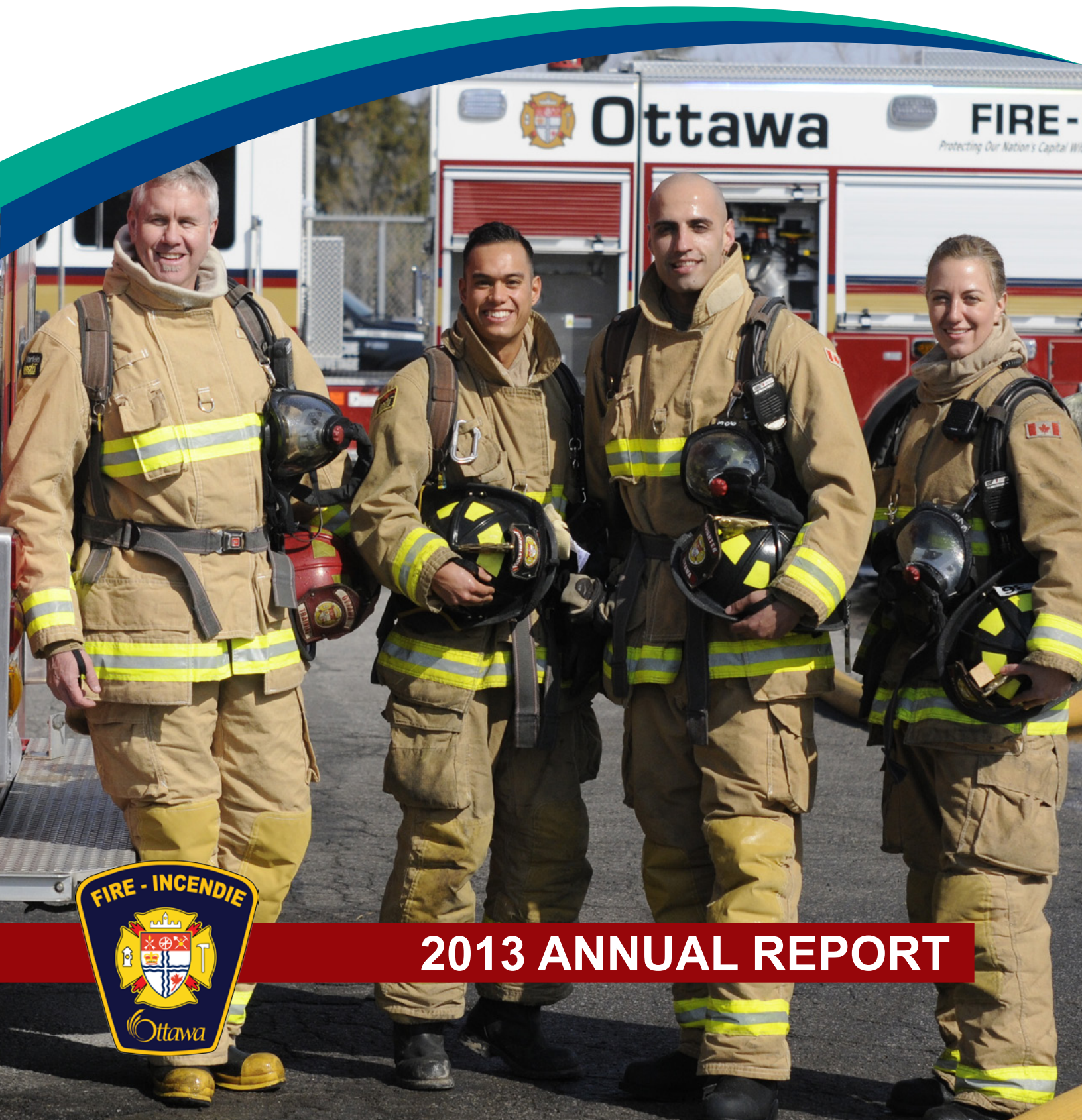


# OTTAWA FIRE SERVICES



**2013 ANNUAL REPORT**

**OTTAWA FIRE SERVICES**

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**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2013**

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**OTTAWA FIRE SERVICES  
SERVICE DES INCENDIES D'OTTAWA**

*Protecting Our Nation's Capital With Pride  
Protéger notre capitale nationale avec fierté*



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As Chair of the Community and Protective Services Committee, it has again been a privilege to work with Ottawa Fire Services over the past year. Ottawa City Council is committed to improving the quality of life for all residents which includes building safe and healthy communities. Ottawa Fire Services is a

critical partner in achieving these goals. Many of the programs and services highlighted in this Annual Report demonstrate how well served the residents of Ottawa are.

In the 2013 budget, Council approved self-contained breathing apparatus and vehicle equipment for Ottawa Fire Services. These ongoing commitments and investments ensured the City's First Responders were ready and able to respond. Ottawa Fire Services also continued to build on its partnerships with local companies to help educate residents about fire prevention including the importance of staying safe in the kitchen. The Project Zero Campaign and the Wake Up Program with support from Enbridge Gas and the Insurance Bureau of Canada have been a tremendous success putting more carbon monoxide and smoke detectors in homes across the City.

