

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Community and Protective Services Committee
Comité des services communautaires et de protection
17 September 2020 / 17 septembre 2020**

**and Council
et au Conseil
23 September 2020 / 23 septembre 2020**

**Submitted on September 8, 2020
Soumis le 8 septembre 2020**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:
Kim Ayotte, Fire Chief, Ottawa Fire Services/ Chef pompier, Services des
Incendies d'Ottawa**

**Contact Person
Personne ressource:
Victoria Calladine, Strategic Programs and Project Specialist / Spécialiste,
Programmes et Projets
613-580-2424, ext./poste 29060, Victoria.Calladine@ottawa.ca**

Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2020-EPS-GEN-0004

SUBJECT: Ottawa Fire Services 2019 Annual Report

OBJET: Rapport Annuel de 2019 du Service des Incendies

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Community and Protective Services Committee recommend that Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le comité des services communautaires et de protection recommande au Conseil de recevoir le rapport aux fins d'information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assumptions and Analysis

City Council approved the enactment of a Fire Services Establishing By-law (ACS2009-COS-EPS-0049) on September 23, 2009. Sections 15 and 16 of the Ottawa Fire Services (OFS) Establishing By-law No. 2009-319 require the preparation of an annual report, which shall include, but not be limited to the following items:

1. The goals and objectives of OFS;
2. A description of the organization of OFS;
3. The fire protection services provided by OFS; and
4. The level of service to be provided by OFS.

This report fulfills the legislative requirement for OFS to prepare an annual report, as outlined in the Fire Services Establishing By-law No. 2009-319.

In 2019, OFS received 94,564 calls to its Communications Centre and responded to 26,028 incidents which remains consistent with the previous year's responses. Additionally, OFS completed 3,882 inspections, participated in 571 public education events and visited 14,143 homes as part of the "Wake Up: Get a Working Smoke Alarm" campaign.

Initiatives for 2019 are further described in the report including the enhancement of the City of Ottawa Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) program, undertaking re-accreditation with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), integrating new technologies to enhance OFS communications and rostering solutions, the continued focus on mental health strategies, and efficient response to major incidents, such as the 2019 floods. The OFS 2019 Annual Report also highlights relevant performance measurements and planned activities for 2020.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Public Consultation/ Input

Public consultations were not undertaken as this report is administrative in nature.

BACKGROUND

Ottawa Fire Services 2017-2020 Strategic Plan Priorities

The Ottawa Fire Services 2017-2020 Strategic Plan establishes four key priorities for the service which were developed to allow OFS to continue serving the community in the most effective and meaningful way.

- Priority 1 - Service Excellence: engaging with community members as well as key stakeholders while performing daily tasks by demonstrating outcomes that provide value to residents and meet or excel service delivery standards.
- Priority 2 - Employee Engagement: building employee engagement and wellness initiatives that foster a healthy, committed workforce that delivers on branch services and programs.
- Priority 3 – Succession Planning: move from reactive to proactive management of employees allowing for improved knowledge sharing, continuity and staff development.
- Priority 4 – Financial Sustainability: becoming financially responsible by effectively managing existing resources and by making sustainable long-term decisions that encourage core service and program improvement now and into the future.

Description of the Organization of Ottawa Fire Services

OFS protects the lives, property and environment for the citizens of and visitors to the City of Ottawa. OFS provides services from 45 stations located across the City of Ottawa. Collectively, these stations provide service to approximately 1,000,000 residents across 2,796 square kilometres. The OFS team is comprised of career firefighters, volunteer firefighters, as well as inspection, education, safety, training, communications, maintenance and administration personnel. OFS personnel provide many valuable services to the community beyond fighting fires, including:

- Fire Prevention and Public Fire Safety Education services which include fire prevention inspections, code enforcement, determination of cause and origin of fires, attendance at public events, fire safety presentations and dissemination of public fire safety educational materials
- Fire Suppression services which include fire rescue, tiered medical response, training, communications and incident management

- Special Operations includes Vehicle and Machinery Extrication, Rope and Confined Space Rescue, Trench/Collapse and Urban Search and Rescue, Fire Support Unit - Rescue Task Force, Hazmat/Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive, Wildland Fires, Light Rail Transit Rescue, Water/Ice Rescue, Specialized Foam Suppression

In order to provide these services, the OFS team operates from six divisions as follows:

1. Office of the Fire Chief
2. Urban and Special Operations
3. Rural Operations – Volunteer Personnel
4. Community Standards and Communications
5. Training and Safety
6. Operational Support Services

A total of 1,472 OFS personnel work within these divisions. Of these, 59.1% are within the Urban and Special Operations Division and 32.4% are volunteers within the Rural Division. The remaining 8.4% are dispersed amongst the other divisions.

