

July 1, 2003

Facilities Operations, Maintenance and Planning
Ana Rijo-Conde, Interim Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: PROGRESS UPDATE ON FIRE SAFETY

COMMITTEE: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Introduction

At its meeting of April 9, 2003, the School Board (Board) directed the Superintendent to complete a Short-Term Action Plan to correct fire safety deficiencies, and to provide a progress update to the Board at the July 9, 2003 meeting. The attached charts provide the details of a comprehensive Action Plan for addressing fire safety issues. It identifies the current process, while highlighting opportunities for improvement. It also includes a progress update on the short-term plan, and details related to intermediate initiatives and long-term goals.

Background

An analysis of the database maintained by the Safety Department, coupled with meetings held with all six fire marshals indicates that consistent effort has been made to address serious fire related code violations quickly. When fire safety issues are identified which are deemed to pose a threat of imminent danger, they are corrected immediately. The fire marshals stated that they were pleased with the efforts of the school district to address code compliance issues identified by their inspectors. There are, however, opportunities for improvement in the current processes and information flow. These improvements, which include coordinated management over the entire spectrum of fire safety related activities, and integrated reporting systems among all parties involved in the inspection and correction processes to minimize under/overstatement of violations, are already being addressed as a team effort.

There is presently a site-by-site, deficiency-by-deficiency assessment of each District facility in progress. With 260 sites completed, more than 12,000 open deficiencies in the safety database have been verified as already corrected or as duplications of other deficiencies. The number of deficiencies identified by inspectors from the various "authorities having jurisdiction" has also decreased by 981, from 3,334 when this assessment process began, to 2,353. The current assessment and verification process should be completed in late July 2003. At that point we will be in a position to quantify, not only the exact number of real deficiencies, but also what the count means in terms of workload and estimated cost to correct. Then, the development of a total remediation plan to address ongoing maintenance, and major and minor capital projects can be completed.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

- 1) accept the progress update on the Short-Term Plan, and details included in the attachment related to Intermediate Initiatives and Long-Term Goals; and
- 2) direct District staff to provide periodic updates on the progress of these goals and initiatives.

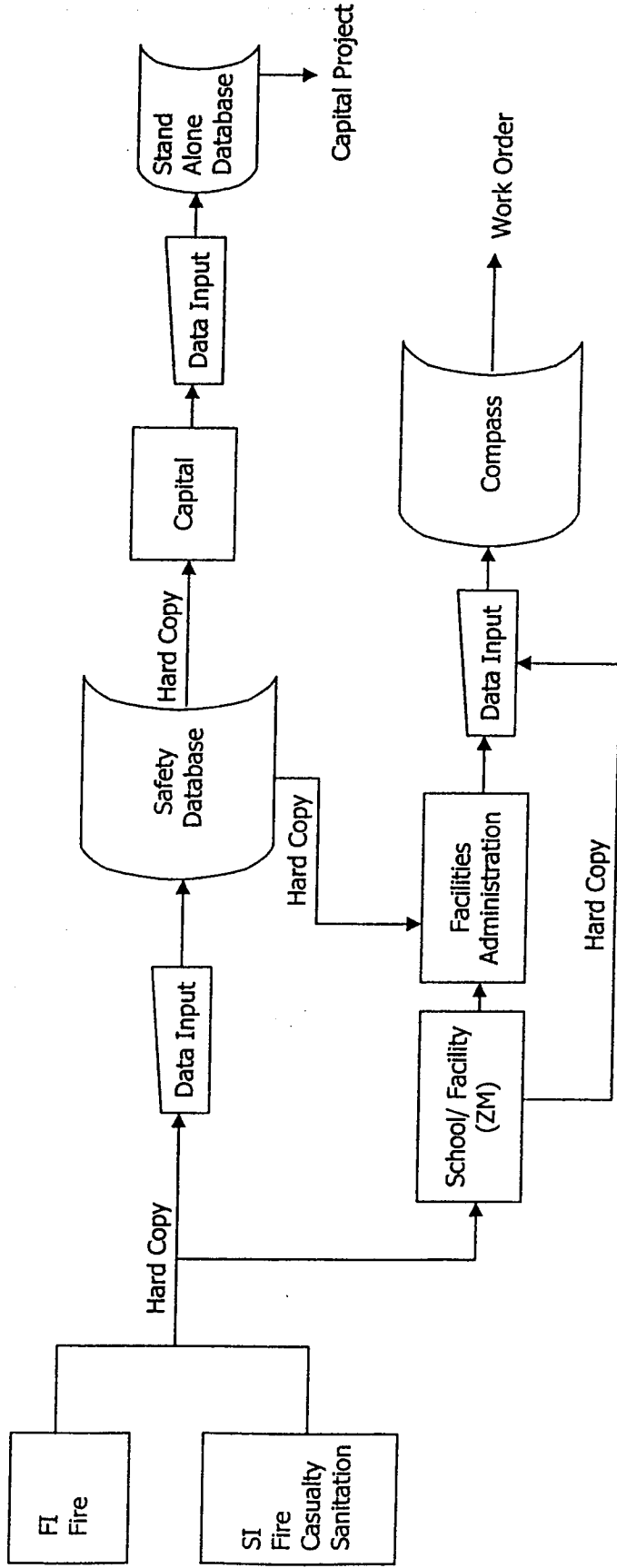
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The Current Process