A rewarding career in the Fire Service continues to be promoted with priority given to attracting a more diverse workforce that is reflective of the community that is being served. In 2013, Ottawa Fire Services was recognized for its efforts in this regard as fire fighter Gil Gelineau received a Public Hero Award for his commitment to establishing and fostering relationships with diverse communities and Chief John deHooge received the 2013 Individual Equity and Diversity Award for his contributions towards making Ottawa Fire Services an inclusive and diverse workplace.

Additionally, Camp FFIT (Female Fire Fighters In Training) and the Annual Women In Uniform Day at Algonquin College continue to give several young women the opportunity to experience life as a fire fighter.

I want to commend Fire Chief John deHooge and all members of Ottawa Fire Services for their commitment and dedication in protecting all residents of the City of Ottawa.

Once again, thank you for your service and I look forward to working closely with Ottawa Fire Services in the coming year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Taylor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Taylor,  
Chair,  
Emergency and Protective Services  
Committee



On behalf of all the men and women of Ottawa Fire Services (OFS), we are proud to present the 2013 Annual Report. With this snapshot of our programs, services and initiatives, we highlight some of the challenges and accomplishments of a dynamic and evolving composite force.

Change is the operative word in a modern fire service – and OFS is embracing change with enthusiasm. It is no longer feasible, nor acceptable, to maintain the status quo. Our community is evolving, and so should we. OFS is committed to continuous improvement, education, evaluation and innovation.

Guided by a Strategic Plan, OFS has established a roadmap that delineates the department's mission, vision and values as well as specific goals and objectives to measure progress. Coupled with our recent accreditation from the internationally sanctioned fire accreditation process, the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), OFS is laying down a blueprint for service excellence. CFAI will ensure our internal and external leaders are equipped to make service delivery decisions based on sound data and best practices.

Increasingly, we work with our different communities to deliver educational and outreach services. Educational programs such as the proactive “Wake Up! Get a Working Smoke Alarm” and the “Project Zero” campaign, which distributes combination carbon/monoxide smoke alarms to seniors within the City of Ottawa. Community outreach programs have been enriched by such undertakings as Camp FFIT (Female Firefighters in Training), partnerships with the Children’s Aid Society and the Officer Development Program, which has a focus on succession planning. This past year, we once again fostered community partnerships and took part in several cultural festivals, such as the Capital Pride Parade.

I am looking forward to the next term of Council as we advance as an accredited fire service, lead an international fire dynamics study and create a Mental Health First Aid program to better support our personnel. These initiatives and many others will ensure OFS’ continual drive for service excellence.

I began this message on the subject of change. However, one thing remains constant at OFS – the dedication of our staff to the safety of our community. I salute the accomplishments of our personnel who, day after day, protect our nation’s capital with pride. I am proud of their devoted service to our city.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John deHooge".

John deHooge, MPA, CFO,  
Chief,  
Ottawa Fire Services



# OTTAWA FIRE SERVICES SERVICES DES INCENDIES D'OTTAWA

*Protecting Our Nation's Capital with Pride  
Protéger notre capital nationale avec fierté*

## Our Mission

Ottawa Fire Services protects the lives, property and environment for the residents of and visitors to the City of Ottawa.

## Our Vision

Ottawa Fire Services will be a modern and integrated fire service that operates seamlessly, employs highly-productive and highly-motivated people, uses innovative practices and technology and strives to improve every day.

## Our Values

Standing together, working together, serving together, as reflected by:

### Teamwork

Our work together is based on trust, cooperation and a group commitment to service excellence. We will work as a team with other emergency services in pursuing broader city-wide goals.

### Honour

We are honourable to our profession. We commemorate those who came before us, we respect those who are a part of the organization today and we will make the organization better for those who follow.

### Integrity

We operate with integrity and we are mutually responsible for creating a work atmosphere that promotes communication and camaraderie. We lead by example and work to inspire others. We are polite, friendly and compassionate.

### Commitment

We are committed to ensuring the well-being of each other and the people who live in, work in and visit the City of Ottawa. We value our community's trust and respect.

### Pride

We are proud of the service we provide to the City of Ottawa. We are skilled, trained and accountable to provide the most effective prevention, education and emergency response. We will work hard everyday to maintain the highest professional standards and to maintain the public trust through our actions.

## Our Motto

*Protecting Our Nation's Capital With Pride*



The OFS Strategic Plan (2012-2015) was developed in 2011 in accordance with the broader strategic priorities of the City of Ottawa and the Emergency and Protective Services Department (EPS). OFS has completed and undertaken many projects and initiatives that contribute to the four main pillars of OFS Strategic Plan and the overall goals of the City of Ottawa. The 2013 projects and initiatives that have contributed to the Strategic Plan will be discussed throughout the report.

The four main pillars of the Strategic Plan are:

### 1. **Service Excellence:**

Delivering quality services to the public and OFS staff is a key component of service excellence. OFS continues to focus on proactively identifying opportunities to improve technology, collaborate with other organizations and strengthen public education and prevention.

### 2. **Governance, Planning and Decision-Making:**

Focusing on increasing planning capacity and establishing useful and credible performance measurements and reports, OFS contributes to and works to improve informed decision-making. Through the

implementation of the Assistant Deputy Chief role, OFS leadership maintains a strategic focus.