Fire Protection Services Provided by Ottawa Fire Services

The *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997*, recognizes the importance of implementing the three lines of defence and the OFS optimizes this philosophy in all of its programs. The three lines of defence include:

- Line 1: Public Fire Safety Education
- Line 2: Fire Safety Standards and Enforcement
- Line 3: Emergency Response

To meet these objectives, OFS promotes the three lines of defense through programs that support the following priorities:

- Public Education
- Fire Prevention
- Fire Safety Standards and Enforcement
- Emergency Response

Level of Service Provided by Ottawa Fire Services

OFS has adopted a risk-based deployment model to protect the lives and property of the residents of Ottawa. As part of the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) process, OFS response standards were developed through the Standards of

Cover, a comprehensive deployment analysis that also served as the foundation for the 2015 Station Location Study. The Standards of Cover assists OFS in ensuring a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical response and specialty response situations and to establish response times that are held to industry standards. Details on incident volume and total response time are described further in this report and in Document 1.

DISCUSSION

The Ottawa Fire Services 2019 Annual Report highlights key accomplishments from 2019. Four key priorities were identified within the Ottawa Fire Services 2017-2020 Strategic Plan including service excellence, employee engagement, succession planning and financial sustainability. 2019 initiatives and accomplishments demonstrating commitment to each priority are outlined below.

Objective 1 - Service Excellence

Key goals under the Service Excellence priority involve demonstrating the value of the Ottawa Fire Service by engaging the community through everyday work, strengthening communications, remaining a leader in the industry, and cultivating client facing initiatives.

PERFORMANCE

2019 marked the fifth year in which OFS reported on response standards, as outlined in the 2015 Station Location Study. As part of the CFAI process, OFS maintains a Compliance Committee within OFS to review response objectives on a quarterly basis. The Compliance Committee evaluates OFS' performance and develops solutions for any issues that may arise.

There are a number of factors that may affect response times from year to year, including construction zones, time of year (weather), time of day, traffic flow, traffic intensification and station cover off as resources are directed to an ongoing incident.

As part of the most recent accreditation process with CFAI, OFS has adopted the CFAI standard for performance measurement standards and reporting. These changes are demonstrated in Document 1 and have resulted in minor variations in call data as a result of the refined reporting criteria. Another change under the 9th edition of the CFAI re-accreditation process is that all performance measurement standards are reported under classifications of 'urban' or 'rural'. Historically, based on the previous

accreditation edition, OFS performance measurement standards were broken out under the categories of urban, suburban and rural.

In 2019, OFS recorded 72,628 vehicle responses to 26,028 incidents. Table 1, as outlined in Document 1, shows the volume of incidents OFS responded to from 2014 through to 2019. The total annual incident volume for 2019 remained consistent with 2018 responses. There was a notable increase in Aid Agreements in 2019 which was primarily due to surrounding municipalities requesting fire apparatus to help provide water for fires near the municipal border. Public education, inspection and code enforcement are mitigation strategies that can be used to reduce the volume of fire-related incidents. OFS continues to monitor trends and adapts accordingly in order to develop new mitigation strategies. OFS remains diligent in ensuring that the proper apparatus and equipment are deployed to each call for service.

The latest OFS Standards of Cover and the 2015 Station Location Study include complete descriptions of the methodologies used to establish our deployment model, including definitions of our risk ratings and population densities. It is also now mandatory to complete a Community Risk Assessment based on provincial direction but since OFS was an early adopter of the CFAI framework, it is something OFS has completed historically and will continue to do so going forward. These documents define how OFS uses critical tasking to determine its Effective Response Force requirements, and how those requirements feed into the creation of our incident classifications and benchmark calculations, which are prerequisites for determining our overall response standards.

