

San Francisco

FIRE DEPARTMENT



2017–2021
STRATEGIC PLAN







Photo: Dwayne Newton



On behalf of the San Francisco Fire Department, I am pleased to present the Department's Strategic Plan. The Plan is intended to be a road map for the San Francisco Fire Department that highlights our priorities to continue to serve and protect the residents of and visitors to the City and County of San Francisco and to support our members.

The year 2016 marked a historic time for the San Francisco Fire Department with the celebration of our Sesquicentennial Year as a paid professional Department. Throughout the year, we honored, reminisced and lauded our 150-year rich tradition, shared in our collective pride about our humble beginnings and our respected status in the community and in the Public Safety industry today.

While the festivities were taking place, our Department was simultaneously embarking on an organizational reflection through the development of a Strategic Plan. Countless hours, deep commitment and collaboration were invested into this valuable introspection. The result was this comprehensive, five-year Strategic Plan that was adopted by the Fire Commission at its meeting on January 11, 2017.

The Strategic Plan's inception began in 2015, after funding for this effort was allocated. The Department's Strategic Planning Committee was immediately formed from a variety of ranks and Divisions within the Department, as well as representation from the Fire Commission, San Francisco Fire Department Employee Groups, San Francisco Firefighters Local 798, retired Department members and members from private industry. Sub-committees were subsequently established based on the following five functional areas that were the basis for the framework of the Plan:

- Operations
- Community Programs & Partnerships
- Health & Wellness
- Infrastructure
- Recruitment, Staffing and Training

This blueprint embodies our Department's mission and represents our core values of service, education, accountability, responsibility and diversity. It was designed with flexibility to function as a living document that can evolve, as-needed, based on member input, operational needs and fiscal realities.

To ensure continuity into the future, Review Committees for each key area above were formed to monitor the need for revisions and / or additional development in these functions. The Review Committees, with the oversight of the Department's Strategic Planning Committee, will keep the document current, meaningful and useful through the next five years.

The vision outlined in this plan embraces our Department's rich history, while allowing for our Department's development in order to continue being a leader and model Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joanne Hayes-White".

Joanne Hayes-White
Chief of Department



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Mission, Values & Vision

Our Mission

The Mission of the Fire Department is to protect the lives and property of the people of San Francisco from fires, natural disasters, and hazardous materials incidents; to save lives by providing emergency medical services; to prevent fires through prevention and education programs; and to provide a work environment that values health, wellness and cultural diversity and is free of harassment and discrimination.

Our Values

Our Department's Values drive our actions.

The San Francisco Fire Department Values:

- The public's trust and the opportunity to serve
- A work environment that promotes health, wellness and harmony, respect for each person, and is free from harassment, discrimination, and retaliation
- Leadership committed to the Department's Mission
- A diverse work force that reflects the community it serves
- A highly trained professional workforce
- Teamwork to effectively achieve the Department's Mission.

Our Vision

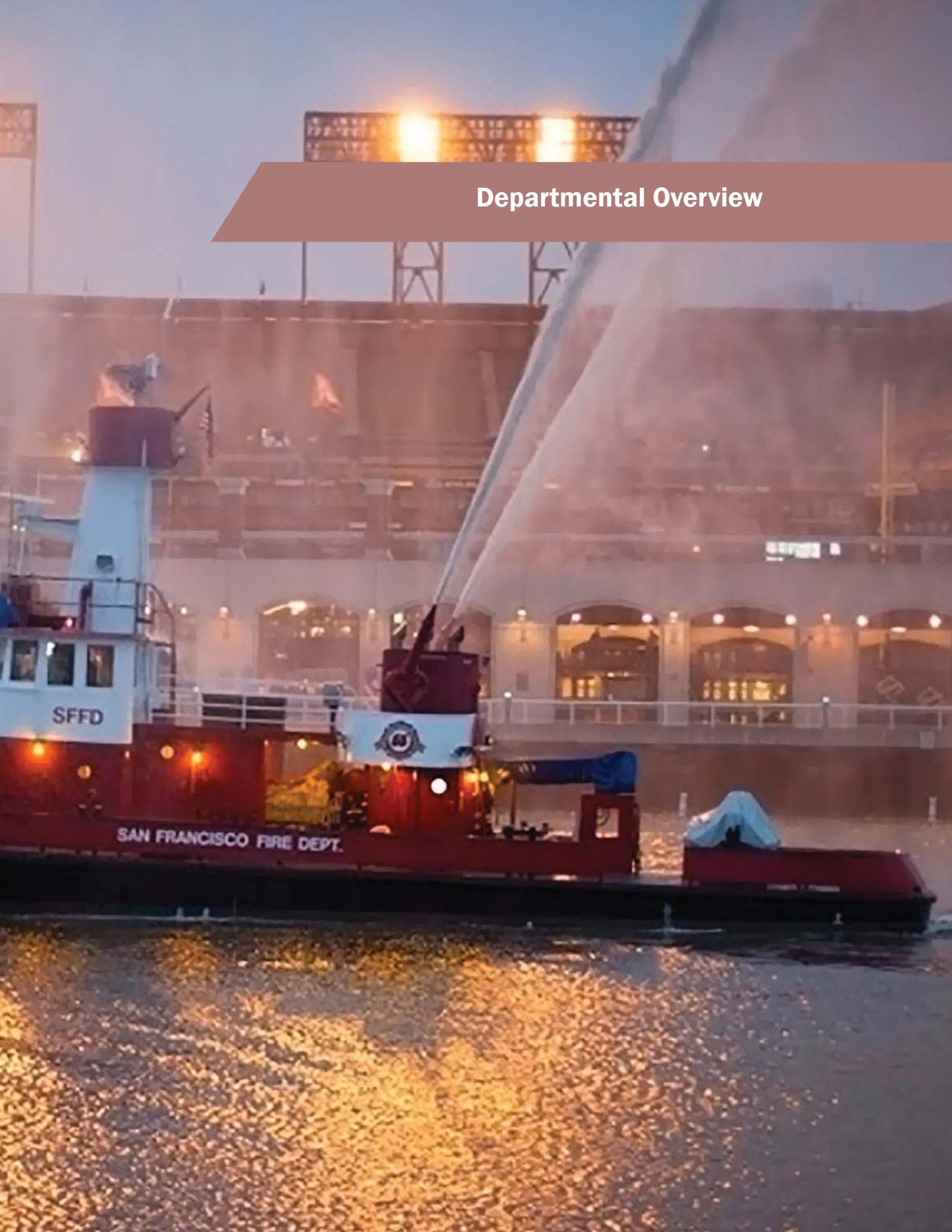
An organization providing a level of service that is viewed as a benchmark throughout the Nation. A Department positioned to be proactive to shifts in the industry in order to provide superior services to City residents and visitors as well as its employees.



Photo: Dwayne Newton



Departmental Overview



Departmental Overview

The San Francisco Fire Department is an all-hazards emergency response Department, providing Fire Suppression and Emergency Medical Services to the residents of and visitors to San Francisco. The Department currently staffs 44 fire stations in a 24/7 capacity, in addition to its dynamic ambulance deployment model throughout the City. The Department also staffs three stations at San Francisco International Airport.

The Fire Department provides the following services:

OPERATIONS fights fires, provides Emergency Medical Services (EMS), oversees specialized services such as Hazardous Materials units and Search and Rescue units, and conducts disaster planning and preparedness training, such as the Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT).

PREVENTION minimizes injuries, deaths, and property loss due to fire through code enforcement, public education and inspection programs that detect and eliminate fire hazards.

INVESTIGATION determines, documents and reports on the origin and cause of fires and explosions, and when appropriate, ensures incidents can be prosecuted; Recognizes defects and equipment failures to prevent future fires.

SUPPORT SERVICES manages the Department's facilities, equipment and water supply systems and is responsible for all maintenance, repairs and capital improvements.

TRAINING instructs and evaluates all Department staff and new recruits, and provides comprehensive Fire and EMS training to all staff.

FIREBOAT operates and maintains the City's three fireboats and responds to Water Rescue and Fire Suppression on the San Francisco Bay.

AIRPORT provides Fire Suppression, EMS, Water Rescue and other services at the San Francisco International Airport.

ADMINISTRATION provides support to and oversees the Department's programs in areas such as Accounting and Finance, Planning and Research, Human Resources, Payroll, Public Information, the Physician's Office, and Management Information Technology.