### 3. **Employee Engagement:**

Addressing recognition, recruitment, diversity, training, development and succession planning is an OFS objective identified in the Strategic Plan. Recognizing, supporting and engaging its people is vital to achieving this goal.

### 4. **Financial Responsibility:**

By exploring opportunities for efficiency and revenue generation in order to re-invest in new priorities and requirements, OFS is fiscally responsible to the residents of Ottawa.

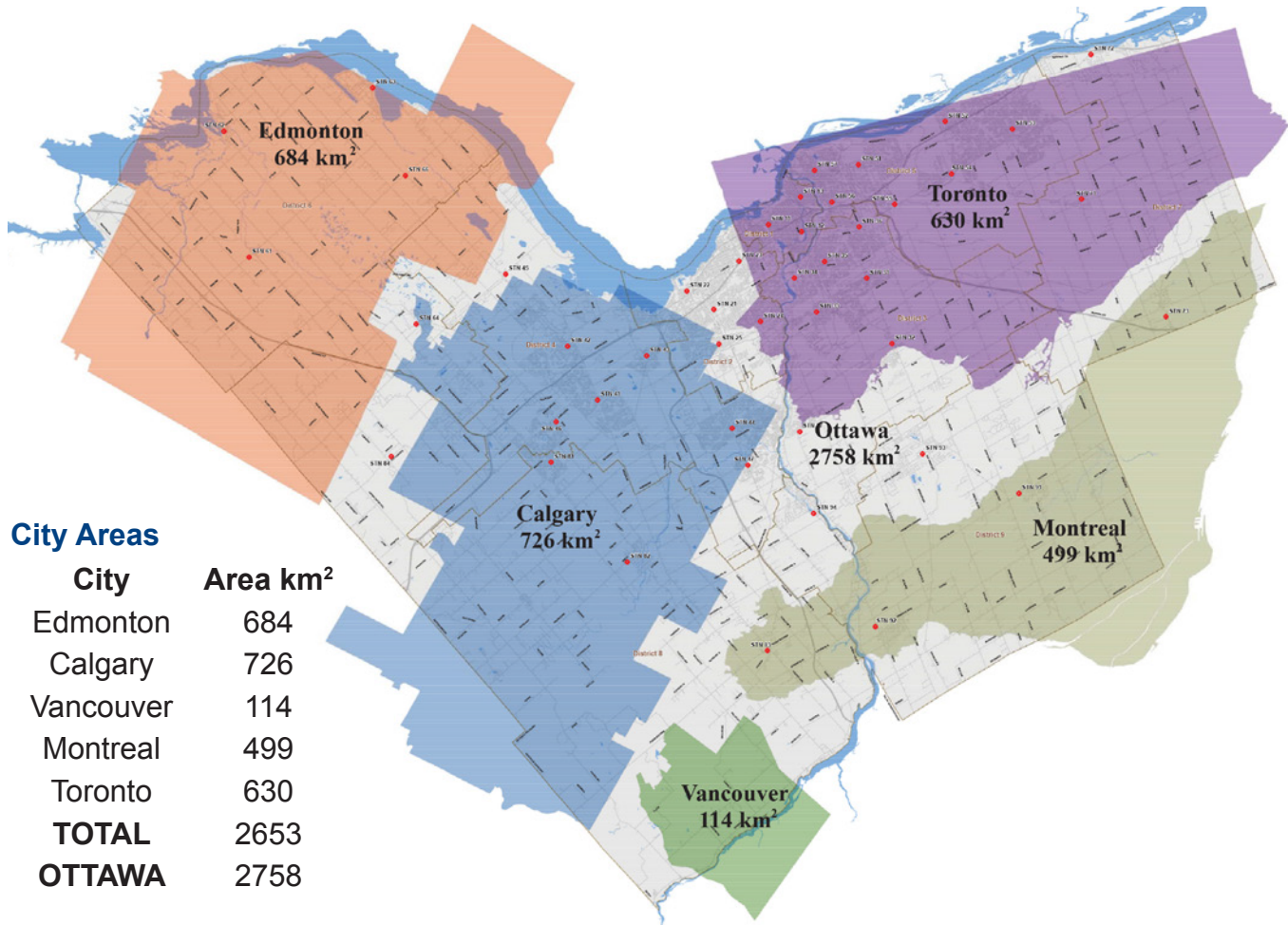


# Our Service

Currently, OFS has forty-five (45) fire stations strategically located within the City of Ottawa. Career firefighters staff twenty-nine (29) stations (four of which are composite stations with a combination of career and volunteer resources).

Volunteer firefighters service sixteen (16) stations. Collectively, these stations provide service to over 940,000 residents across 2,796 square kilometres. This makes OFS the largest composite fire service in the country.

## CANADIAN CITY LAND AREAS COMPARED TO OTTAWA



When compared to the largest metropolitan fire departments in Canada, Ottawa Fire Services serves a geographic area that exceeds the total combined area served by Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary fire services. In fact, OFS' coverage is more than four times that of Toronto, Canada's most populous city.

