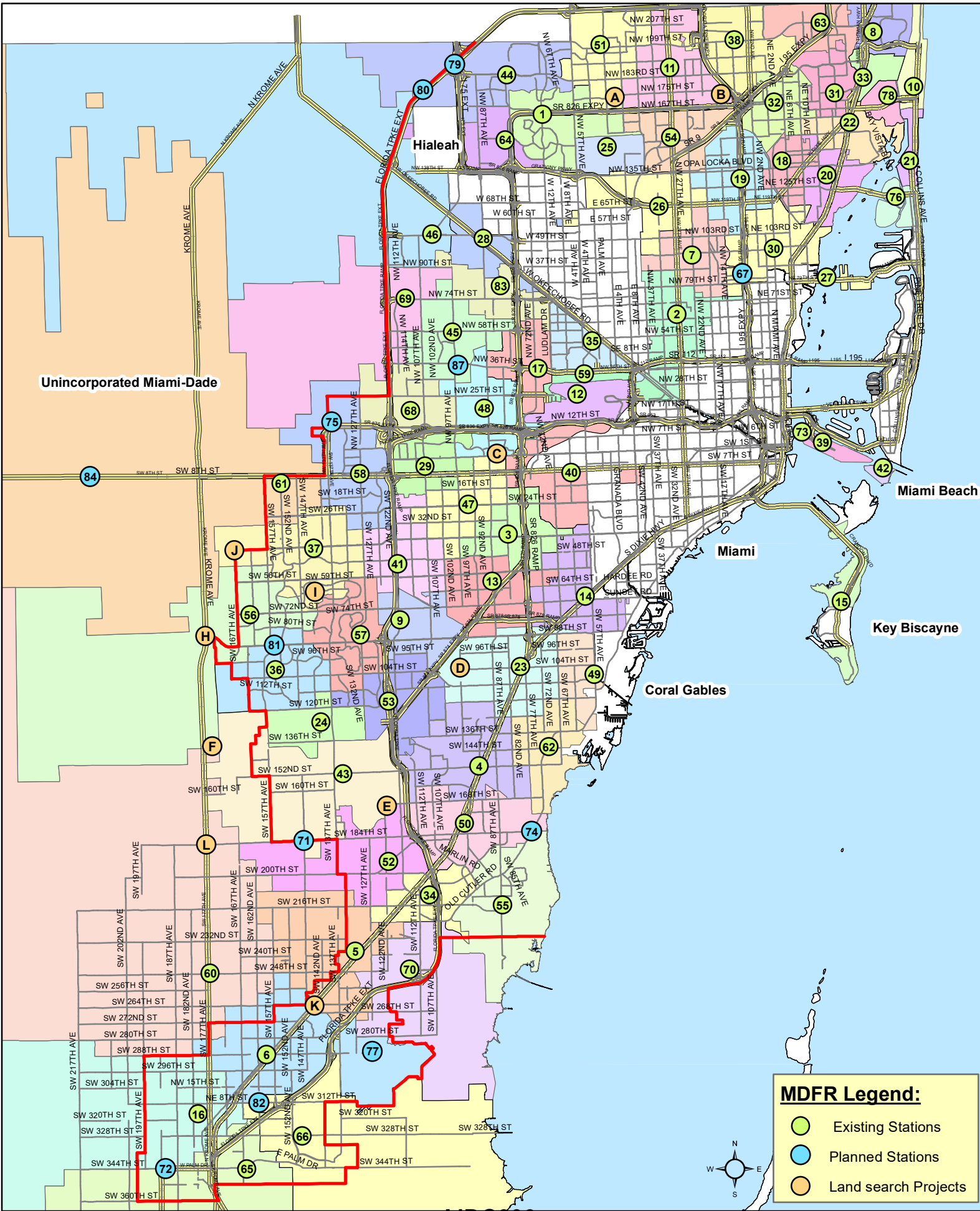
Should you require any additional information, please contact Raied S. Jadallah, Fire Chief, at (786) 331-5112.