The City's 44 stations are geographically divided into two operational Divisions, each covering approximately half of the City. Within each Division are five Battalions that oversee anywhere from four to six Stations. In addition to fire engines and trucks, these stations support a number of specialty units, including Heavy Rescue Squads, Coastal Rescue units (Cliff & Surf), Rescue Boats and Water Craft, Fireboats, a Mobile Command Vehicle, Multi-Casualty Units, two Multi-Casualty Transport Units, a Hazardous Materials Unit, a CO2 unit, and a Mobile Air Unit. The Department also

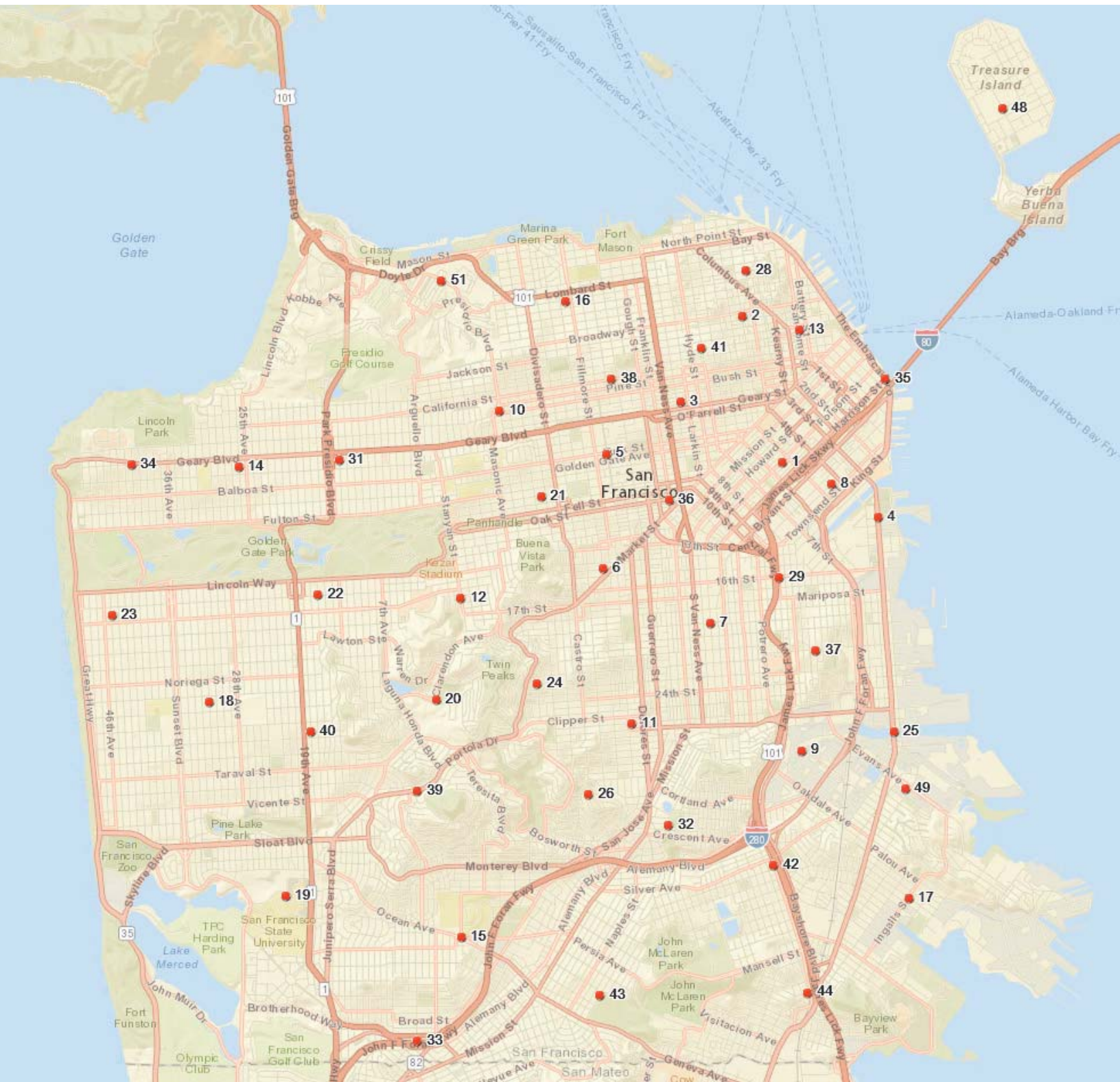
houses 54 Ambulances at Station 49, where up to 48 different shifts are dynamically deployed per day. These resources protect the residents of and visitors to the City, as well as varied and historic critical infrastructure, including San Francisco International Airport, numerous landmarks and national monuments, and a number of financial institutions. The Department faces unique challenges in carrying out its firefighting operations, given the City's large number of old, wooden residential buildings, high population densities, diverse topography and zero lot line separations on many of the City's buildings. It also faces challenges in its Emergency Medical Services (EMS) operations, given the large increase in call volume, the needs of a changing community and the increase in traffic congestion.

The SFFD's approximately 1,700 Firefighting and Emergency Medical personnel are part of the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Regional Task Force (RTF) response for Chemical, Biological, Radiological Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) incidents. The SFFD has been a contributor to the State of California Master Mutual Aid Agreement since its inception in 1950, providing mutual aid to 58 counties within the State, as well as parts of southern Oregon and western Nevada. The SFFD also provides water response mutual aid under the same agreement to our neighboring Bay Area Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma Counties.



San Francisco Fire Department Station Locations

Station	Location	Station	Location
1	935 Folsom at 5th Street	24	100 Hoffman Avenue at Alvarado Street
2	1340 Powell Street at Broadway	25	3305 3rd Street at Cargo Way
3	1067 Post Street at Polk Street	26	80 Digby Street at Addison Street
4	449 Mission Rock at 3rd Street	28	1814 Stockton Street at Greenwich Street
5	1301 Turk Street at Webster Street	29	299 Vermont Street at 16th Street
6	135 Sanchez Street at Henry Street	31	441 12th Avenue at Geary Boulevard
7	2300 Folsom Street at 19th Street	32	194 Park Street at Holly Park Circle
8	36 Bluxome Street at 4th Street	33	8 Capital Street at Broad Street
9	2245 Jerrold Avenue at Upton Street	34	499 41st Avenue at Geary Boulevard
10	655 Presidio Avenue at Bush Street	35	Pier 22½, The Embarcadero at Harrison Street
11	3880 26th Street at Church Street	36	109 Oak Street at Franklin Street
12	1145 Stanyan Street at Grattan Street	37	798 Wisconsin Street at 22nd Street
13	530 Sansome Street at Washington Street	38	2150 California Street at Laguna Street
14	551 26th Avenue at Geary Boulevard	39	1091 Portola Drive at Miraloma Drive
15	1000 Ocean Avenue at Phelan Avenue	40	2155 18th Avenue at Rivera Street
16	2251 Greenwich Street at Fillmore Street	41	1325 Leavenworth Street at Jackson Street
17	1295 Shafter Avenue at Ingalls Street	42	2430 San Bruno Avenue at Silver Avenue
18	1935 32nd Avenue at Ortega Street	43	720 Moscow Street at France Avenue
19	390 Buckingham Way at Winston Street	44	1298 Girard Street at Wilde Avenue
20	285 Olympia Way at Clarendon Avenue	48	800 Avenue I at 10th Street, Treasure Island
21	1443 Grove Street at Broderick Street	49	1415 Evans Avenue at Mendell Street
22	1290 16th Avenue at Irving Street	51	218 Lincoln Blvd at Keyes Avenue
23	1348 45th Avenue at Judah Street	AP	Fire Stations 1,2,3 at SF International Airport



Past, Present & Future

From the Gold Rush to the tech explosion, San Francisco has always been a boom town on the cutting edge of the future. In 1848, the City's population was 1,000 with only a few hundred buildings in the vicinity of Jackson Square. The Gold Rush saw the City's population grow from 1,000 to 25,000 in just a year. The Fire Department grew with the City, as the first Volunteer Fire Department was formed after the City's first Great Fire at Dennison's Exchange on Kearny Street at the close of 1849.

From the Annals of San Francisco:

"This was the first of the great fires which devastated San Francisco, and it was to be speedily followed by still more extensive and disastrous occurrences of a similar character. Scarcely were the ashes cold when preparations were made to erect new buildings on the old sites, and within a few weeks the place was covered as densely as before with houses of every kind."

As the City continued to grow, so did the number of fires, with six major fires in just two years and another 12 notable fires over the next 15. In just 17 years, the City again more than doubled in population, and saw a City whose growth was undeterred by disaster.

In December of 1866, a paid Fire Department for the City of San Francisco was established, with six steam fire engines, eleven horse hose reels, two hook and ladder trucks and thirty horses. This paid Department has kept the City safe and minimized damage to life and property through 150 years, including the 1906 Earthquake, the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, and countless fire, marine and medical emergencies.

The San Francisco Fire Department recently celebrated its 150th Anniversary. These 150 years have been witness to the City of San Francisco's transformation from a sprawling, undeveloped land of Gold Rush settlers into its present day status as one of the most beautiful, diverse and iconic cities in the world. San Francisco is the cultural and financial center of Northern California. The City of San Francisco has experienced a multitude of changes over the past 150 years – vast urban development, major demographic shifts, economic booms and busts, natural disasters- and the San Francisco Fire Department has been there to protect, serve and provide vital emergency services to the residents of and visitors to San Francisco.

The San Francisco Fire Department has grown significantly from those early days as a paid career Department, from horses and steam engines to the advanced equipment and highly trained staff that make up the Department of today. As the Department has grown these past 150 years, and as the fire service industry itself has progressed and continues to evolve, the role of the fire service has become much more than extinguishing fires, as disciplines such as Emergency Medical Services, fire prevention, and community outreach and education efforts have become a part of the Department's daily operations. Operating today out of 44 fire stations and with a vast network of dynamically deployed ambulances, the Fire Department responds to more than 140,000 calls for service each year. However, the growth of the Department has not been without its challenges.

The City of San Francisco is currently at its highest daytime and nighttime populations in its history. The City has seen unprecedented growth in the current decade, resulting in numerous challenges for all of City government, including the Fire Department. With further large developments planned at Treasure Island, Candlestick Point and Hunters Point, this growth is anticipated to push the population of San Francisco to over one million residents by 2033. As call volume continues to increase, specifically in the area of Emergency Medical Services, the Department must look at ways to sustain its ability to provide the highest level of care in the most timely manner for all of the City's residents and visitors. With this expected growth, having a dynamic, flexible and fiscally responsible plan is crucial to the Department in order to meet these new increased demands for fire protection and emergency medical services.