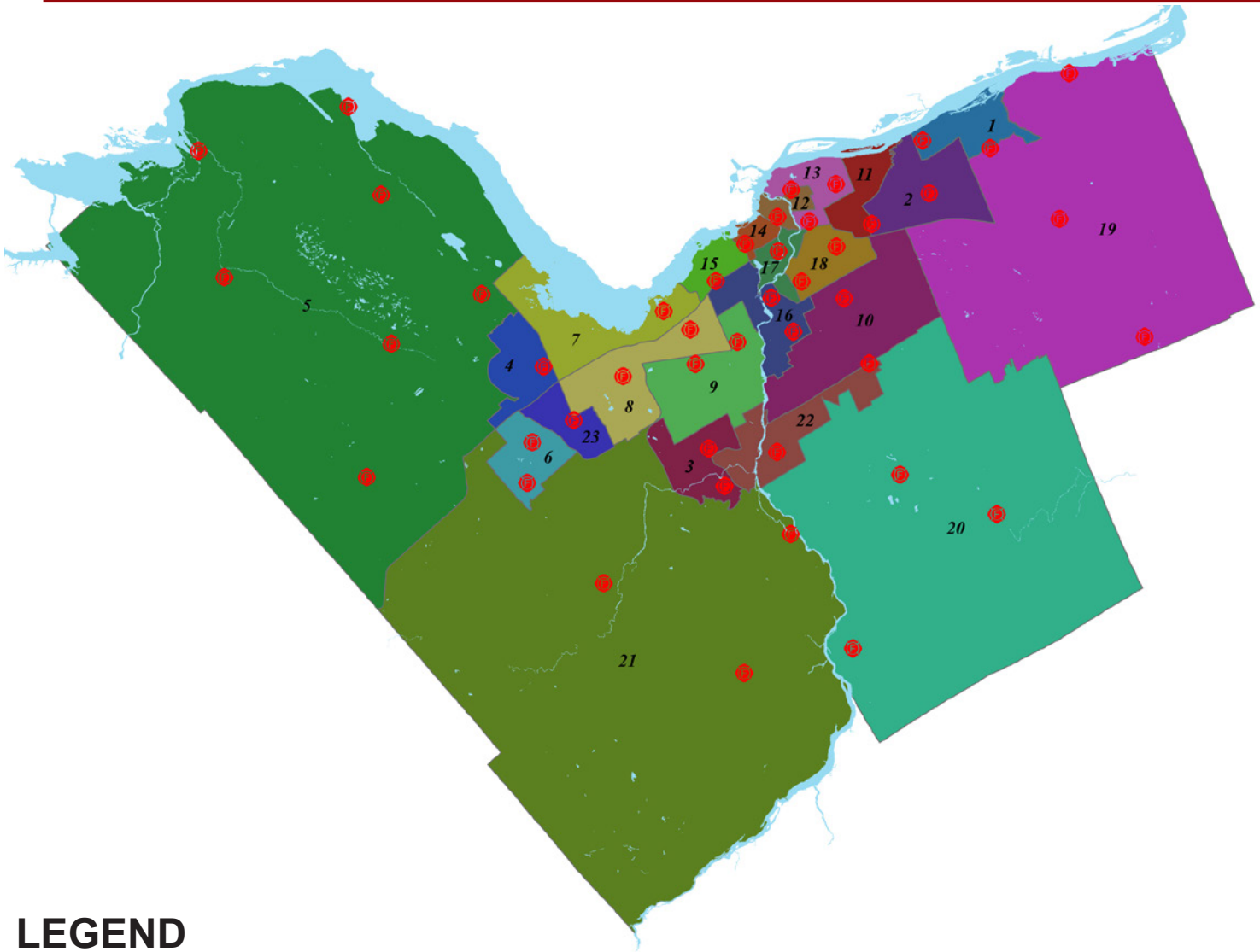
In addition to a vast coverage area, OFS also faces challenges in regards to a growing population, as shown in the table below:

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Population	908,390	917,570	927,118	935,073	943,258
Households	371,975	377,098	382,873	387,732	392,704

\* Population and Household amounts are yearly estimates from the Planning & Growth Management Department.



# OTTAWA FIRE SERVICES - CITY WARDS AND STATIONS



## LEGEND

 Fire Stations

Ward 1 ORLEANS - Station 52

Ward 2 INNES - Station 54

Ward 3 BARRHAVEN - Stations 44, 47

Ward 4 KANATA NORTH - Station 42

Ward 5 WEST CARLETON-MARCH -  
Stations 45, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 84

Ward 6 STITTSVILLE - Stations 46, 81

Ward 7 BAY - Station 22

Ward 8 COLLEGE - Stations 21, 43

Ward 9 KNOXDALE-MERIVALE - Station 24, 25

Ward 10 GLOUCESTER-SOUTHGATE - Station 31

Ward 11 BEACON HILL-CYRVILLE - Station 55

Ward 12 RIDEAU-VANIER - Station 13, 57

Ward 13 RIDEAU-ROCKCLIFFE - Station 51, 56

Ward 14 SOMERSET - Station 11

Ward 15 KITCHISSIPPI - Station 23

Ward 16 RIVER - Stations 33, 34

Ward 17 CAPITAL - Station 12

Ward 18 ALTA VISTA - Stations 33, 36

Ward 19 CUMBERLAND - Stations 53, 71, 73, 73

Ward 20 OSGOOD - Stations 91, 92, 93

Ward 21 RIDEAU-GOULBOURN - Station 82, 83, 94

Ward 22 GLOUCESTER-SOUTH NEPEAN - Stations 32, 37

Ward 21 KANATA SOUTH - Station 41



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The management structure of Ottawa Fire Services is divided into a Fire Leadership Team (FLT) and a Fire Management Team (FMT).