Attachment I – Map of Land Search Areas
Attachment II – Resolution R-985-25

c: Geri Bonzon-Keenan, County Attorney
Jess M. McCarty, First Assistant County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Raied S. Jadallah, Fire Chief
Adeyinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor
Office of Policy and Budgetary Affairs
Basia Pruna, Director, Clerk of the Board
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator



MDFR Existing and Planned Fire Stations



MDC006

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(15)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: October 9, 2025

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution directing the
County Mayor to evaluate
Countywide emergency
services response times,
develop methods for
improvement, and provide a
report detailing such findings
to this Board

Resolution No. R-985-25

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Natalie Milian Orbis and Co-Sponsor Commissioner Roberto J. Gonzalez.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/ks



MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: October 9, 2025

FROM: 
Cliff Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 11(A)(15)

Please note any items checked.

- _____ **“3-Day Rule” for committees applicable if raised**
- _____ **6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing**
- _____ **4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing**
- _____ **Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget**
- _____ **Budget required**
- _____ **Statement of fiscal impact required**
- _____ **Statement of social equity required**
- _____ **Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor’s report for public hearing**
- _____ **No committee review**
- _____ **Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3’s present ____, 2/3 membership ____, 3/5’s ____, unanimous ____, majority plus one ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3) (h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c) (2) ____)** to approve
- _____ **Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(15)
10-9-25

RESOLUTION NO. R-985-25

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO EVALUATE COUNTYWIDE EMERGENCY SERVICES RESPONSE TIMES, DEVELOP METHODS FOR IMPROVEMENT, AND PROVIDE A REPORT DETAILING SUCH FINDINGS TO THIS BOARD

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County has experienced significant population growth in the last two decades, and this Board anticipates that the County will continue to experience such growth in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, such growth increases the demand for services throughout the County; and

WHEREAS, of particular importance to residents are the emergency and life safety services provided by the County, especially through the County's Fire Rescue Department ("MDFR"); and

WHEREAS, MDFR has 71 fire rescue stations located throughout the County, serves 29 municipalities, and in addition to fire rescue operations, provides air rescue, ocean and marine rescue, hazardous materials services, urban search and rescue, venom response, aero-medical transport, and disaster mitigation, response, and recovery, among other services; and

WHEREAS, MDFR responds Countywide to nearly all life-threatening and time-sensitive situations, including 9-1-1 calls; incidents requiring fire suppression; emergency medical incidents involving the need for pre-hospital care, advanced life support, and basic life support; and environmental or other disaster responses; and

WHEREAS, in certain geographical locations within the County, particularly in densely populated areas, the County's emergency services response times may be able to be improved; and

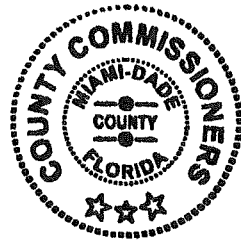
WHEREAS, this Board is always interested in developing strategies to reduce Countywide emergency response times and make the provision of such services more efficient, whether through operational adjustments, technological enhancements, allocation of staff, or interdepartmental coordination,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board directs the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to evaluate the response times for emergency services provided by the County throughout Miami-Dade County, develop methods for improving such response times, and provide a report detailing such findings to this Board within 90 days of the effective date of this resolution, and to place the completed report on an agenda of this Board without committee review pursuant to rule 5.06(j) of the Board's Rules of Procedure. The report shall, at a minimum, clearly delineate what types of emergency response services are provided by the County and, in particular, MDFR, with an emphasis on demand for services in areas with significant population centers, and how to reduce response times for such services.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Natalie Milian Orbis and the Co-Sponsor is Commissioner Roberto J. Gonzalez. It was offered by Commissioner **Raquel A. Regalado**, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Marleine Bastien** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Anthony Rodriguez, Chairman	aye		
Kionne L. McGhee, Vice Chairman	aye		
Marleine Bastien	aye	Juan Carlos Bermudez	aye
Sen. René García	aye	Oliver G. Gilbert, III	aye
Roberto J. Gonzalez	aye	Keon Hardemon	aye
Danielle Cohen Higgins	aye	Eileen Higgins	aye
Natalie Milian Orbis	aye	Raquel A. Regalado	aye
Micky Steinberg	aye		

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 9th day of October, 2025. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
 BY ITS BOARD OF
 COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

JUAN FERNANDEZ-BARQUIN, CLERK

By: **Basia Pruna**

 Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
 to form and legal sufficiency.

Javier Zapata