



MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 26, 2021

TO: Mayor, Council
CC: Eric Holmes, City Manager

FROM: Brennan Blue, Fire Chief

RE: **Vancouver Fire Department 2020 Report on Service Levels**

RCW requires the adoption of a Standard of Cover document that includes established performance measures and an annual reporting to the elected governing body. The City of Vancouver Ambulance Services Agreement Article 7, Section 15, Annual Performance Evaluation establishes the requirement for an annual evaluation to be provided to City Council.

This year the report encompasses both requirements, providing the City Council with the first combined Fire and EMS system report.

This memo is intended to provide context and supplemental background on elements contained within the presentation. While the presentation notes some system performance challenges relative to the City's Standard of Cover, Vancouver Fire Department and AMR continue to meet public safety needs of the overall service area that includes the City of Vancouver and Fire District #5. In my tenure as the fire chief, I have observed some gaps in service that will need to be addressed, to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our growing community and addressing the substantial increase in call volume.

VFD Response Time Performance- Slide 10:

This slide represents "Full Alarm" responses. While there were no full alarm responses for Technical Rescue or Hazardous Materials, VFD did respond to 7 Technical Rescue and 288 Hazmat incidents in 2020.

VFD 2020 Service Levels- Slide 11:

Time measures from time of dispatch until arrival at the scene of the emergency reported at the 90% fractal. This time measure represents the time for the unit(s) to arrive at 90% or less of the emergencies.

We believe that increased travel times primarily related to congestion is the biggest contributor to increased response times. Increased call volume causing units to respond from one end of their district to another is also a likely component.

VFD 2020 Station Reliability- Slide 12:

Reliability is measured as the percentage of time a unit assigned to a given station area arrives first to incidents within their station area. There are a number of factors that impact reliability – placement of resources, increased call volume, number of units per station, station boundary lines, etc. This is a management tool used to make deployment decisions. The target of 80% established at VFD is self-imposed.

VFD 2020 Call Volume AMR & VFD- Slide 13:

This slide includes all calls within the VFD service area including calls AMR responded to without VFD.

VFD 2020 History of Call Volume and Staffing- Slide 14:

This slide represents the calls that VFD responded to. It does not include the calls that AMR responded to without VFD.

Public Relations/Community Education Slide- 17: This slide is a requirement of the Ambulance Services Contract and represents the community engagement efforts provided by AMR under the terms of the contract with the City of Vancouver.

Fire Chief's Initial Observations 2021:

- VFD is a highly trained, competent, and responsive Fire/EMS Agency with dedicated personnel.
- The rescue / squad program was a positive step in addressing rising call volume, but additional units will be needed in the short and long term.
- Currently meeting our call volume needs overall as a system, however, there is little margin for surge capacity or concurrent large incidents.
- Strategic planning for future growth will be critical to our success, and to ensure that we can continue to meet our current and anticipated response needs.
- Wildland firefighting training and preparedness needs improvement.
- Use of the “total force concept” and thoughtful resourcing will benefit the VFD and our community as we are challenged by a rapidly changing landscape.



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