The Fire Leadership Team consists of the Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chiefs and is the strategic management level of OFS whose focus is to establish long-term strategic objectives to ensure OFS is in concert with the branch's goal of continuous improvement and aligned with Corporate and Council priorities.

The Fire Management Team consists of the Assistant Deputy Chiefs supported by a Manager that supports business/legislative services and performance measurement reporting. The FMT is the operational management level of OFS whose

objectives are to handle all short-term and day to day operational requirements.

OFS personnel provide many valuable services to the community beyond fighting fires, including:

- Fire Suppression (fire rescue, tiered medical response, training, communications, and incident management)
- Special Operations (water/ice rescue, auto extrication, confined space, trench, collapse and high angle rescue; hazardous material responses; Urban Search And Rescue; Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and explosive response)
- Fire Prevention and Public Fire Safety Education (fire prevention inspections, determination of cause and origin of fires, attendance at public education events and dissemination of public fire safety educational materials)

DIVISION	Number of Personnel
Office of the Fire Chief	3
Operations & Special Operations	1,405
<i>Career Personnel</i>	892
<i>Volunteer Personnel</i>	513
Communications & Asset Management	51
Community Standards, Education, Planning & Safety	68
Fire Business Support Unit	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,531</b>

# In the Community



As an emergency service, OFS is extremely visible within the community and takes the opportunity to engage and educate the public. Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan, OFS has undertaken many initiatives to improve service excellence and its delivery of quality services to the community through engaging residents.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

OFS works diligently to advance its public education programs as population and community growth within the city continues to increase. As this trend continues, OFS must focus on improving the public's fire safety knowledge and awareness.

Fire safety programs include inspecting smoke alarms and developing escape plans, distributing fire safety education materials to owners and occupants, releasing public service announcements, connecting through social media and more.

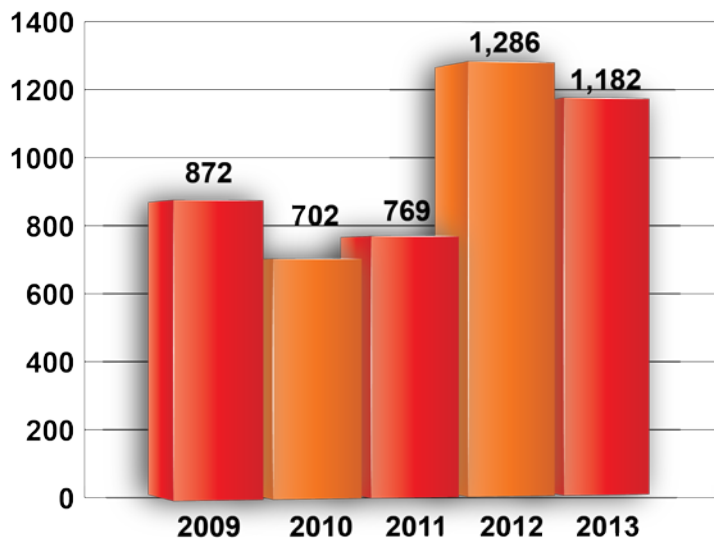
In 2013, OFS personnel had direct contact with over 73,000 Ottawa residents through numerous educational events including school events, community fairs and more high profile campaigns and tactics such as:

- Fire Prevention Week: The theme for Fire Prevention Week 2013 was "Get Cooking with Fire Safety" and highlighted the importance of

kitchen fire safety. Kitchen fires remain one of the most common causes of fire.

- The new Fire Safety House: OFS received a Fire Safety House in 2013, only the second of its kind in Canada. The Fire Safety House is used to teach fire safety messages in an interactive atmosphere.
- The Wake Up! Smoke Alarm Program was revamped from a weekend only campaign to an eight day format, twice a year, in order to have a more sustained presence in the community. In 2013, 13,500 homes were visited to inspect and distribute smoke alarms.

### Public Education Activities



\* Note this does not include Wake Up Campaign Statistics

# In the Community



## City of Ottawa Fire Statistics

Statistic	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>No. of Fires*</b>	1,032	936	718	715	692
<b>No. of Investigations</b>	753	940	727	728	675
<b>No. of Intentional Fires</b>	238	149	92	77	65
<b>Dollar Loss of All Fires</b>	\$61,785,772	\$52,588,109	\$42,826,097	\$41,819,381	\$39,424,323
<b>Dollar Loss of Intentional Fires</b>	\$3,914,023	\$2,606,654	\$6,011,639	\$3,451,487	\$2,465,632

## INSPECTIONS

The landscape in Ottawa is constantly changing by as seen by the construction of Light Rail and the opening of new major venues, such as Lansdowne and the Ottawa Convention Centre. Inspections are an essential component of the City's overall fire prevention strategy and help to mitigate against our expanding city (i.e. both population and structural growth).