Strategic Planning



Strategic Planning Framework

The San Francisco Fire Department has a rich history and tradition that has existed through decades of growth and change in the City and has bridged generations of San Franciscans. As the services the Department provides have grown and changed over time, the core Mission has not wavered. As the Department looks at what is in store over the next five years, it is committed to honoring that legacy in the midst of some of the most unique times in the history of the City it serves. To do so, the Department has identified priorities that are crucial to maintaining its values and vision and achieving its objectives:

- Providing high quality fire and emergency medical response
- Improving outreach and collaboration with the communities it serves
- Investing in and supporting the well-being of our employees, both personally and professionally
- Supporting a sustainable infrastructure to carry out the Department Mission

Fire-related dispatches continue to pose a high risk to the community due to the danger of conflagration from the dense construction of buildings and the difficulty of navigating City streets to access the fire. For this reason, the SFFD must always send a robust response to any report of fire in a structure. The result of successful efforts to improve fire safety has been a decrease in structure fires in the City. This has placed a greater emphasis on training, as the opportunities for Firefighters to hone their craft on the fire-ground have decreased. The current training facility at 19th Street and Folsom Street is inadequate for the Department's current and future needs. The Treasure Island training facility is due to close as development extends throughout the Island. Locating and constructing a new training facility must be a priority as the SFFD plans for its future.

The SFFD must continue to strive to be a leader in Fire Suppression, while understanding the ever-increasing role of being a leader in the delivery of Emergency Medical Services. The workload of the SFFD has shifted as medical-related calls continue to increase annually. First response Advanced Life Support (ALS) Fire Engines are able to arrive on scene and provide life-saving interventions. Ambulances respond and provide patient care and rapid transport of the ill and injured. As the City continues to change, so does the world of EMS and healthcare in general. As a leader in the delivery of EMS, the SFFD has to be aware of all the changes in the industry, from community paramedicine to alternate destination sites. The SFFD must be a leader in developing strategies for the residents who call 911, but do not necessarily need treatment in an Emergency Room. This is a National issue that leaders across the Country are faced with. The City of San Francisco and the San Francisco Fire Department are committed to meeting this challenge and to working with our allied agencies to enhance our service delivery of high quality and timely medical care to those members of the public that are in need.

The SFFD must continue to inform, educate and advocate for a properly staffed and equipped Department to sustain its response levels as it enlists the community and builds relationships with City leaders to advance its Mission. The SFFD plans to renew its focus on engaging with community stakeholders, non-profits and businesses as it moves to the future.

From daily patient contact to continuous fire safety outreach efforts, there are a number of avenues during which the Department interacts with the public. The Department is committed to strengthen relationships with the public we serve.

As more and more members fall victim to cancer and other illnesses related to toxic exposure, as well as post traumatic stress injuries, the SFFD plans to focus on the health and wellness of its First Responders. The Department will enhance resources, planning and services to help keep its members safe.

If the Department is to remain effective and responsive, it will need state-of-the-art vehicles, equipment, personal protective equipment and facilities as well as highly trained personnel. Its members must be provided with the most current training and tools in order to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. Over the next five years, the SFFD will focus on funding needs of these endeavors, as well as a plan to sustain the Department in each of these critical areas.

Looking forward, the SFFD must take into account that the City is growing while its geography remains fixed. Population size is increasing. Structural density and traffic congestion are increasing. Firehouses are by necessity located in the neighborhoods they serve. As new neighborhoods are being built, the demands on the SFFD will inevitably intensify. With change as a constant element to Department operations, both from the City and Fire/EMS industries' perspective, being proactive and adaptable is crucial for supporting the Mission of the Department and providing emergency services that serve as a model for other departments.



Strategic Planning Process

Through the economic difficulties stemming from the most recent recession in 2008, Departmental administrative and infrastructure needs were compromised as resources were dedicated to the operational aspects of the Department. As the economy improved, and funding and functions were gradually restored, a key area of need for which Department resources were identified and allocated was for planning. One of the highest planning priorities was the development of a Strategic Plan to guide the Department through the next five years. To this end, the Department's Strategic Planning Committee was formed in 2015, comprised by members from a variety of ranks and Divisions, as well as representation from Local 798, the Fire Commission, private industry, and retired Department members.

The Strategic Planning Committee met regularly, discussing the desired overall strategy and message of the Strategic Plan, in addition to its format. Committee members formed a number of subgroups by functional area for further discussion, drawing in additional Department members for input and expertise as needed. Committee subgroups then presented to the Committee as a whole, where the desired format of a plan was further defined.

After more than one year of meetings and consultation, the San Francisco Fire Department focused its Strategic Plan around five key areas, and has identified key goals for those respective areas.

The Strategic Plan includes specific strategies, action steps and methods for achieving these desired goals. The five key areas are as follows:

- Operations
- Community Programs & Partnerships
- Health & Wellness
- Infrastructure
- Recruitment, Staffing & Training

The Strategic Plan covers a five-year period with a wide range of goals for which its progress will be monitored. Each of the five areas will have a Review Committee comprised of stakeholders, with each Review Committee breaking into subgroups as needed. The Review Committees are responsible for developing action plans for their respective goals and strategies, and for submitting an annual report to the Department's Planning Division on their progress for meeting the various initiatives, as well as proposing modifications to the strategies and goals as needed. This feedback will be consolidated and presented as an update to the Fire Commission annually.

The Strategic Plan is intended to update and reflect changes in factors, both internal and external to the Department, and serve as a basis for budgetary requests and policy decisions. The Plan is intended to provide direction for all members of the Department and information to the public on the future of the SFFD.



SFFD

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPT.

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AERIAL TRUCK CO.

Strategic Planning Review Committees

Proposed Operations Team Committee Members

Fire Commission, Deputy Chief of Operations, Assistant Deputy Chief of Emergency Medical Services, Assistant Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention and Investigation, Assistant Deputy Chief of Homeland Security, Assistant Deputy Chief of Support Services, Assistant Chief, Emergency Medical Services Operations Section Chief, Captain of Bureau of Equipment, Local 798 Representative, Division of Emergency Communications/ Radio Representative, Rank and File members, Information Technology Representative, Captain of Assignments, Strategic Planner

Proposed Community Partners Team Committee Members

Fire Commission, Deputy Chief of Administration, Assistant Chief, Public Information Officer, Communications & Outreach, Local 798 Representative, Rank and File members, Information Technology/Webmaster, Employee Group Representative, Neighborhood Emergency Response Team, EMS-6, Mayor's Office of Community Development, EMS Representative, Strategic Planner

Proposed Health & Wellness Team Committee Members

Fire Commission, Deputy Chief of Administration, Assistant Deputy Chief of Support Services, Assistant Deputy Chief of Training, Assistant Chief, Physician's Office, Public Information Officer, Industrial Hygienist, Health & Safety Committee Representative, Local 798 Representative who also serves on the Board of the SF Firefighters Cancer Prevention Foundation, Rank and File members, Strategic Planner, Stress Unit

Proposed Infrastructure Team Committee Members

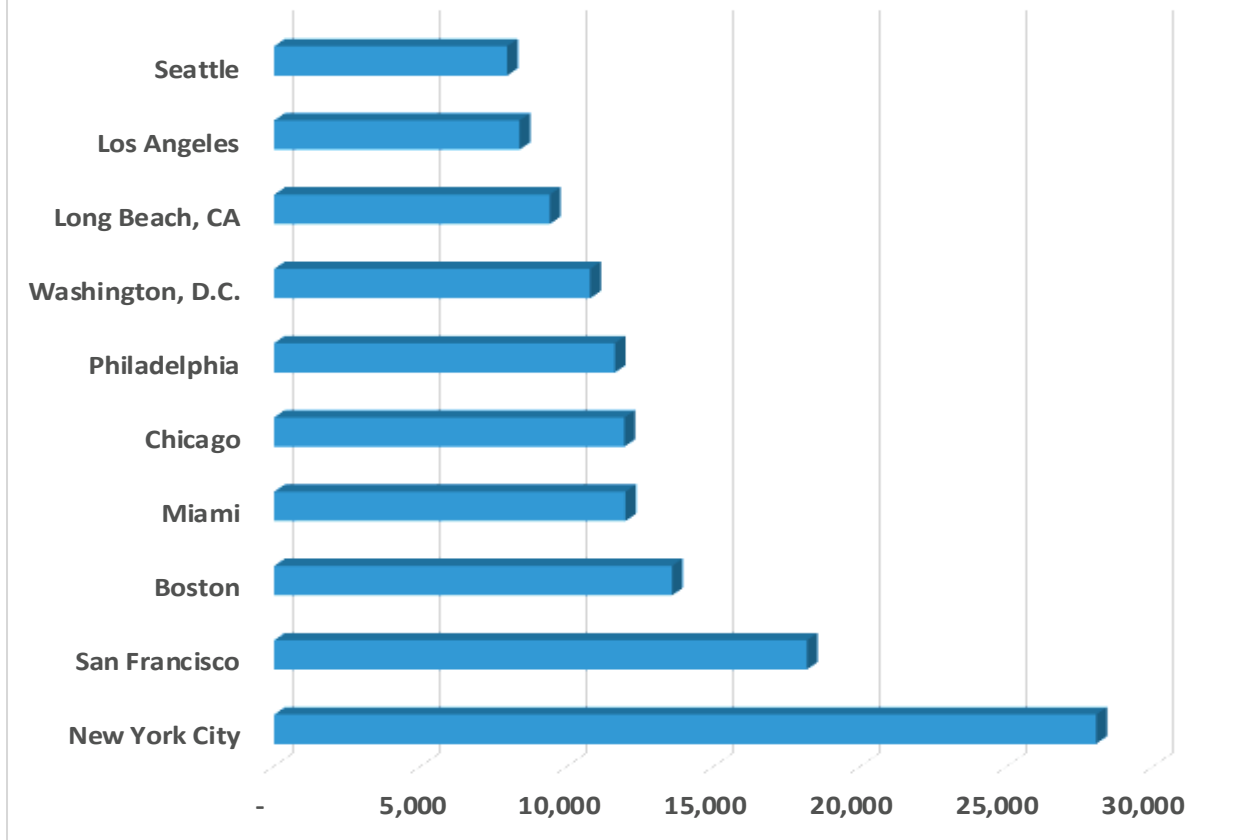
Fire Commission, Deputy Chief of Administration, Assistant Deputy Chief of Support Services, Director of Finance & Planning, Assistant Chief, Captain of Bureau of Equipment, Logistics Manager, Emergency Medical Services Logistics, Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response (ESER) Captain, Division of Emergency Communications/Radio Representative, Water Supply Officer, Stationary Engineer, Information Technology Representative, Local 798 Representative, Rank and File members, Strategic Planner