The current process and information flow starts with an inspection being performed at a District facility by one of our in-house inspectors or an inspector from one of the "authorities having jurisdiction." After the inspection is completed, a report is left at the site and a copy of the report is subsequently sent to the Department of Safety for processing. The data from the report is then put into a database maintained by the DOS. The database generates a unique FI number for each deficiency cited by the AHJs and a SI number for deficiencies cited by our in-house inspectors. These unique numbers are added to the report, after which a hard copy is transmitted to the Maintenance and Capital departments for handling of their respective items marked either "M" or "C."

Both Maintenance and Capital then inputs the information into their independent databases. The Maintenance Department uses the COMPASS Work Order System and the Capital Department uses a stand alone database to track their work and/or projects related to cited deficiencies. Hence, work is done by both departments in response to cited deficiencies. However, since there is no integration of their independent datasets, the database maintained by the DOS is not updated on the status of work done to address deficiencies.

Current Process



Problems with the Current Process:

Triplicate Data Input

The data from inspection reports is entered three times into three separate databases. In addition to this being an inefficient use of clerical resources, it increases the likelihood of errors. Moreover, because of inconsistencies in the way the data is set up, electronic matching is difficult.

Hard Copy Data Transfer

The data from inspection reports is transmitted via hard copy memos to Maintenance and Capital. This slows down the overall process and it also can cause delays in handling urgent deficiencies.

Redundant Fire Inspections

Since separate and independent inspections are done by both in-house inspectors and inspectors from the various AHJs, often the same deficiencies are cited by both entities. This leads to duplicate citations of identical deficiencies and, at times, a gross overstatement of the number of outstanding violations.