By the end of 2014, OFS is projecting to have completed approximately 6,000 inspections, which will exceed the number of inspections completed in 2013.

Furthermore, Fire Prevention Officers issued 47 charges in 2013, totalling \$156,625 in fines. To date in 2014, OFS has 27 charges totalling \$127,125 in fines.

As part of the City of Ottawa's Mobile Workforce initiative, Fire Prevention Officers have been placed in numerous stations across the city to be more efficient with their inspections and outreach within their district. With the transition, Fire Prevention Officers are now more familiar with their district, giving them the ability to better identify properties that are a cause for concern and develop working relationships with property owners. When working with property owners, whether commercial or residential, OFS primary goal is to educate property owners on fire safety measures and provide concrete solutions for fixing any identified deficiencies.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Inspections</b>	3,276	3,099	4,289	5,748	4,503	6,000 (Projected)



## CAMP FFIT

The Education Division provides recruitment programs, in-service training and specialty courses to OFS personnel. Its primary responsibility is ensuring all OFS personnel are fully prepared for the mental and physical requirements and challenges that come with being a firefighter. Above and beyond that, the Education Division, acknowledges the benefits of a diverse workforce and seeks innovative ways to recruit from designated demographics that traditionally don't consider a career in the fire service. One of the ways in which it does so is through a summer camp for young women between the ages 15-19 called Camp FFIT (Female Firefighters in Training). Camp FFIT began in 2010 and is a weeklong camp that provides female youth first-hand experience of what it takes to be a firefighter. Over the past 4 years, the program has had 94 participants. Of those participants some are now rural firefighters, attending pre-service programs in post-secondary schools and applying for fulltime positions within fire services across the nation. OFS continues to offer Camp FFIT with the hopes that it will increase confidence and empower young women to pursue non-traditional careers. OFS also participates each year in the Women In Uniform Day at Algonquin College with

its partners in Police, Paramedics and By-law to promote a career in the protective services field to high school students.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF OTTAWA

In 2013, the Community Standards Division embarked on a new partnership that has enhanced fire safety within one of Ottawa's vulnerable populations. In partnership with OFS, the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa (CASO) established a committee to find ways to implement and enhance awareness of fire safety and prevention recommendations. The committee developed a protocol stating that, as a part of their assessment, child protection workers will determine if their client has a working smoke alarm on each level of the family home. Where there isn't a working alarm present, the worker will provide a loaner alarm to the family and will make a referral to OFS for immediate follow up. OFS held a training day for all CASO staff to inform them of the new protocol and increase awareness on several fire safety measures including blocked exits, space heaters and electric hazards.

# In The Community



Education and inspection are vital pieces of the City's fire prevention strategy and this partnership allows OFS to reach both caregivers and landlords in a more effective way. In 2013, OFS received several hundred referrals from CASO resulting in 314 inspections or re-inspections of smoke alarms. Ottawa's fire related fatalities rate has stayed within its five year average and has consistently remained below the Provincial fire death rate. Increased fire prevention activities will continue to help reduce fire fatalities.

communities in Ottawa to better understand their culture, to seek ways to work together in providing safety messaging and for recruitment purposes. OFS will continue to make progress in this domain as it aims to become an organization that better represents the community it serves.

## INCLUSION

With the implementation of the Inclusion, Advisory and Outreach Team in 2012, OFS has been promoting and advocating the importance of diversity and inclusion through various avenues. In 2013 OFS again hosted a flag raising ceremony to celebrate Capital Pride and continued to conduct outreach to faith communities. OFS also participated in several cultural festivals that take place around the city such as the Muslim Festival, the Lebanese Festival and Caravibe. OFS remains dedicated to increasing connections within diverse





In line with the Strategic Plan, OFS focuses on increasing planning capacity and establishing useful and credible performance measurements and reports to improve informed decision-making. In order to maximize its resources and provide efficient and effective services, OFS understands that it must conduct thorough performance analysis.

## COMMISSION OF FIRE ACCREDITATION INTERNATIONAL

One of OFS Strategic Initiative Priorities was to launch the Commission of Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) process to ensure OFS is operating efficiently and at industry standards. OFS applied for the accreditation in 2011 and is proud to announce that in August of 2014, OFS received its accreditation, cementing itself as a progressive and effective fire service on an international scale. CFAI is an internationally recognized self-assessment and evaluation model for fire and emergency service organizations. It compares OFS to industry best practices, enabling OFS to:

- Determine community risk and safety needs
- Provide a detailed evaluation of services provided to the community
- Identify areas of strength and weakness within the department
- Encourage professional growth for both the department and its personnel
- Create processes for addressing deficiencies while building organizational success
- Provide a forum for the communication of organizational priorities
- Create a mechanism for developing and evaluating programs and action plans

OFS launched the process in 2012 placing them in the “applicant agency” phase. In this phase content experts throughout the organization were tasked with gathering data and other exhibits to support its accomplishments, identify weaknesses and provide insights and analysis within all areas of the organization. In the next phase of the process, OFS developed a Standards of Cover document that ensured OFS deployment model is the most effective and efficient it can be. In 2015, OFS will be reporting back to Committee with the results of this study.