**Proposed
Recruitment,
Staffing & Training
Team Committee
Members**

Fire Commission, Deputy Chief of Administration, Assistant Deputy Chief of EMS, Assistant Deputy Chief of Training, Assistant Chief, EMS Training Section Chief, Training Captain (EMS), Training Captain (H-2), Training Captain (In-service), Recruitment Coordinator, Captain of Assignments, Human Resources Manager, Director of Finance & Planning, Local 798 Representative, Rank and File members, Strategic Planner, Employee Group Representative



Population Density per Square Mile (2014)



San Francisco Fire Department - Total Incidents by Fiscal Year

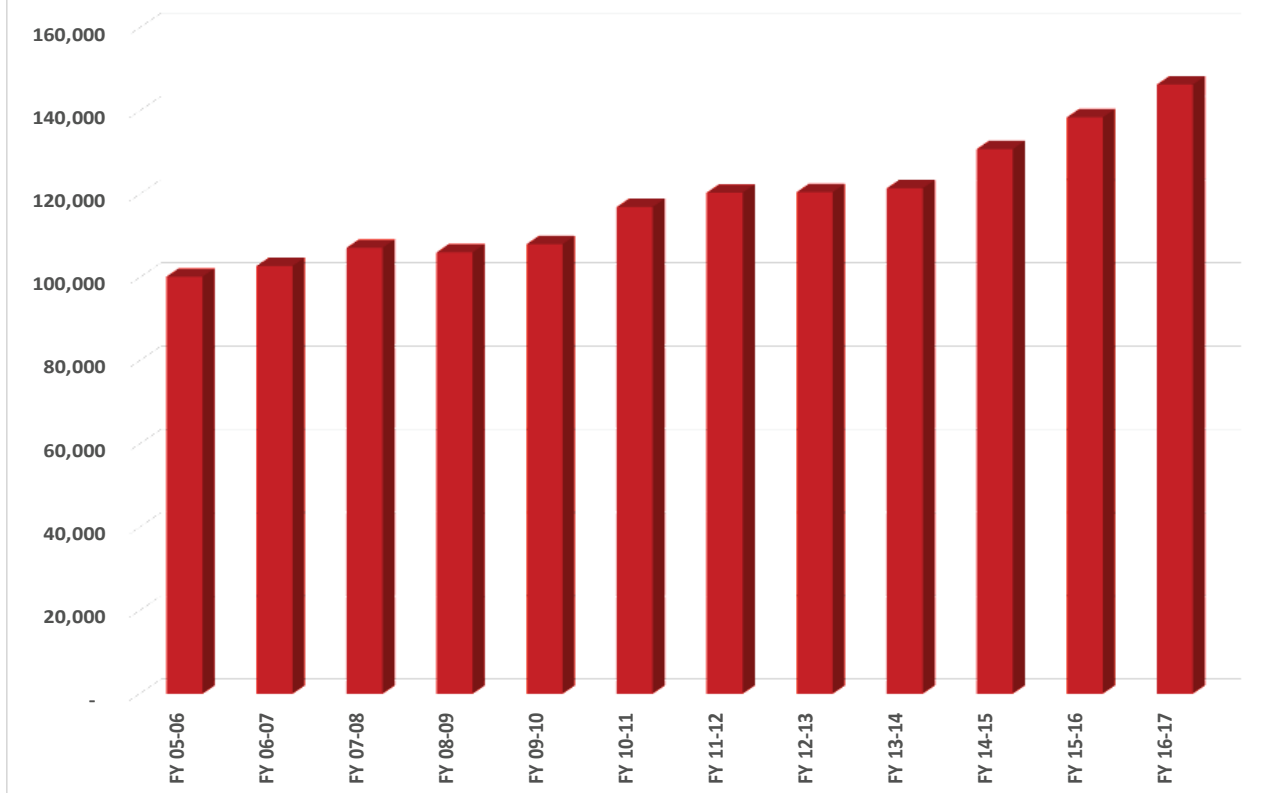




Photo: Milton Yuen



A close-up photograph of a firefighter's gear. In the foreground, a green and black fire helmet is visible, resting on a black bag with orange and red straps. To the left, a portion of a firefighter's jacket with yellow reflective stripes is shown. In the background, a large black tire with a red rim and brass bolts is visible, part of a fire truck. The scene is set in a dark, possibly indoor, environment.

Operations

Operations

It is the SFFD's Mission to protect the lives and property of the residents of and visitors to San Francisco. Through fire suppression response, emergency medical services and a number of specialized capabilities, the SFFD provides the most critical of services to the public. However, this operational environment is constantly changing. With projected growth of San Francisco over the next 15 years, the City's Public Safety infrastructure must be able to support these changes, and the Fire Department is an intricate component of that network.

The overall driving force behind Department operations is to provide exemplary public service through saving lives and property of the community we serve. Increased efficiency and effectiveness to Departmental operations advances the Mission, especially in the current economic environment. The Department must review and identify the needs for its services alongside available resources and plan accordingly to meet those needs.

With advances made in fire safety code requirements over the past few decades, newer buildings are being constructed with improved fire safety considerations, including sprinklers and alarm/detection systems. However, while these advancements have improved overall fire safety, the potential impact of a fire incident remains high due to a variety of factors including new challenges and risks. The new building construction materials, additional high-rises and increased development of the City's real estate all contribute to the high risk of damage and injury from fire incidents. In addition, the existing structures in San Francisco present other challenges for firefighters. Given the City's dependence on property tax revenue, the protection of property by the Department is extremely crucial to limit the financial risk exposure of a large fire incident.

While EMS needs of our community grow and as medical call volume continues to increase annually, the SFFD strives to provide compassionate, high quality care to those who are ill or injured. As our population grows and demographics change, the healthcare needs are also evolving. The dynamic medical field in which SFFD Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics now work is drastically different from the environment of the past. SFFD members are challenged to make increasingly complex decisions on a regular basis.

In order to provide optimal services, the SFFD must continue to adapt our care delivery systems to best meet the needs of the community. Exploration and evaluation of new and efficient deployment strategies for both individual medical and large scale multi-casualty incidents are important for success. The Department will continue to place emphasis on fundamental patient care skills and advance new clinical techniques that benefit our patients. Additionally, the SFFD will continue to improve partnerships with the existing healthcare infrastructure to assist our patients with obtaining efficient and effective care.

On the Fire Prevention and Investigation side, the face of the City has changed dramatically in recent years. From construction stemming from the economic recovery, to planned developments of entire new neighborhoods, the landscape of the City is ever-evolving. From newly constructed buildings subject to the newest fire and safety codes, to buildings built decades ago under far different code standards, the density and diversity of buildings presents unlimited challenges for the Department's emergency responders. The need for fire safety education and outreach has never been more apparent. In addition, new legislative requirements change the way the Department enforces fire and safety codes. The Department must be able to adapt to a changing landscape.



Goal 1: Evaluate & Adjust Current Operational Models To Ensure That The SFFD Continues To Provide The Highest Level Of Service – Be it regulatory or legislative

changes, demographic shifts, or traffic or environmental policy implementations, the Department’s operational response must be adaptable to continue to deliver premium service to the residents of and visitors to San Francisco. With projected growth of San Francisco in coming years, the Fire Department must be able to identify gaps in service and adjust operational models to address those gaps.

Strategy 1: Improve Delivery Of Service – By truly understanding the needs of the population it serves, the Department must measure its performance while providing these services. The Department must not only focus on improving services, it must also plan for changes in those services as part of a growing City. The Department has concentrated efforts to improve response times, be it by policy changes, technological advancement, or improved resource allocation. Those efforts will continue to provide the public with the high level of service it has come to expect from the SFFD.

Action Steps

- Utilize continuous demand analysis to meet response objectives
- Review and improve system status and resource management
- Evaluate current trends and determine the need for redistricting and/or additional Command Officer Posts, additional Fire Stations, and ambulance posting locations
- Review and analyze current organizational structure for improvements or efficiencies
- Continue to work on response time improvements through review of dispatch, technological and operational policies and procedures

Strategy 2: Increase The Profile Of Emergency Medical Services – In the present-day SFFD, EMS plays an ever increasing role in day-to-day operations, from call volume to community outreach. As the Department sees annual increases in EMS call volume, and as medical calls make up a larger portion of Departmental call volume, it is anticipated that the role of EMS in the Department will expand and become more critical as the City continues its growth in the coming years. As EMS response is a joint effort of both suppression and EMS resources, the two disciplines are clearly intertwined, and proper coordination and training across both is crucial. While the Department has seen an increase in budgeted resources for EMS over the past few years through additional personnel and equipment, the Department must ensure that there are sufficient front-line ambulances and staffing, EMS infrastructure and policy considerations to ensure the Department can be ahead of the curve of a rapidly changing industry and support the Mission of EMS.

Action Steps

- Review of Departmental EMS organizational structure to ensure clear and logical reporting structure and to ensure new resources are incorporated efficiently
- Improve coordination and training efforts between suppression and EMS
- Establish a committee for the Department’s efforts during the construction of the new EMS facility as part of the City’s Health Bond
- Develop updated EMS logistics plan in advance of move to new facility

Strategy 3: Explore Alternative Staffing & Patient Transport Destination Options To Address The Diverse Needs Of Our Population

– The Department strives to provide assistance to the public as efficiently and rapidly as possible. With needs and populations in the City constantly changing, the Department must be able to adapt service delivery models accordingly to ensure that people depending on the 911 system for assistance can be properly directed to the most appropriate services. Working with a wide range of partners, examining best practices in the industry and analyzing the needs of the public will assist the Department’s response to a changing City.