Benchmarks are commonly referred to as the targets or goals an organization strives to obtain in an effort to achieve excellence in service delivery. Municipal fire services are mandated by the Fire Protection and Prevention Act to provide fire protection services in accordance with local needs and circumstances. As such, through the CFAI accreditation process, OFS adopted the National Fire Protection Association standards of performance benchmarks in compliance with the Provincial legislation. Those benchmarks were then used in conjunction with our baseline data from 2014-2018 to identify areas for improvement, measure performance, and create minimum standards for the current five-year accreditation period (2019-2024).

Tables 3 and 4, as outlined in Document 1, shows the first on scene (FOS) total response time performance at the 90th percentile to each type of Fire incident between 2014 and 2019 using the new performance measurement standards, as compared to the performance from our baseline reporting period (2014-2018).

Tables 5 and 6, as outlined in Document 1, shows the effective response force (ERF) total response time performance at the 90th percentile to each emergency incident classification group between 2014 and 2019 using the new performance measurement standards, as compared to the performance from our baseline reporting period (2014-2018).

Table 7, as outlined in Document 1, shows the OFS Communications Center's annual call volume for the past six years. The Communications Division enables OFS to provide effective fire protection and timely emergency responses across the City of Ottawa. The Communications Division contributes to reducing intervention time (total time from the moment a call for service is received to the moment personnel arrive on scene), injuries and loss of life and property due to fires and other emergencies. The Communications Division creates a safer working environment for emergency responders through the transfer of information from bystanders/witness to responding personnel.

OFS is currently working towards releasing fire response volume on incident data on the open data portal through Ottawa.ca.

KEY RESPONSES

OFS responded to a number of incidents in 2019, some key responses that demonstrate operational performance and contribute to public trust in the service are explained below.

Spring Flood

Between April 25, 2019 and June 12, 2019, the City of Ottawa declared a State of Emergency with record setting flooding along the Ottawa River. Flooding affected four wards, with forced evacuations in areas including Constance Bay, Fitzroy Harbour, Cumberland and Britannia. OFS personnel supported both emergency response and recovery phases and were deployed in different capacities during the flood to help fill critical roles at the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and Incident Command Centres. Additionally, OFS staff performed wellness checks for residents and carbon monoxide monitoring in order to ensure the safety of residents. OFS also responded to two separate fires in less than 48 hours where the homes were surrounded by floodwaters. As a result of water rescue resources and ladder trucks, the firefighters were able to act quickly to prevent the fires from spreading to adjacent properties.

Westboro Station Collision

On January 11, 2019 OFS responded to an OC Transpo double-decker bus that collided into the Westboro Station on the transitway. The collision resulted in a complex rescue effort which included multiple extrications. Firefighters used ladders to reach the bus's upper deck, as first responders worked to comfort and treat the injured.

Byward Market Fire

On April 12, 2019 OFS responded to a restaurant fire in the heart of the ByWard Market. OFS deployed a defensive attack during this four-alarm fire as there were fears the fire could spread along the tightly packed block of businesses in buildings that are more than 100 years old. All restaurants and nearby buildings were evacuated due to the rapidly deteriorating conditions. OFS crews were able to confine the fire to the restaurant of origin, which resulted in minimal damage and service disruptions to adjacent buildings in the ByWard Market.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

OFS is continuously looking at innovative ways to be leaders amongst fire services and this includes continuous improvement and implementing strategic initiatives that will help achieve priorities.

Ottawa Light Rail Transit Project

OFS continued to support the Ottawa Light Rail Transit (OLRT) project throughout 2019 and has a dedicated resource assigned to provide fire related assistance with Phase II. As the authority having jurisdiction for National Fire Protection Associations (NFPA) compliance, OFS has developed response plans for the new hazards that may be encountered. OFS has also trained all personnel from responding stations on effective OLRT response. Station crews within the vicinity of OLRT stations have gone underground to gain familiarization of the layouts and identify potential hazards to be mindful of, if responding to incidents in these locations.

Urban Search and Rescue

On July 19, 2019, OFS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Province of Ontario and the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management to provide a provincially deployable, medium urban search and rescue capacity as defined under United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisor Group guidelines. Ottawa's enhanced Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Program will protect lives, property and

the environment and ensure public confidence by providing the ability to respond to exceptional situations in a timely manner with an integrated multi hazard, multi-disciplinary team, capable of sustained operations within a dynamic environment.