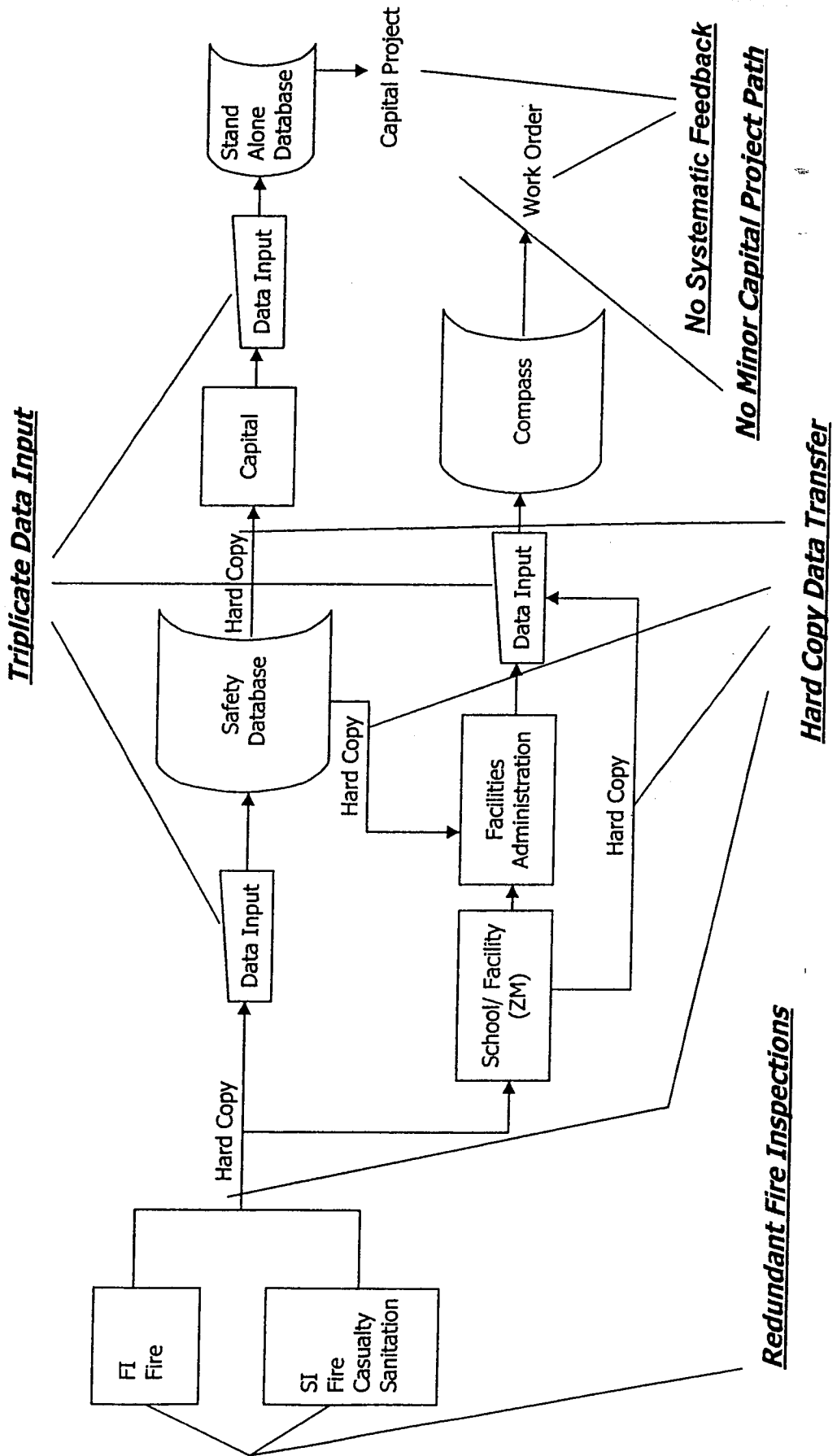
No Systematic Feedback

Since the databases are maintained independently, there is no integration of data; no updating of the status of work in progress or completed work. This perpetuates the overstating of the number of deficiencies and reporting of deficiencies as remaining outstanding when, in fact many of them have been corrected.

No Minor Capital Project Path

While many of the deficiencies (approximately 68%) can be addressed by the Maintenance Department through their work order system, a significant number of the deficiencies require small capital projects to be completed. However, since they are typically too large to be addressed by our in-house maintenance work force, and too small to be assigned to capital, these deficiencies are often deferred and remain unassigned and unaddressed for lengthy periods of time.