Action Steps

- Explore expansion of the EMS-6 program and the addition of community paramedicine
- Work with our allied agencies to establish potential alternatives to Emergency Department destination transport
- Explore alternative staffing and resource deployment models to address the varied calls for service and the best utilization of personnel and resources (e.g., Quick Response Vehicles)
- Following exploration and analysis of these models, review and implement changes as appropriate

Strategy 4: Improve Clinical Performance – Building comprehensive measures for clinical medical performance is important to the Fire Department. By incorporating improved data analysis into this review, potential clinical trends can be identified and issues can be addressed by additional training or other methods. Improved Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), as part of an overall risk management plan, is crucial to this strategy. The Department shall make use of improved technologies for EMS, incorporating the Department’s new Electronic Patient Care Record (EPCR) platform with other platforms.

Action Steps

- Explore additional technology for pre-hospital care options
- Participate in evidence-based medical research for pre-hospital studies
- Create a comprehensive risk management program
- Establish a continuous Patient Care Record (PCR) audit process
- Review current performance of field providers combined with evidence-based analysis



Strategy 5: Expand Complex Incident Management Capabilities – Given the variety and complexity of threats to the safety of the public in today’s day and age, both man-made and natural, the Department must be prepared and plan for a number of scenarios. In addition, the City & County of San Francisco regularly hosts large-scale events, where large crowds can provide operational challenges for the Department and strains on Departmental resources. The Department must be able to resource for its day-to-day emergency operations, in addition to being prepared to respond to larger scale incidents.

Action Steps

- Increase medical surge capacity
- Create an Incident Management team tasked with preparing for large-scale, pre-planned events
- Develop additional Incident Action Plans
- Develop an EMS Strike Team plan

Strategy 6: Improve Radio Communications & Dispatch Systems – The Department is working to enhance current communications and dispatch systems through a combination of both policy and technology solutions. The overall objective is to streamline the dispatch and response components of the system. The Department is one of the main participants in the City’s Radio Replacement project, addressing infrastructure and equipment needs of the current system and upgrading the entire system to be P-25 compliant.

Action Steps

- Review Department staffing levels at Division of Emergency Communications
- Analyze current dispatch procedures and incorporate additional technologies to assist in efficiencies where applicable
- Work closely with other City Public Safety partners on the implementation of the City’s Radio Replacement project



Goal 2: Enhance Fire Prevention & Investigation Efforts To Adapt To The Needs Of A Growing City

– With the demand for services increasing in recent years due to construction activity throughout the City, the resources of the Bureau of Fire Prevention have been strained. Additional staff has been added in each of the last few fiscal years, and resource reallocation within the unit has occurred under the direction of the Fire Marshal. Construction growth is anticipated to continue in the coming years and the Bureau needs to ensure it is properly resourced and continues its effective code enforcement efforts. Recent legislation passed by the Board of Supervisors has required the Bureau to assume more inspection responsibilities, as well as provide additional data to the public. These requirements must be included in the workload of the Bureau to ensure sufficient staffing levels. The Bureau of Fire Investigation has restored staffing levels that resulted from budget reductions a few years ago and has had a number of new Investigators assigned to the Bureau.

Strategy 1: Improve Enforcement Of Fire Code – Fire code enforcement is one of the key pillars of the Bureau of Fire Prevention. Fire Prevention staff work closely with the units in the field on residential inspections. The Department will enhance this relationship as more units are added for inspections through technological advancements and additional training. The Bureau will also continue to work closely with the Department of Building Inspection and other City partners on code enforcement and fire safety issues to best serve the residents of and visitors to the City.

Action Steps

- Develop, plan and implement Department complaint section under the Bureau of Fire Prevention to manage the entire life cycle of a complaint
- Analyze the need for Fire Prevention staff to assist with R1/R2 inspections on an annual basis given the increased number of units that require inspection
- Improve training and communication with field units to create efficiencies and ensure up-to-date knowledge of fire code and other legislative changes

Strategy 2: Analysis of Division Of Fire Prevention & Investigation Staffing Levels To Meet Demands Of A Changing City

– Increased growth of the City, particularly the impact of new construction to the Department's Plan Check Bureau, has placed strains on the current resources for Fire Prevention. Further resource needs are to be analyzed as the City's projected growth is anticipated to continue. This includes office space and other staff resources. Funding allocations in recent years have restored staffing and resources to the Investigations unit, and the Department must support these new Investigators with sufficient training to perform their jobs effectively.

Action Steps

- Regular analysis of Prevention Staffing model to adapt to regulatory or legislative changes to the fire code and fire safety enforcement
- Conduct a space analysis and needs study as the Bureau incorporates new offices as it prepares to move to a multi-agency facility on Mission Street
- Collaborate with Department of Building Inspection and City Planning on upcoming City-wide projects
- Develop training plan for new Investigators



Community, Programs & Partnerships



Community, Programs & Partnerships

The San Francisco Fire Department is an integral part of the community. Investing in community relationships is extremely important for the sustainability and trust of the Department within the population it serves. Open dialogue with the communities is crucial to providing the best services to the public. The Department places great importance in its standing in the community as it shares a common goal to make the entire City safer and more capable to respond to an emergency event.

Along with improving coordination with community groups, better coordination amongst the Department's partners is important. These communication improvements can assist in presenting a united and consistent message to our partners. The Department works with and depends on support from other governmental entities (including Federal, State and City agencies) as well as our partners in the private sector. This support can, in some cases, supplement the Department's budgetary funding, expanding the services the Department is able to provide.

Goal 1: Streamline Department Communications To Maximize Effective Messaging Within The Organization, City Government & The Community –

A consistent message is crucial in the communication of the Department's goals and messages to government leaders, the general public, as well as internal stakeholders. These efforts are crucial to properly advocate for the Department's interests, from a public policy perspective with community and government leaders but also from a financial perspective given the number of competing interests for funding prioritization. Internal communication of Department objectives and goals needs to be effective and clear.

Strategy 1: Identify & Fortify Internal & External Partnerships – Improving collaboration and communication within the Department is the first step to strengthening relationships with partners outside of the Department. All Divisions and Bureaus across the Department shall be working toward the same goal and promoting healthy communication. Strengthening relationships between Department Administration and labor/employee groups is crucial to this goal as well. The Department should expand and enhance relationships with private partners to make use of additional resources to supplement budgetary funding, expanding services available to the public. The Department will work with the Board of Supervisors and other City partners to better address concerns raised by the public. From an external perspective, working with our healthcare partners to improve system-wide integration is a priority.

Action Steps

- Commit to and preschedule regular meetings to ensure clear communications with Employee Groups, Board of Supervisors, the Mayor's Office, and other City and State agencies
- Identify measures to improve collaboration among Department Divisions and Bureaus
- Target additional Governmental, Business and Philanthropic partners to identify regional initiatives and leverage resources
- Strengthen relationships with local hospitals

Strategy 2: Strengthen SFFD Media Relations – By strengthening relationships with the media, the Department can improve trust and communication with the community. The Department should use media opportunities to showcase our exemplary employees, making the public aware of all services and functions that the Department provides. The Department can leverage relationships with the media to assist with public outreach and education to the community, serving as a conduit for information and messaging. The Department can utilize positive media relations to be helpful in large-scale incidents by incorporating their resources into Departmental responses as appropriate.

Action Steps

- Streamline communications through the Department's Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Collaborate with Employee Groups to establish a media agenda for Department needs
- Initiate media outreach and schedule appearances to update the public on Department news and community involvement
- Increase Public Outreach and Communications staff to include a Digital Specialist, administrative support and an additional PIO
- Increase social media presence and ensure accurate and timely messaging
- Create a joint Administration and Labor policy for social media
- Review the Department's website to ensure information is current, simplified, and presented in a user-friendly format
- Expand the use of video, photographs and graphics for a more user-friendly experience



Strategy 3: Reinforce SFFD Internal Communications – In addition to media and external communications to the public, clarity and coordinated messaging within the Department is extremely important. From the Chief of Department to Firefighters in the field, improved communication will be of benefit to all parties. By providing relevant and timely information to all members, the Department can foster collaboration among all ranks and disciplines. The Department should develop better ways to incorporate feedback and communication in both directions of the chain of command.

Action Steps

- Encourage participation in committees, special events and planning from uniformed and civilian members of the Department
- Review current Departmental communication methods and utilize a variety of mediums to increase ongoing communications to the field from the Administration
- Improve administrative response to members' General Form submissions
- Review current Departmental communication methods and identify alternative methods for internal communications

Goal 2: Expand SFFD Community Programs – While the community and the neighborhoods of San Francisco is the population served, they are also some of the biggest advocates for the Department. The Department should cultivate an informed community by improving outreach and communication efforts. By educating and preparing the community for various types of situations, the Department can improve the overall efficiency of a City-wide response, and focus resources where they are most needed in an emergency. These groups will become more invested in the health of the Department and in turn the health of their own communities.

Strategy 1: Develop A Community Outreach Plan – The Department should develop a comprehensive community outreach plan to engage as many communities as possible. By using a variety of tools to enhance relationships with neighborhoods, the Department can build trust and open communication with the people it serves. Through improved interaction and communication with the community, the Department can better identify the concerns and priorities of the community to address them in a comprehensive manner.