A Steering Committee was established made up with senior leaders from OFS, Ottawa Paramedic Service, Ottawa Police Service and Security and Emergency Management. The revised task force structure is comprised of 76 personnel identified for enrolment across multiple City departments/services. In 2019, members from the USAR team participated in a Provincial USAR Exercise and since then have engaged other provincial partners on training, equipment and developing joint operation standards.

Commission on Fire Accreditation International

OFS first completed the process to receive accredited agency status with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) in 2014. OFS has maintained its annual accreditation by demonstrating continuous improvement through the annual compliance reporting process. In 2019, OFS went forward in front of the CFAI Commission for re-accreditation and was granted accredited agency status once again. The accreditation process required OFS to complete an in-depth analysis of all of its divisions, programs and involvement with other areas of the city. The process included a Self-Assessment Manual and a Standards of Cover, which takes an in-depth analysis of station response times and the deployment of resources across the City of Ottawa. These documents provided a comprehensive look at each division and its deployment strategies to ensure they were operating efficiently and effectively.

CFAI accreditation allows OFS the opportunity to learn alongside the best in the industry and it is a commitment to continuous improvement by OFS. Since first being accredited in 2014, OFS has implemented the Commission's accreditation model and recommendations by strengthening its internal culture and labour relations, building positive relationships within the community and by being at the forefront of innovation and improvement. CFAI accreditation is an important pledge to the community that OFS is committed to offering the best services possible. It is also a confirmation that the service is accountable for keeping the City of Ottawa safe and secure.

2019 Audit of Fire Suppression

OFS underwent a review by the Office of the City Auditor General where the overall objective was to determine that key management systems, practices and processes within OFS support the delivery of effective and efficient fire suppression operations. The audit found that OFS management systems have generally been established to

support the delivery of effective and efficient fire suppression. However, there are opportunities to strengthen management practices in terms of supervisory oversight of career firefighters, recruitment processes, diversity and inclusion focus within the recruitment process and broader information technology (IT) planning and data quality management improvements.

OFS agreed with all four audit recommendations and is taking action, where appropriate. It is anticipated that all four recommendations will be completed and implemented by the end of Q3 2020, subject to ongoing labour relations negotiations.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management's (OFMEM) integrated approach for the delivery of fire protection services identifies public fire safety education as the first line of defense against fire. As OFS strives to ensure its practices are in line with his approach, OFS works diligently to advance its public education programs as population and community growth continues throughout the city. Fire safety programs include inspecting for the existence of working smoke alarms, developing escape plans, distributing fire safety educational materials and promoting fire safety to owners and occupants through the release of public service announcements and connecting through social media and public events. In addition, the Public Education division organizes tours of fire stations, provides fire extinguisher training, plans fire truck visits, gives fire safety presentations, visits from Sparky and more.

In 2019, the Public Education Team participated in 571 public education events, in addition to the "Wake Up: Get a Working Smoke Alarm" campaign. Since its inception in 2005, it has become a core program of the OFS Public Education Team. In 2019, the campaign reached 14,143 homes over two eight-day periods. During the campaign, fire suppression crews go door-to-door to ensure that residents have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, to educate residents on the importance of functional alarms and to assist with the installation of alarms, as required. The ultimate goal of the Wake Up campaign is providing awareness and increasing the number of working alarms within the city.

In 2019, the Fire House Sub Foundation approved OFS' application for a grant for approximately \$18,000 for the purchase of a tabletop Hazard House, for use on display tables during Public Education events. The Public Education team also provides an overview about fire safety, i.e. how to prevent a fire, what to do if there is a fire in your home, and what to do if you hear an alarm whether it be a fire alarm or smoke alarm. In

addition, Public Education also covers the importance of working smoke and CO alarms and the importance of preparing and practicing home escape planning.

In Canada, Fire Prevention Week is proclaimed annually by the Governor General. The theme for Fire Prevention Week is chosen by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The national theme for Fire Prevention Week 2019 was “Not every hero wears a cape. Plan and practice your escape!”. OFS promoted the 2019 Fire Prevention theme by setting up display booths at Ottawa Home Show and several Government offices, and by making fire safety presentations to seniors’ groups. Presentations for the ‘Achieving and Maintaining Fire Code Compliance’ program, geared towards building owners and property managers, were held to help educate on their responsibilities under the Ontario Fire Code. The kickoff for this program took place on October 7, 2019, with a presentation to Ottawa Community Housing. In October 2019, OFS’s Public Education Team attended 81 public education events.