Current Process Problems



Short-Term Plan

On-Site Assessment and Verification

There are currently 18 teams in the field doing a site-by-site, deficiency-by-deficiency review of virtually every facility in the District to assess the status of each violation. Each member of the teams received a training course that included an overview of the types of deficiencies that would be encountered; an outline of the impact that the installation of automatic sprinkler protection could have on existing deficiencies; and an overview of the Fire Safety Evaluation System. Preliminary reports suggest that an average of over 35% of the open deficiencies assigned to Maintenance and Capital have already been corrected or are duplicates. It is anticipated that this assessment process will be completed by mid to late July 2003. When this process is completed we will be in a position to quantify, not only the exact number of real deficiencies, but also what the count means in terms of workload and estimated cost to correct.

Web Based Reporting

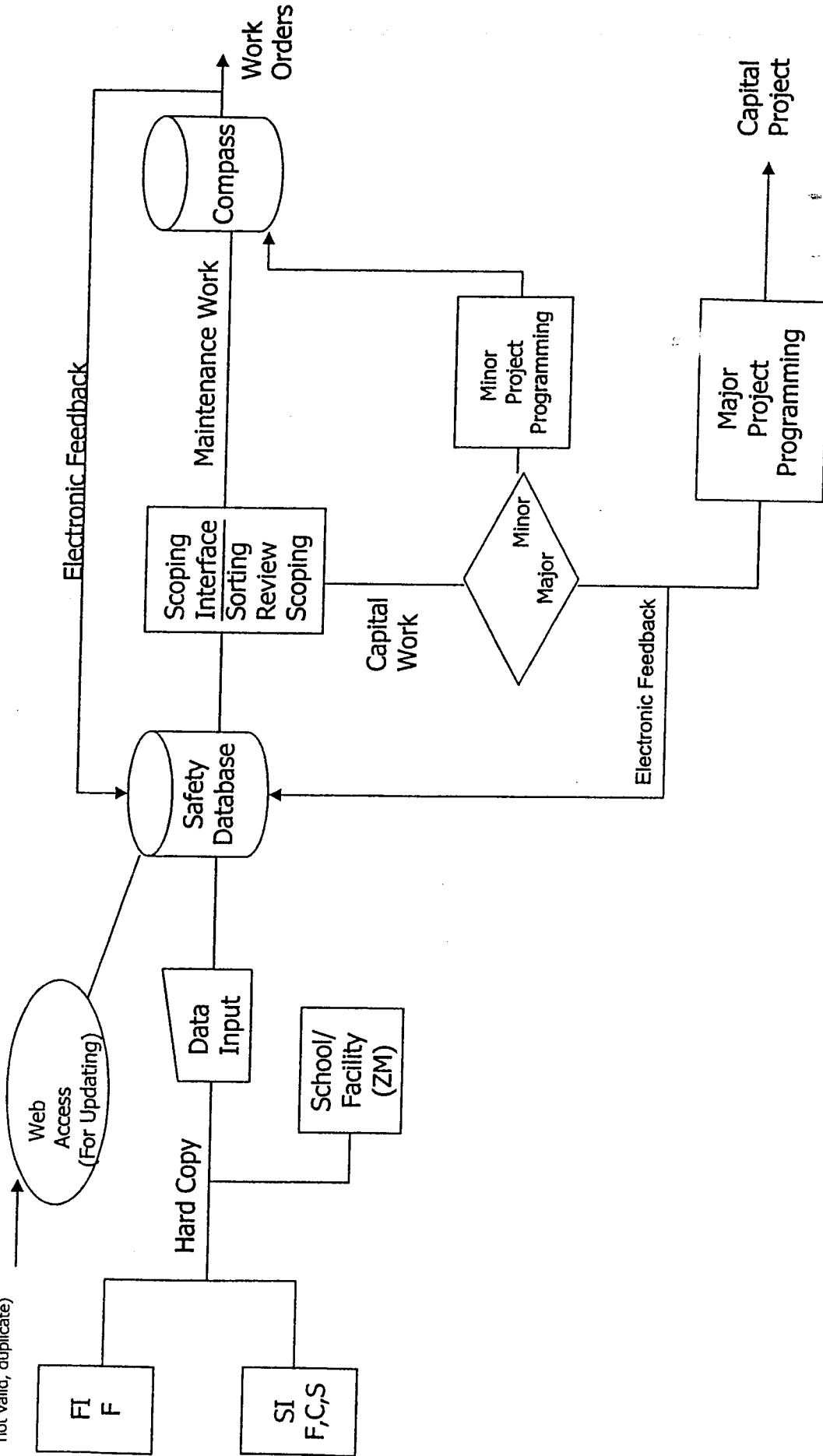
A Web based portal into the DOS database has been created so that, with the completion of each site assessment, the database can be updated from the field to accurately reflect the status of each facility. Meanwhile, an electronic interface has also been created, linking the database to the COMPASS Work Order System. This electronic interface allows the DOS database to serve as the engine, generating work orders in the COMPASS System that correspond to each deficiency in the database assigned an "M" code. The deficiencies are reviewed and scoped on-line, then upon approval, uploaded into the COMPASS System without the need for additional data input or hard copy transfer of information. As work is done by the Maintenance Department to correct deficiencies, the status of the work is electronically fed back to the DOS database so that an accurate status is always reflected there. This results in the elimination of triplicate data input. To eliminate the unnecessary redundancy between inspection entities, namely, the AHJ versus the DOS, it is recommended that joint or coordinated inspections be arranged. A joint or coordinated effort will virtually eliminate duplication since only unresolved deficiencies that do not already exist in the database will be added. This approach will minimize the over/understatement of deficiencies, and improve the overall accuracy of information.