Action Steps

- Expand Department field units' participation at neighborhood and community meetings and events
- Participate in Police Community Meetings
- Update outreach materials for community meetings
- Incorporate new Fire Prevention and Investigation resources into outreach plan

Strategy 2: Cultivate Community Preparedness Programs – The Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) is an extremely valuable resource for the Department, having trained thousands of volunteers in disaster preparedness. The Department strives to prepare and educate the community, both for their own safety in a large scale disaster, in addition to being better able to help their neighbors and other community members should emergency responders not be immediately available. Enhancing the availability and scope of public education and literature, in multiple languages, is a part of this goal. By leveraging the success of NERT with additional partners to enhance the program, the Department can target a variety of populations and demographics. These programs allow individuals to make an investment in their own community and foster neighborhood involvement and empowerment.

Action Steps

- Increase NERT training, staffing and leadership support
- Increase training for specialized volunteer opportunities, such as TeenNERT, Medical Reserve Corps, SFPD-ALERT and more
- Expand fire safety training through the Bureau of Fire Prevention
- Expand the CPR-in-Schools initiative
- Develop Public Safety materials for marketing SFFD programs and safety messages. Ensure messages meet multi-cultural and diverse community needs
- Explore collaboration with other education providers, such as City College of San Francisco and the State Fire Marshal







Health & Wellness

Health & Wellness

The most important resource the Department has is its workforce. The health and wellness of Department employees is paramount to the well-being of the Department. The unique requirements of the job result in a high level of stress for employees, both physically and emotionally. There are short-term challenges, such as an acute injury, and long-term challenges, such as cancer, which is prevalent in the fire service. All cases present their own issues and strategies for solutions.

Recognizing these unique challenges is crucial to fully supporting the employee, as they can have an impact on both work life and home life. A healthy workforce reduces the chance of injury on the job, and allows the Department to best serve the community.

Health and wellness has both short and long-term benefits for the employee. As data is gathered and trends are identified within the Department and industry-wide, and as the fire service becomes better educated on these issues, programs will be developed to properly meet the needs of members and their specific situations.

The City of San Francisco has taken great steps to encourage employee health and wellness. The Department should leverage these efforts and go beyond, to customize programs for the unique challenges faced by Firefighters and EMTs/Paramedics. A complete and proactive health and wellness program carries over from the employee's work into all areas of their life.



Goal 1: Build On Existing Health & Wellness Resources For Members Of

The SFFD – This goal entails creating a more positive work environment with happier and healthier employees and improving individual health and relationships. Improving the health and wellness of members can increase morale as well as enhance the overall quality of the members’ work and home lives. Department members become better role models for the community by practicing good habits to support health and well-being. Supplementing resources and education available to Department members helps them make more informed decisions about their health. With health and wellness improvements, the Department strives to increase productivity while reducing injuries, helping reduce long-term costs for the Department and City.

Strategy 1: Develop Employee Health Education & Expand Support Programs

For Members – The Department’s health and wellness program should strive to assist members in addressing every aspect of their overall health – physical, mental and emotional. The Department will leverage and incorporate already existing City programs and resources for health and wellness, while modifying and taking into consideration the unique challenges of the fire service that differentiate it.

Action Steps

- Create a voluntary employee wellness program and better utilize the City’s existing wellness resources
- Work with City’s Wellness Program Coordinator to improve employee participation incentives
- Develop additional Cancer prevention awareness, education, and screening programs for members and strive for 100% participation rates
- Update Health Check Standards
- Coordinate SFFD guidelines with best ergonomic practices and OSHA requirements

Strategy 2: Improve Mental Health Advocacy & Education For Members – Along with the physical health of employees, mental and emotional health are extremely important to the overall health of First Responders. Daily exposure to high-stress situations and traumas are part of the job and provide challenges for employees from their work environment that can carry over to other aspects of their lives and take a toll on members. Bringing awareness to these issues and providing avenues of assistance for members can help develop a better understanding of the problems surrounding First Responder mental health.

Action Steps

- Increase SFFD Stress Unit resources, including the potential of contracting external professionals to provide employee assistance
- Increase mental health awareness education for incoming and current staff

Strategy 3: Improve Physical Safety In The Work Environment – Keeping employees healthy is a top priority, as having a sick and injured member is not good for either the employee or the Department. A safe work environment is a key part of that strategy, ranging from proper use of equipment, safe facilities, and correct operational techniques and procedures. Attention to these details will allow members to feel supported by the Department. By identifying best practices in the industry, the Department will be able to make use of improvements and data to best serve its members. Once policies and procedures are developed, education and training will be needed and reinforcement of these practices is required. The Department should strive to set the standard for employee safety in the fire service.

Action Steps

- Determine the most common employee injuries and their causes
- Develop an education and training program to address the most common injuries
- Formalize a process for communicating common health hazards to members in the field and incorporate common hazard prevention strategies into training modules
- Collaborate with the Industrial Hygienist and Cancer Prevention Foundation to reduce cancer causing exposures in the workplace







Infrastructure



Infrastructure

Infrastructure serves as the backbone of the Fire Department, allowing the Department to carry out its core mission. From logistical support to financial support, the Department's infrastructure is crucial in responding to rapidly changing technologies and increasing demands for services. The Department's facilities and equipment directly support First Responders and provide those individuals the tools required to do their jobs.

Efficiencies developed within the framework of the Department's infrastructure can lead to cost savings as well as overall improvements in the delivery of services. Whether improvements are in the procurement of new equipment, the implementation of new technologies, or maintaining current facilities and equipment, sustaining a strong infrastructure is crucial to Department operations. When there are financial constraints, infrastructure is often over-looked, sacrificing long-term health for short-term gains. Identifying sufficient funding to support and sustain current infrastructure, as well as the enhancements required to meet the needs of an ever-changing City, is a priority of the Department.

The stability and strength of the Department's infrastructure is critical not only to support the everyday emergency response carried out by the brave men and women of the Department, but also for surviving a large-scale disaster event, man-made or natural.



Goal 1: Expand Revenue Generation/Funding Alternatives – From a budgetary perspective, the Fire Department is supported predominantly by the City’s General Fund, making it susceptible to economic fluctuations of the City’s overall financial health. However, the Department provides a vital core public safety function for the City and the Department has not seen its need for services decrease during economic downturns. The Department must be able to fund its operational and support functions even during lean economic times.

Strategy 1: Explore Alternative Sources Of Funding – Given the Department’s significant dependency on the City’s General Fund, as well as the competition amongst other City Departments for limited General Fund dollars, the Department must find additional avenues of funding to adequately address the needs of the Department. The Department shall research and explore the possibility of Department-specific parcel taxes, impact fees, set-asides and general obligation bonds to augment the financial resources currently available to the Department. The Department should also develop a plan to identify and promote more private donations to the Department.

Action Steps

- Research additional funding options, such as Department-specific Impact Fees, parcel taxes and general obligation bonds
- Develop a plan to identify availability and uses of private donations to the Department
- Seek and apply for grants that enhance/supplement/promote Department goals

Strategy 2: Capture All Supplemental Reimbursement For Medical Calls – As the costs for providing medical services continue to rise, while Federal and State reimbursement for these services stay the same or decrease, it is becoming increasingly clear that Department’s costs for providing emergency medical services far outweighs the reimbursement received for those services. The Department should look to establish an EMS Revenue Officer. In addition to overseeing regular Departmental billing and collections, this position would enhance the Department’s Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) reimbursement and claim program, while at the same time work with the applicable Local, State and Federal entities on other EMS revenue programs being developed or coming on the horizon. The Department should continue to study the impacts on projected revenue of the continually changing healthcare and insurance environments.

Action Steps

- Establish an EMS Revenue Officer
- Enhance the Department’s Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) reimbursement
- Work with the applicable Local, State and Federal entities on other EMS revenue programs in process and designed for future development, such as GEMT expansion, first-responder fees and Inter-Governmental Transfers (IGTs)

Strategy 3: Undergo Comprehensive Analysis Of Current Departmental Fee Structures & Explore Other Opportunities For Fee-For-Service Programs - Due to legislation or

policy constraints, the Department is limited as to what service fees it can charge. However, fee revenue is a source of income for the Department. The Department will establish a plan to regularly conduct a comprehensive review of its fee structures and schedules to determine that all costs associated with providing the service are recovered. The Department should also regularly explore fee enhancements to absorb service cost increases within the confines of relevant legislation. The Department is to regularly review the billing potential of existing services that it provides, as well as conduct an assessment of current and potential revenue streams.

Action Steps

- Continuously review fee structures and schedules to determine that all costs associated with providing a service are recovered
- Within the scope of applicable legislation, evaluate additional potential fee-for-service areas within the Department

Strategy 4: Develop A Grant Application & Administration Infrastructure – Given the Department’s competition for the City’s General Fund dollars, grants have been an important funding source for the Department in recent years, enhancing staffing, facilities and equipment. However, given limited resources, the Department lacks centralized procedures and work flow for grants. The Department should develop and establish a Grants Unit, responsible for the entire grant process, from identification and application of grants to administration and monitoring. The Department should work to improve the processes for proposing and vetting grant project proposals by establishing a Grants Committee Workgroup. The Department should improve communication and outreach to Grant Units of other jurisdictions to find examples of approved projects.

Action Steps

- Establish a centralized procedure and work-flow for grants
- Establish a Grants Unit/Committee, responsible for the entire grants process, from identification and application of grants to administration and monitoring
- Pursue funding for a Department grant writer
- Initiate outreach to other entities who have been awarded previous grants



Strategy 5: Leverage The Department's Division Of Training For Enhanced Revenue Opportunities

The Department should look to make broader use of its current two training facilities, located at 19th and Folsom Streets and Treasure Island. Given the unique characteristics of these sites and their ability to host a variety of classes, the Department will make efforts to develop a training plan to bring classes to these sites to host other jurisdictions, charging for the use of the various facilities and/or the training instruction itself. These revenue opportunities can provide funding for updates to the training facilities or equipment. In addition, the Department will explore an Instructional Service Agreement with City College of San Francisco, which would allow the Department to capture additional revenue for the Department's current training curriculum while, at the same time, provide valuable career development training to current members at little to no cost.