FIRE PREVENTION

Section 2.1(1) of the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* makes fire prevention and public education mandatory for municipalities. The goals of fire prevention include the education of residents on fire safety and the reduction of preventable fires within our communities. OFS prides itself on being out in the community and takes every opportunity to engage and educate residents on fire safety. Education, inspections and Ontario Fire Code enforcement are crucial tasks carried out by Fire Prevention Officers (FPO’s) in the Community Standards and Communications Division of OFS.

Due to the wide range of services provided by FPO’s and the critical tasks that they are required to perform, the recruitment and selection proves to be highly competitive. Successful FPO’s receive additional in-house training and qualification courses through the Ontario Fire College. These courses are part of a certification program based on international standards, which includes courses on the Ontario Fire Code, public education programs, enforcement and fire investigations. This training ensures that our FPO’s meet performance standards, as well as educational, training and job experience requirements as approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Ontario and the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs.

Inspections

OFS FPO’s are responsible for carrying out inspections to ensure that buildings are in compliance with the Ontario Fire Code. Inspections are mandatory for the licensing of restaurants and bars, public garages, public halls, fire safety plans and fire routes.

Inspections may be initiated as the result of a complaint or request, or if fire personnel identify an issue. FPO's work proactively to inspect other properties for retrofit requirements and to ensure the safety of all of the City's assembly occupancies.

When violations of the Ontario Fire Code are identified, FPO's establish an appropriate timeframe for the property to become compliant, based on the scope of work required. FPO's work with property owners to achieve Code compliance, however, when requirements are not met within the established timeframe, charges may be laid. In 2019, OFS completed 3,882 inspections and worked closely with Legal Services staff to complete 36 prosecutions, which resulted in \$47,406 in penalties.

In accordance with provincially legislated requirements, OFS performs annual inspections of all vulnerable occupancies, for example long-term care facilities, nursing homes, etc., within the City of Ottawa. In addition, the Ontario Fire Code requires these occupancies to review their fire safety plan annually and hold an annual fire drill that is approved and witnessed by OFS. In 2019, FPO's completed inspections of all vulnerable occupancies in Ottawa, 185 in total, to ensure that seniors and people with disabilities are living in buildings that are safe and free of Fire Code violations.

Throughout 2019, OFS continued their partnership with Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) for providing annual inspections to all OCH properties. Inspections were conducted in order to ensure that all fire and life safety systems within each OCH building were being properly maintained in accordance to Ontario Fire Code standards. This collaborative partnership has resulted in safer homes for residents of OCH buildings. OFS will continue to inspect OCH buildings in 2020 to ensure compliance.

Investigations

Post-fire activities include conducting on-site investigations wherein the OFS Fire Investigator is responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting detailed findings regarding the fire. Fire Investigators are responsible for looking into the source(s) of ignition, growth and development of the fire, and the sequence of events that led to the ignition of the combustible material. Fire Investigators must take into consideration the building construction, interior finishes and furnishings, fire detection and suppression activities, the performance of structures that were exposed to fire, the control and movement of smoke, human response and evacuation, fire fighting and rescue as well as the extent of the losses, injuries and property damages.

The data collected during the investigation is used to determine the cause of the fire. The cause of each fire is reported to the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office who collects data for the province in an effort to identify trends. Determining fire cause also helps to develop future fire prevention and public education programs for the year ahead.

Objective 2 - Employee Engagement

Key goals under the Employee Engagement priority involve promoting a health focused work environment for all OFS employees.

On January 14, 2019, OFS held the first annual Fire Chiefs Commendations and Awards ceremony recognizing personnel for 2018 initiatives for different acts of heroism and strategic innovative ideas. The Commendations and Awards ceremony was very well attended and received excellent feedback from attendees. OFS management continues to engage and recognize staff through station visits, quarterly newsletters, briefing reports, weekly information bulletins and 'Ask the Chief' inbox which allows for members to share their thoughts and concerns with the Chief. In the spring of 2019, OFS management team hosted a lunch for all personnel as an employee recognition event.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Employers of workers covered by the presumption in the Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act are required to submit Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) prevention plans to the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The OFS Mental Health Peer Support Program is a key component of the PTSD prevention plan required by the Province. The "peers" are volunteers who have been trained to provide their colleagues with confidential, emotional and social support in a safe, non-judgmental environment and the "peers" are representative of a cross section of OFS. In 2019, two training sessions were provided to peer supporters, which gave them the skills and tools required to offer support to their peers. There were approximately 300 requests for assistance from peer support members or OFS personnel in 2019.