Expedited Construction Projects

In tandem with the initiatives outlined above, the team assigned to this program has identified an immediate supply of A/E and construction firms available to address outstanding fire safety violations requiring major capital projects. The Capital Department has presented sixteen (16) projects with an estimated combined cost of approximately \$3.6M. The following schools are included: Ben Franklin Elementary, Miami Shores Elementary, Mae Walters Elementary, Olympia Heights Elementary, Poinciana Park Elementary, Phillis Wheatley Elementary, Van E. Blanton Elementary, Broadmoor Elementary, Campbell Drive Elementary, Kinloch Park Elementary, Melrose Elementary, Morningside Elementary, Shadowlawn Elementary, L.C. Evans Elementary, Miami Springs Middle, and Henry Filer Middle. These projects are being reviewed by the working group. Upon completion of this review, these projects will be bundled and assigned to CM @ Risk firms to achieve time savings and economies of scale. Additional projects are being developed to be bundled and assigned in the same manner.

Short-Term Plan

Trained Assessment Teams to verify status (i.e. corrected, uncorrected not valid, duplicate)

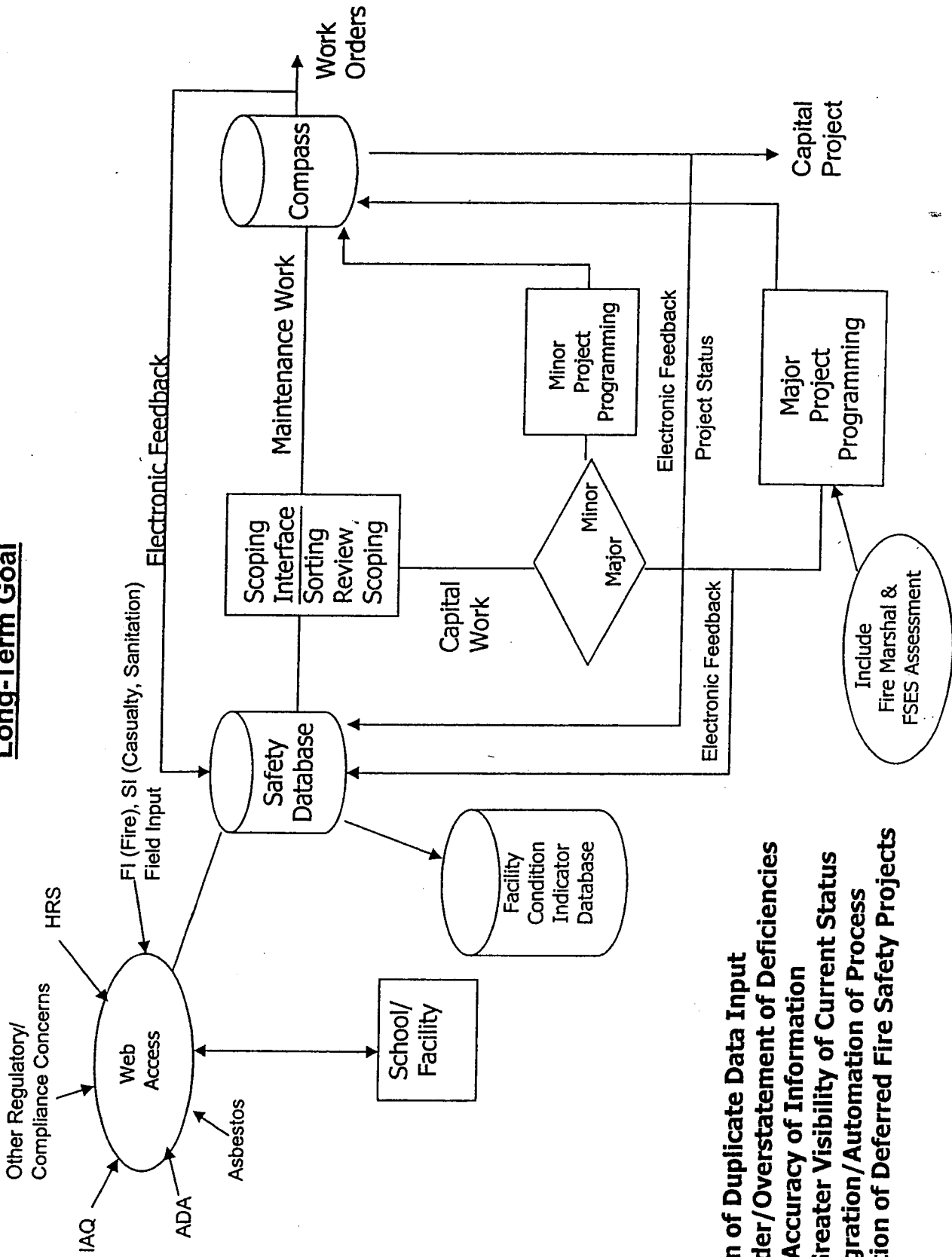


Intermediate Initiatives

In addition to prioritizing tasks that can be expeditiously addressed by maintenance, a process is being developed that will prioritize and bundle non-maintenance projects into minor and major capital projects. The minor projects will be assigned to a small group of projects managers assigned to the Maintenance Department. The major capital projects will be addressed by the Capital Department. However, prior to being assigned to an A/E, the major projects will be reviewed and scoped by a team that includes a representative from the AHJ. Consideration will also be given to the feasibility of using the FSES.* The Capital database will also be electronically linked to the DOS database to allow for systematic feedback on the ongoing status of projects to address cited deficiencies. All projects will be assigned completion timelines.

* Fire Safety Evaluation System (FSES) - This system was developed by the State of Florida in recognition of the impracticality of applying prescriptive code requirements to many existing buildings. It provides a method for assessing and documenting equivalencies for specific occupancies that must be used in conjunction with the requirements of NFPA 101.

Long-Term Goal



- Elimination of Duplicate Data Input
- Avoids Under/Overstatement of Deficiencies
- Improves Accuracy of Information
- Provides Greater Visibility of Current Status
- Total Integration/Automation of Process
- Identification of Deferred Fire Safety Projects