Action Steps

- Establish a fee-for-use service for other jurisdictions/agencies at the Treasure Island Training Facility
- Explore an Instructional Service Agreement with City College of San Francisco, as well as enhanced documentation of training activities that would potentially increase revenue from the State

Goal 2: Update Aging Facilities, Equipment & Apparatus In Order To Meet The Mission Of The Department

Department facilities are unlike other City properties- members work and live out of these facilities. The condition of facilities can pose health and safety issues for fire and medical personnel. Similarly, the Department's apparatus are not just vehicles to transport members from place to place; rather they are life safety equipment that are essential to performing the job at the scene of an emergency. The proper maintenance, repair and replacement of facilities and equipment is crucial to support the Department's commitment to safety for its members and to the general public.

Strategy 1: Develop An Alternative Vehicle Procurement Process – Replacement of Departmental apparatus is crucial to the overall response of the Fire Department. An old and outdated vehicle fleet results in increased maintenance costs and inefficiencies, as well as potential safety concerns for members. The Department has worked closely with the Mayor's Office to develop an equipment and vehicle replacement plan, which needs to continue in the future.

Action Steps

- Draft an alternate "life-cycle replacement schedule for apparatus" per NFPA 1901 and 1917 plan standards
- Receive approval and funding for the proposed schedule, with the goal of being fully compliant in three to five years
- Once the entire fleet is modernized, create a sustainability plan for the future for both front-line and relief apparatus
- Incorporate the latest in industry and technological standards into Departmental specifications for equipment and vehicles

Strategy 2: Update Aging Facilities In Order To Support Current & Future Technologies

– Given the age of the Department’s facilities, many are unable to support the current and future technology needs of the Department. From communication/dispatch capabilities to standard electrical capacity, many of the Department’s facilities are unable to handle the demands of today and are in need of upgrade. While some replacement is planned as part of general obligation bond work, a scheduled replacement and upgrade of all facilities is needed as the Department moves forward.

Action Steps

- Develop a plan to remodel and/or rebuild two (2) Fire Stations per year until all facilities are modernized
- Fund and properly staff a maintenance schedule to ensure our facilities remain in peak working order
- Establish a station template for new construction, incorporating minimum standards and characteristics to support the needs of a modern day firehouse
- Update technological infrastructure at all Department locations to support dispatch and communications upgrades currently available

Strategy 3: Develop A Standard Plan For Department Facility Expansion Based On City Growth Predictions

– As the City’s population and development growth is projected to increase in coming years, the need for additional fire stations is projected in order to meet the increased demand for services. These new resources need to account for the increased density of both population and buildings of the City. The plan for a new training facility, including land acquisition, is of highest priority over the next five years along with a new Bureau of Equipment facility.

Action Steps

- Develop a standard formula for expansion based on population growth, new construction, traffic patterns and call history
- Establish a plan to secure funding and procure land to build a new, state of the art training facility, incorporating a comprehensive needs assessment for the Department’s training requirements
- Install additional training features into new and upgraded facilities

Strategy 4: Modernize Equipment & Update Inventory – Without replacement, not only does the Department encounter increased maintenance and repair costs and potential equipment failures, but the Department also misses out on technological advancements and improved industry standards. There is a clear need for the Department to be able to regularly upgrade and replace equipment on its front-line apparatus. There is also a need to have sufficient inventory to outfit additional relief units and crews that are deployed in a natural/man-made disaster response.

Action Steps

- Purchase a full complement of tools, equipment and supplies for every frontline and relief piece in the Department
- Explore present-day industry standards for equipment and incorporate best practices into procedures for use and replacement
- Continue to upgrade power tools from gas to battery-powered
- Fund an effective, sustainable, flexible water delivery system for the City, enhancing the Department’s domestic and auxiliary water supply systems

Strategy 5: Update Inventory Control Processes To Reduce Damage, Loss & Spoilage

– Enhanced inventory tracking is a need for the Department, for both accountability purposes and efficiency. Given the volume of supplies and equipment the Department is responsible for, improvements in inventory tracking is crucial. The Department should make use of current technologies to improve tracking and reporting of inventory.

Action Steps

- Roll-out an inventory system to track apparatus, equipment, tools and supplies
- Automate and improve upon equipment requests and restocking processes
- Analyze data recorded through new processes, and develop new policies and procedures to reduce inventory loss as needed
- Formalize inventory and logistics structure as the Department prepares to move into a new EMS facility

Strategy 6: Evaluate The Feasibility Of A Transfer Of The City's General Services Agency Fire & Ladder Shops Over To The SFFD's Bureau Of Equipment

– The Department's Bureau of Equipment works closely with Central Shops, relying on them for such services as wooden ladder repair and construction, vehicle repair, and brass fabrication. By working with the General Services Agency (GSA) to improve work-flow, the Department could better prioritize work and improve efficiency. The Department should also develop a plan to create/ manage its own in-house machine shop, which would be cost effective and improve work processes.

Action Steps

- Perform a cost analysis of the transfer process and long-term cost-saving projections
- Confer with Departments, such as SFPUC, who have absorbed Central Shops functions into their Departments
- Consider the potential of these units in planning for a replacement Bureau of Equipment facility
- Explore potential of and provide a justification plan for the addition of positions from the trades into the Department's budget



Goal 3: Use Technology Effectively To Improve Public Transparency & To Support Staff With Strategic & Operational Decisions

– With advances in technology in recent years providing avenues for integration into the fire service, the Department must use these tools to improve the efficiency and service delivery performance to the public. The Department also has an obligation to be as transparent as possible to the public with its data and metrics. In many cases, the issue is being able to make use of existing technologies in order to allow the public access to data. The Department has made progress along those lines, with work on the EMS Data Working Group Dashboard and efforts to move Fire Prevention data on-line, but these efforts will continue.

Strategy 1: Make SFFD Measurable Activity Data Easily Accessible Internally Through Real-Time Dashboards & Externally Through On-Line Data Portals

– The Department's internal Human Resources Management System is used daily by Department employees for purposes such as reporting, scheduling, inventory, training and payroll. However, upgrades to this system could result in increased capabilities for the Department, including user data reporting and analysis. There are also a number of avenues where Department data is available for public consumption, either through the Department or other City portals. The Department should look to increase the types of data availability and the ease of access to it.

Action Steps

- Review existing SFFD datasets in SF Data Portal and determine if any additional datasets should be offered
- Work with DataSF staff to provide the public with additional dashboards based on the existing datasets
- Continue work in the presentation of building inspection and other Fire Prevention data and information through an easy to use public interface
- Upgrade Departmental HRMS to allow SFFD employees access to additional individual and Departmental data while improving business intelligence capabilities

Strategy 2: Deploy & Develop Mobile Applications That Provide Secure Access To The SFFD Data Repository

– The Department has focused on making mobile technologies available for end users in the field to assist with their day-to-day activities, from tablets used by Chief Officers to assist with incident management, to electronic medical record documentation for patients. Wireless networking in the field for mobile devices for training and documentation can result in time efficiencies that were not possible just a few years ago. These technologies depend on a mobile network and wireless infrastructure to deliver. With the onset of these mobile technologies, however, the Department must ensure that it can provide a safe, secure mobile network for all Department devices, as well as solutions to manage that network for IT staff. With secure mobile management, the Department could roll out any number of current applications to mobile users.

Action Steps

- Deploy all new SFFD internal applications using a uniform responsive interface, easily rendered in desktops and mobile devices
- Continue to work with the Department of Emergency Management in the deployment of mobile applications to emergency vehicles
- Complete the installation of a standard Mobile Deployment Management tool to all SFFD devices
- Provide SFFD personnel training on existing online tools deployed as part of the City enterprise agreements

Strategy 3: Use Technology To Fully Support Front-Line Operation Employees To Meet The Department's Mission

– There are a number of technological solutions that can be implemented to provide members with tools in their efforts of planning, responding and documenting emergency incidents. Technology can be used to reduce response times, as well as improve Firefighter safety by increasing the information available on scene. With the dependence on the stability of radio communications at the scene of an incident, technological advances in this area can have a direct positive impact on the health and safety of the Department's members.

Action Steps

- Work with the Department of Technology to extend fiber and wireless networks to all Departmental facilities
- Conduct assessment and review of industry standards and alternatives for technology implementation
- Working with other City partners, establish data relationships to provide first responders with the most current building and incident information upon dispatch
- Working with other City partners, replace the outdated radios installed in Department vehicles and stations, and upgrade the hand-held radios used daily by personnel. The new system will provide better coverage throughout the City, including improvements in critical City facilities, BART and Muni underground, and in the developing Bay View/Hunters Point area



Goal 4: Develop An Efficient & Reliable IT Infrastructure – Until recently, the Department’s IT staff was not resourced sufficiently to support the IT needs of the Department. Staff were relegated to dealing with issues as they came up, and could not commit to long-term plans due to bandwidth issues. In the past couple of fiscal years, additional allocations for IT personnel have increased the availability of resources for the Department. With this comes the focus on establishing a formal IT infrastructure, from both a systems and personnel perspective, which will support the Department for years to come and allow the discovery, testing and implementation of various technologies into the Departmental service model.

Strategy 1: Develop A Comprehensive Technology Plan For The Department –

With the changes and possibilities due to new technologies, and their potential positive impacts to the delivery of Fire and EMS services, there are many areas in the Department where additional technology support will improve the efficiency of service delivery and information transparency. However, further study on those alternatives is needed to ensure consistency and coordination across all Department functions and to ensure all technologies work together with other Department and City systems. The Department must analyze where these new technologies can assist in accomplishing the Department’s overall Mission, and in turn, how they should be implemented.