FIRST RESPONDER MENTAL HEALTH STUDY

OFS secured \$650,000 in funding from Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) to complete a two-year study with the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute on the mental health of first-responders which commenced in Q4 2018. The First Responder Mental Health Study looks into preferences for mental health support services and includes a small-scale randomized control trial to evaluate methods of

providing these services. Ottawa Police, Fire and Paramedic Services are all participating in the study managed by OFS and championed by the General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services.

OFS also continued to support its mental health peer support team by implementing the Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) training to personnel.

WELLNESS AND FITNESS INITIATIVE

OFS established the Wellness and Fitness Initiative (WFI) in 2017. WFI aims to provide OFS personnel with training and support to improve their overall health and wellbeing. In 2019, all peer fitness trainers were again recertified through American Council on Exercise (ACE). Gym equipment in stations are maintained in order to be in line with a standardized program based on support functional movement training. All new recruits are led through wellness coaching sessions by peer fitness representatives as part of their learning in order to establish healthy practices at the start of their careers.

Objective 3 - Succession Planning

Key goals under the Succession Planning priority include enhancing recruitment and succession planning efforts, while placing an emphasis on the importance of employee development and developing ongoing organizational stability.

RECRUITMENT

In 2019, 43 candidates were hired to fill career firefighter positions with another class of approximately 40 scheduled to begin training in 2020 in order to fill vacancies. OFS is currently undertaking a thorough evaluation of the recruitment process and framework and anticipates that the next OFS recruitment campaign will launch in the Q3 2021. This review includes finding efficiencies within the recruitment process as well as placing more of an emphasis on outreach activities to attract a diverse workforce.

In 2019, the Rural Operations Division hired 42 volunteer firefighters that filled a number of vacancies in the West Carleton, Rideau-Goulbourn, Osgoode, and Cumberland wards. Rural Operations accepts applications on an ongoing basis and traditionally hold a recruit class in the fall of each year pending availability.

Camp FFIT

OFS first implemented the innovative Camp FFIT (Female Firefighters in Training) in 2010 as a recognition of the benefits of diverse workforce that is representative of the

community it serves. The weeklong camp provides female youth between the ages of 15 to 19 years old to gain first-hand exposure to the duties of a firefighter including auto extrication, hydrant catching, search and rescue and fighting simulated kitchen and vehicle fires.

In 2019, OFS hosted 24 young women, bringing the total participants since Camp FFIT's inception in 2010 to more than 240. In the fall recruit class of 2019, OFS celebrated the hiring of its first Camp FFIT member as a career firefighter, who was part of the very first summer of Camp FFIT. Some of the other Camp FFIT participants are now volunteer firefighters with OFS, attending pre-service programs in post-secondary institutions or applying for full-time positions within fire services across the nation.

The successful implementation of the Camp FFIT program in Ottawa has been modelled by several other fire services across Canada, and OFS is regarded as a source of guidance and a model for best practices by municipalities who have begun coordinating their own programs.

Camp FFIT will continue to be offered in coming years with the hopes that it will increase confidence and empower young women to pursue careers in Fire Services.

OFS Fire Ventures Program

In 2019, OFS began a collaboration with Scouts Canada and their Ventures Program to create an opportunity for Ottawa's youth between the ages of 14 and 17 to get a sense of the day to day life involved in being a firefighter and gain some important perspective on this incredible career option.

The program commenced on September 25, 2019 and runs until June 7, 2020. 12 applicants meet approximately twice a month and are given the opportunity to learn important firefighter knowledge, such as basic fire chemistry, fireground tactics and learn about Fire Prevention. Participants also gain hands on skills including firefighter drags, lifts and carries, ladder drills, forcible entry, ventilation and have the opportunity to practice rappelling with some OFS rope rescue team personnel.