# Performance

All required documentation was complete in the early months of 2014 and submitted to CFAI. In May, five CFAI peer assessors visited OFS to validate the documentation and provide minor recommendations before the final accreditation stage. In August, Chief deHooze and OFS Accreditation Manager Jim Narraway presented OFS accreditation requirements to a panel of CFAI officials in Dallas, Texas where OFS officially became accredited. In many ways, the work has just begun. Accreditation is an ongoing process that allows OFS to conduct an all encompassing self-assessment on a regular basis and will set the framework for OFS new performance measurement framework.



## TRI-SERVICE RESPONSE

With the introduction of the Joint Emergency Services Operational Advisory Group (JESOAG), OFS continues to work with Ottawa Police and Paramedic Services to enhance joint emergency response and the delivery of service to the public. The group's fundamental responsibility is to strengthen tri-service operational effectiveness through policy, engaging community partners and strategic direction. In 2013, the JESOAG amended the Tiered Response Agreement and adopted Escalation and De-Escalation Protocols. The agreements ensure timely availability of emergency responders and that the appropriate services are efficiently deployed.

## RESPONSE TIMES

Ottawa Fire Services measures response times for each call for service. There are a number of factors which may affect response times from year to year: construction zones, time of year (weather), time of day, traffic, traffic intensification, and station cover off. The chart below reflects the five year average (at the 90th percentile) as a more accurate evaluation of the response time trends.

Response time is the Dispatch time from OFS Communications Center to On-Scene time of first apparatus.

### Operations Response Statistics

Area	Actual 90th Percentile Response time 5 Year Average (2009)	Actual 90th Percentile Response time 5 Year Average (2010)	Actual 90th Percentile Response time 5 Year Average (2011)	Actual 90th Percentile Response time 5 Year Average (2012)	Actual 90th Percentile Response time 5 Year Average (2013)	Target 90th Percentile Response Time 5 Year Average
Urban	5:43	5:52	5:56	5:48	5:48	5:00
Suburban	7:29	7:36	7:56	7:41	7:43	7:00
Rural	14:29	13:50	14:46	14:33	14:31	14:00





In 2013, OFS recorded 62,476 apparatus responses to 22,615 incidents. The continued exemplary efforts of the Operations and Special Operations Division, together with increased focus on prevention and public education programs, have resulted in an improved 2013 statistical report card for Ottawa Fire Services.

protection and emergency response to the City. As the first point of contact in an emergency or life threatening situation, this division is equipped with the technology and systems to receive calls from the public and from other emergency agencies. Overall, Communications encompasses a computer aided dispatch center, portable and fixed radios, pagers, station alerting systems including printers, mobile data terminals, as well as the antennas, towers and infrastructure to support the system. Staffed on a 24/7 basis, Communications' personnel are trained to handle all types of emergency and non-emergency calls. The Division contributes to reducing intervention time, injuries, loss of life and property due to fires and other emergencies and creates a safer working environment for emergency responders.

Response Type	Incidents	Incidents
	2012	2013
Fire	1,277	1,009
Fire Related	2,457	2,255
False Alarm	8,310	8,279
Hazmat	1,030	1,166
Rescue	4,208	3,884
Medical	4,850	3,509
Aid Agreements	27	10
Miscellaneous	3,051	2,503
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25,210</b>	<b>22,615</b>

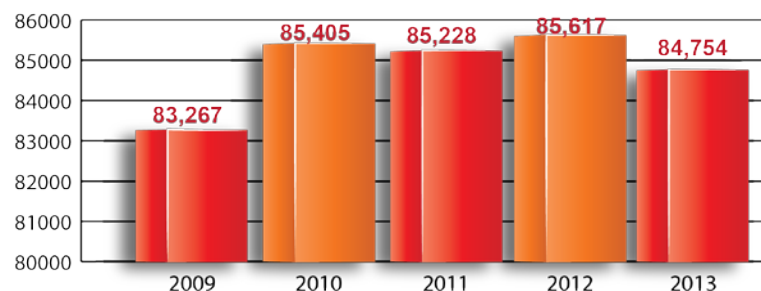
\* Note: The decline in medical calls is as a result of the Tiered Response Agreement between OFS and the Ottawa Paramedic Service.

\*Note: Miscellaneous calls include illegal grow operation (no fire), and assist police.

## CALL VOLUME

The Communications Division directly impacts the ability of OFS to provide effective fire

### Communications Call Center Call Volume



# Leadership & Innovation



OFS prides itself in being one of the most versatile and innovative fire services in the nation. Other fire services often look to the nation's capital for leadership.

## TECHNOLOGY

A prime anchor of service excellence is leveraging technology to improve operational performance and deliver more efficient service. As such, OFS has engaged in several opportunities to enhance its communications services through technology. For example, OFS installed a new pager notification system that instantly captures the number of responding rural firefighters to a station, scene, and a number of other scenarios. As a result, Chief Officers and the Dispatch Centre are able to determine the number of firefighters available to respond to the incident. With this system, rural firefighters are now able to quickly determine who is responding to any given incident in order to ensure adequate response.

Additionally, OFS has installed Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) in Chief Officer vehicles. The MDT's give Chief Officer's access to City of Ottawa applications, the Records Management System and provide Automatic Vehicle Location and Global Positioning System capabilities. These improvements allow for effective and efficient decision making when responding to emergencies.