DIVERSITY

In 2019, OFS continued to see an increase of personnel that have self identified as being part of a diverse group. OFS recognizes that sustained outreach efforts are required in order to attract a more diverse workforce that represents the communities it serves. Revised outreach opportunities will be captured as part of the new Recruitment Strategy project that is currently underway and will include such items as surveying

other fire services on their best practices and seeking input from different Ottawa community groups. Currently the percentage of successful applicants and new recruits for women in 2019 is 9.30%. OFS is making continued efforts to engage women in applying for firefighter positions including highlighting existing female firefighters and encouraging young women to participate in Camp FFIT (Female Firefighters in Training). In the fall recruit class of 2019 OFS has graduated its first Camp FFIT member

Fire Service Women Ontario (FSWO) held their 10th anniversary Professional Development Symposium in Ottawa in 2019. FSWO offered two days' worth of in-class and hands-on training sessions to build upon skills as well as increase knowledge in certain areas. OFS had 35 members participate in different capacities for the Symposium and continuous to encourage future participation in FSWO events.

Objective 4: Financial Sustainability

Key goals under the Financial Sustainability priority include maintaining innovative and quality facilities, equipment and technology to meet the strategic and operational needs of the service and to improve resource management.

NEW FIRE TRAINING CENTRE PROJECT

The current OFS training centre was built pre-amalgamation and no longer meets the needs of a modern fire service. The centre is unsuitable for live fires as a result of the condition of the burn building as well as the increased number and proximity to resident and commercial properties surrounding the site, posing significant safety risks. On May 22, 2019, the Development Charges By-law was approved at the Finance and Economic Development Committee where OFS was allotted \$84M for the replacement of the current Fire Training Centre for 2023-2026. The net capital cost of \$21M will be capital project costs, both growth-related and recoverable from development charges while the remaining 75% (\$63M) of the facility funding is required to be provided from Grants, Subsidies and/or other recoveries. Ottawa Fire Services has been working with the National Research Council (NRC) in developing a strategic vision for fire safety and sciences within Canada as the NRC is currently undergoing an initiative to modernize Canada's National Fire Laboratory (NFL). The shared vision is to develop a facility that can act as the replacement for both the existing National Fire Laboratory and Ottawa Fire Services' main training facility.

COMMUNICATIONS

OFS Communications Division provides 24-hour front-line support to both the public and first responders for emergency and non-emergency calls. When calls are received, it allows dispatchers to alert firefighters of calls for service through the radio system, paging alerting system, or computer-aided dispatch system.

In 2019, the Communications Division continued working on several projects that have a positive impact on the Division and Service overall.

Station Alerting and Paging Project

The Station Alerting and Paging project aims to enhance station call-out and paging abilities in urban and rural areas through the implementation of new technology. In 2017, OFS issued a Request for Information and developed a project implementation plan. OFS was successful in securing Capital Funds in 2019 as part of a two-year funding request to upgrade the fire station alerting and paging systems. With the secured 2019 Capital Funding, OFS will continue working to confirm the implementation plan to upgrade the paging system.

Automatic Vehicle Routing Recommendation Project

The Automatic Vehicle Routing Recommendation (AVRR) project will utilize electronic mapping technology, real data road speeds, GPS, and in-vehicle Mobile Data Terminals to ensure that the closest OFS vehicle is dispatched to an emergency, ensuring faster response times. In 2017, OFS began piloting the new AVRR system in several first responding vehicles and through testing worked with the vendor in 2018 to implement improvements. An updated road network was recently loaded and in 2019, Phase 2 of AVRR was implemented. This phase works on expanding the project to include urban and rural Ladders/Towers and Heavy Rescues. Phase 3 will include all other OFS MDT equipped vehicles implementation is targeted for Q1 2020. Computer Aided Dispatch CAD 7.5 Upgrade was completed which introduced many new features/improvements.

Communications Performance

The Ottawa Fire Services follows the best practice guidelines established by the NFPA 1710 (Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments). The call processing time standard is described as not more than 60 seconds for at least 90% of the alarms (priority 1 calls) and not more than 90 seconds for at least 99% of the alarms (priority 1 calls). An OFS Communications Directive was developed to enable Dispatchers to measure their call answering and call processing

times. This task is completed monthly by each Dispatcher and reviewed by the Assistant Division Chief of Communications, as required. All four platoons in Communications met the established performance objectives set out by NFPA 1710.