## NEW PROMOTIONAL SYSTEM

Addressing succession planning is an OFS objective identified in the Strategic Plan. In 2013, the Education Division worked diligently with the Ottawa Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA) to enhance the Officer Development Program and implement a new Promotional System that focuses on succession planning and better preparing OFS officers for the next stages of their career. A competency based program has been implemented for personnel hired post-2002 to better prepare the future leaders of OFS. The new system focuses on career progression and a commitment to further education at all levels of the organization. Some of the course content includes: emergency management, empowering leaders, mentorship programs, technology and strategies and tactics.





## SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Ottawa is a vast city with urban, suburban and rural areas surrounded by water and green space. This requires OFS to provide unique services outside of fighting fires to keep residents and visitors of Ottawa safe. The Special Operations Division has the ability to respond to natural and human caused disasters and is trained to provide the following services:

- CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives)
- Hazardous Material Response
- Water and Ice Rescue
- High Angle Rescue
- Trench Rescue
- Collapse Rescue
- Confined Space Rescue
- Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)
- Auto Extrication



These unique capabilities make OFS one of the most versatile fire services in the nation:

- OFS provides one of only three CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive) teams in the province of Ontario (the others are located in Toronto and Windsor). OFS provides Hazmat responses in accordance with NFPA Standard 472 Level III capability.



- OFS is the primary municipal provider of water and ice rescue services.
- Our technical rope rescue program is one of the most advanced in North America with many of our personnel trained to the highest industry standard. This “low frequency, high risk” type of rescue requires considerable continuous training as the skills learned must be regularly maintained.

# Leadership & Innovation



- In 2013, the OFS Vehicle Rescue Team built upon its already impressive resume of awards placing 1st overall in the North-Eastern USA Regional Competition and the North American Vehicle Rescue Challenge. The team began training together in 2007 and is made up of eight OFS personnel, both urban and rural. Competition training begins in the late spring and the team does so on voluntary time. Each year the training is unique, as standards and techniques continue to evolve within the industry. Successful extrication is a direct result of hard work, ongoing training and a working environment that fosters a teamwork approach. This not only promotes success in competitions but within the line of work as well. OFS plays a significant role in automobile extrication focusing on vehicle stabilization, patient disentanglement, material relocation and is recognized across North America for this specialized expertise.

## FIRE DYNAMICS

The goals of the Safety and Innovation Division are to develop, implement and maintain programs to meet the highest possible level of safety for all Ottawa Fire Services' personnel. The Division is actively engaged in fostering a culture of safety, learning and service excellence that is supported by a highly reliable Occupational Health and Safety Management System.

In 2013, the Safety and Innovation Division received a grant from Defence Research and Development

Canada, the Canadian Safety and Security Program (CSSP). OFS, in collaboration with multiple stakeholders and international partners, will deliver an evidence-based fire dynamics training and development program. The CSSP is a federally-funded program aimed at strengthening Canada's ability to anticipate, prevent, respond to, mitigate, prepare for, and recover from natural disasters, accidents and crimes.

In 2014, OFS will lead the program through the many stages of development with the objective of changing the way fires are fought internationally. The program, supported by international partners such as the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the Fire Department of New York and the International Association of Fire Fighters to name a few, will develop a comprehensive, evidence-based fire dynamics compartment fire behaviour training (CFBT) program for fire services. The curriculum and training will be done under live-fire conditions using several CFBT tool designs in coordination with Canada's National Research Council. Concurrently, twenty OFS personnel will be trained as CFBT instructors who will then certify representatives from training agencies and fire services across Canada and beyond.



# Looking Ahead

OFS will continue to contribute to the Strategic Plan with various projects currently underway and in future plans. With the recent accreditation from CFAI, OFS must continue to maintain internationally recognized standards of performance. A new performance measurement framework is underway and will play a major role in improving OFS performance reporting, decision-making and maintaining CFAI status.

OFS is also taking leadership in the realm of mental health. As first responders, OFS personnel are exposed to incidents that can have an impact on their mental health and OFS leadership has made it a priority to better support its personnel in that regard. Many mental health resources have been distributed to personnel to provide them with contact information for mental health services within the community and provide tips on dealing with stress management. The Training Division has been working with the Mental Health Commission of Canada to develop a curriculum to deliver a two day Mental Health First Aid Program to all OFS personnel.

As of 2014, OFS has trained 14 para-trainers and will be delivering the program later this year. The program will focus on giving personnel the tools to identify and better approach mental illness within the community, as well as reduce stigma within the service.

Ottawa is host of the 106th Annual Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, Fire-Rescue Canada Conference in September 2014 and OFS has played an integral role to include non-traditional topics such as mental health and diversity within the fire service.

As growth within the city continues, OFS will continue to focus on fire prevention and education outreach to reduce the number of fires and ensure residents and property owners are taking proper measures to stay safe. OFS will continue to be a versatile and innovative force that will remain a leader amongst fire services in Canada and globally.





**OTTAWA FIRE SERVICES**  
**SERVICE DES INCENDIES D'OTTAWA**

*Protecting Our Nation's Capital With Pride*  
*Protéger notre capitale nationale avec fierté*

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