The 2019 call processing times met the established performance objectives set out by the NFPA 1710. NFPA 1710 describes the standard and recommended practice for alarm answering time of “not more than 15 seconds for at least 95% of the alarms received and not more than 40 seconds for at least 99% of the alarms received”. It also describes the processing time objective to be “not more than 60 seconds for at least 90% of the alarms (priority 1 alarm calls) and not more than 90 seconds for at least 99% of the alarms (priority 1 alarm calls). An OFS Communications Directive was developed in 2017 to enable personnel to measure their call answering and call processing times, which is also reviewed by the Assistant Division Chief of Communications.

FALSE FIRE ALARM STRATEGY

False alarms are largely the result of improper maintenance of aging fire alarm systems, malicious activations of pull stations and improper notification of alarm testing (not advising OFS before alarm testing is being conducted). In 2011, OFS launched a False Alarm Education and Awareness Program, which aimed to reduce false fire alarms by engaging and educating property owners and managers of properties whose buildings had multiple false alarms within a given time frame.

While targeted education has worked at certain properties, it has not been effective on a larger scale. OFS has been diligently working on an enhanced false alarm recommendation for program enhancement for committee and council consideration. In 2019, OFS held targeted stakeholder outreach, aimed at building owners, landlords and property managers for post-secondary education institutions, large shopping centres, and other facilities where a fire alarm system is required.

OFS will continue their efforts to educate stakeholders and perform inspections at properties with false fire alarms until there is a notable reduction or further action is taken. A False Alarm By-law is the next step for reducing false alarms in Ottawa.

Planned Activities for 2020

Some short-term priorities and projects were highlighted as focus areas for the department going into 2020, in order to continue to fulfill the objectives of the OFS Strategic Plan in its last year. These include:

- Promoting of the three lines of defense: Public Education, Fire Safety Standards and Enforcement, and Emergency Response;
- Improving Health and Safety by continuing the Wellness and Fitness Initiatives and Mental Health programs;
- Improving Technology and Communications to provide every officer with easily accessible data to help manage their teams and plan effective response as well as the new station alerting and paging system;
- Supporting the Training division with additional resources for implementing the Officer Development and Regulations programs;
- Promoting interoperability with OFS' allied partners; and
- Enhancing the Fire Chief's Commendation Awards event in celebration for OFS personnel and family.

Kanata North Station

OFS has procured land for a new station in Kanata North, which is projected to be complete in 2022, as outlined in the Annual Budget. Given the growing population density throughout the city, OFS is performing further research on the current stations and how to best serve residents.

Electronic Rostering

OFS initiated a large-scale IT project in Q4 2017 to implement an electronic rostering solution. This solution will revolutionize how fire personnel are scheduled to work, called back for shifts and how they book leave entitlements. OFS is anticipating time and process efficiencies once this solution is in place that will enhance the overall administration of the suppression and communication divisions. The implementation of the rostering solution is set for Q1 2021.

New Fire Training Centre

OFS will continue to seek partnerships for a new fire training centre. The Fire Chief and General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services will continue conversations with the Director General of the National Research Council of Canada's Construction Research Centre to discuss this partnership opportunity and other potential partners.

Conclusion

OFS continues to focus on fire prevention, code enforcement and education outreach in hopes to reduce the number of fires and ensure residents and property owners are implementing the proper measures to stay safe.

Continued investments in mental health initiatives, including the wellness and fitness program, will ensure that OFS personnel are provided the necessary skills and tools to be successful.

In part of the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) accreditation process and as a commitment to the residents, OFS will be working throughout 2020 to develop a new 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan will include revised priorities and initiatives that will allow OFS to continue serving the community in the most effective and meaningful way.

Overall, OFS is well positioned to continue to provide effective, efficient emergency services to the residents of Ottawa, while focusing on continued improvement. OFS remains a versatile, innovative force and a leader amongst fire services in Canada.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

Public consultations were not undertaken as this report is administrative in nature.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a City-wide report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to Committee and Council's receipt of this report for information.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with the recommendations of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This information contained in this report supports the 2019-2022 City Strategic Plan priorities of Service Excellence Through Innovation, Thriving Communities, and Thriving Workforce.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Incident Volume Data

DISPOSITION

The Ottawa Fire Service will action any direction received as part of consideration of this report.