Action Steps

- Conduct assessment and review of industry standards and alternatives for technology implementation
- Establish a Departmental Technology Committee to solicit feedback and input from field and administrative members of all ranks and disciplines
- Develop a technology plan for the Department, setting goals for future technology implementation and integration and a formal structure of the IT staffing group
- Establish minimum technological standards for all firehouses that will serve as a guide for all stations to be remodeled/rebuilt in future years, in order to maintain consistency across all platforms and stations

Strategy 2: Streamline Operations & Infrastructure To Eliminate Unnecessary Duplication, To Increase Efficiencies, Improve Security & Reduce Costs – Whether it is the consolidation of existing work flows, availability of data for analysis or new tools, technology provides the Department with opportunities to improve the delivery of services to both its members and the public, while at the same time providing cost and work flow efficiencies. These efforts would be undertaken in accordance and conjunction with City technology policies.

Action Steps

- Work with the Department of Technology in completing the migration of SFFD servers to the MS Azure data center
- Work with the Department of Emergency Management and the Department of Technology in configuring new firehouse switches that can eliminate the need for duplicate single function devices at each location
- Use cloud technologies to achieve secure, scalable and cost efficient computing capabilities
- Develop hardware and software policies in line with City-wide policies that allows for consistency across the Department



Photo: Greg Collaco

Strategy 3: Ensure The SFFD Technology & Public Safety Infrastructures Have Robust & Reliable Disaster Recovery & Security Capabilities To Support The Continuity Of Operations

– As a Department providing crucial public safety service, continuity of operations in a disaster is crucial. Part of this is the technological infrastructure support for field operations. In addition, as cyber threats become more and more prevalent, the need for a secure technology infrastructure is paramount to protect sensitive information and applications, as well as support the continuity of operations.

Action Steps

- Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan for the Department in conjunction with Department partners and their respective systems
- Complete an analysis of Departmental security IT needs
- Protect sensitive data through the deployment of robust security and privacy programs

Strategy 4: Ensure The SFFD IT Workforce Has The Knowledge & Skills To Support The SFFD Technology Services & Infrastructure

– As the Department can bring on additional IT staff, it is essential that we provide these members with the most current technologies to assist Departmental end users. As new technologies are developed, the Department must be on the cutting edge of implementation, providing benefits to both our members in the field and the public. Availability of training for IT staff is a large part of that, working with the Department of Technology, as well as outside vendors.

Action Steps

- Ensure IT staff have access to up-to-date technologies to support the changing needs of the Department
- Provide Training for IT staff on new software applications and hardware that can eventually be rolled out to Department end users
- Explore further the use of consultants when specific expertise is not available elsewhere in the City



Recruitment, Staffing & Training



Recruitment, Staffing & Training

The Fire Department of the 21st Century will be operating in an environment that will experience changes at a rate never before seen in the delivery of emergency services. To that end, it is incumbent upon the Department to provide the training and support that will provide every employee an opportunity to succeed.

The basic building block for that success is the selection and hiring of qualified employees that are representative of the community the Department serves. Recruitment efforts should be directed at maintaining a Department that is diverse and responsive to the needs of the residents.

New technology may also identify efficient ways of delivering not only the traditional services provided by a Department, but also open doors to other support that employees of the Department might be called upon for service.

Staffing levels for all Divisions, Bureaus and assignments need to be analyzed for the most efficient delivery of services. The Department intends to take a proactive approach in anticipating openings in supervisory ranks so that candidates can be properly prepared through experience, training and education.

Training provided through the Department will be based on best practices in the industry and will be compliant with National standards. The Department will explore training opportunities and certification standards that are endorsed by the California State Fire Marshal through the division of State Fire Training.

The Department will also maximize economic and training opportunities that are provided through an Instructional Services Agreement with City College of San Francisco and through an affiliation with California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (CJAC).



Goal 1: Ensure Staffing Levels, Recruitment & Hiring Processes Meet The Growing Needs Of The Department

– As the community the SFFD serves grows, and as training requirements become more advanced and changes in the industry arise, the Department must make sure it has appropriate staffing to serve the residents of and visitors to this great City, and that these individuals are prepared as best as possible to do their jobs. The members of the San Francisco Fire Department are the greatest resource it has. It is crucial to recruit, hire and train appropriate levels of personnel to meet the dynamic demands of San Francisco.

Strategy 1: Develop An Entry Level Firefighter & EMT/Paramedic Recruitment Plan Designed To Reach All Of The San Francisco Bay Area’s Diverse Communities

– The City and County of San Francisco, as well as the surrounding region, provides a wealth of diversity in the people that live and work here. The employees of the Department should reflect the diverse population it serves. The Department shall work to ensure it reaches all these various communities on the processes and expectations of working for the San Francisco Fire Department. The recruitment process should help integrate the various communities into the Department, enhancing the overall level of service provided to the public.

Action Steps

- Revamp neighborhood outreach programs
- Create an entry level Job Announcement flow chart with clearly defined prerequisites, expectations and timelines

Strategy 2: Increase The Total Number Of Department Positions To Meet The Growing Needs Of The Department

– With the population and development of the City projected to increase in the coming years, the demand for Departmental services will increase as well. To meet this demand, the Department must staff and resource sufficiently. With additional Fire Stations anticipated to come on-line soon, the Department must be able to hire additional staff to support those stations. Support staff, both uniform and civilian, will be needed to carry out the Department’s core functions.

Action Steps

- Review staffing levels in each Division, both Civilian and Uniformed
- Align staffing levels with comparable City Departments and NFPA recommendations
- Analyze Departmental growth in conjunction with growth in the City overall



Strategy 3: Develop Comprehensive Succession & Staffing Plans –

The Department must be staffed appropriately to allow it to meet its Mission. This plan shall incorporate all available information about overall staffing levels and hiring, including projecting retirements and changes in service levels. This staffing plan is to include administrative and support staffing needs as well. The need for regular analysis of daily staffing levels, for both Fire Suppression and EMS, should be incorporated to ensure the Department is meeting the demands for services. In addition, the need for a succession plan is a high priority for the Department, to identify how to replace knowledge and experience of Department leaders who promote or retire from various ranks. This will increase Department preparedness for personnel changes while allowing continuity of leadership for the Department going forward, spanning all ranks and functions of the Department.

Goal 2: Create A Culture That Values Ongoing Leadership Development –

The men and women that make up the San Francisco Fire Department are the Department's greatest resource and the continued professional development of those members is crucial for the health of the Department. The SFFD will provide a number of opportunities for those members to expand their skills and reach their potential as they move through the Department ranks.

Strategy 1: Develop An Employee Development Program & Training Plan To Give Employees & Supervisors Tools For Improvement – The SFFD must invest in its employees and future leaders, as the Department relies on a highly qualified and trained workforce to fulfill its Mission. The end goal for the Department is having qualified and trained individuals available and ready when promotional positions become available.

Action Steps

- Produce a Department-wide annual training plan that meets the needs of all Divisions and positions, current and future, including entry level, Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and promotional training needs
- Identify continuing education opportunities for specialized positions in the Department, both uniformed and civilian
- Implement a mentorship plan for entry-level and promotional positions
- Improve availability and breadth of civilian training

Strategy 2: Identify & Implement Educational & Experience Prerequisites For Promotions – A clear promotional path for employees is a priority for the Department. Establishing standards for promotion levels, while at the same time offering career development options for employees to meet those standards, is a large part of the process. The Department shall work to identify and evaluate what prerequisites are required for all promotional ranks.

Action Steps

- Perform a job analysis and determine relevant educational prerequisites for all promotional opportunities
- Perform a survey of comparable departments and determine industry standards regarding educational and experience prerequisites
- Identify qualifying State Fire Training certification standards
- Evaluate National Fire Academy programs

Strategy 3: Develop Future Leaders By Offering Continuous Supervisor & Management Training

– Along with identifying the prerequisites for promotional positions in the Department, a key is providing tools for employees to meet those requirements and advance their personal development. The Department’s goal is to capture strengths of each individual and assist those members who promote into a supervisory or management position. Providing sufficient support for this is beneficial to both the supervisor, as well as the employees that he/she will be supervising.

Action Steps

- Identify key training benchmarks required for advanced positions
- Create advanced academies for Officers and other management positions
- Create a management training path by using identified State Fire Marshal (State Fire Training) courses and National Fire Academy courses, and others as identified by the Committee
- Commit to training the future leaders of the SFFD by providing management and advanced leadership courses in-house
- Provide opportunities to employees to further their education off-site
- Promote and support EMTs to train as Paramedics while on duty
- Incorporate leadership training throughout the Department with measurable outcomes and defined expectations

Strategy 4: Improve Personnel Management & Clarify Roles & Responsibilities

– Clarity of rules, regulations and procedures is in the best interest of all parties involved. Support for recently-graduated recruits throughout their probationary process is crucial for the success of the Firefighter. Proper training and evaluation, as well as establishing a clear conduit for feedback through the probationary period, are part of this process. Standards need to be applied consistently for all employees.

Action Steps

- Define Supervisory and administrative roles and responsibilities in each functional area
- Incorporate EMS specific Department Rules and Regulations and operational guidelines into current Department documents and manuals
- Clearly outline the discipline and appeal process
- Create a “task book” to be used as a guide during promotional probationary periods
- Develop a plan to track H3 L1 Emergency Medical Technician and L2 Paramedic members through probation

Goal 3: Provide Training That Prepares Department Members For The Changing & Challenging Environment Of The Delivery Of Emergency Services – As the dangers of the first responder environment continue to increase, the Department must prioritize providing its members with the appropriate tools and training to meet these challenges. This begins with the initial recruit academy training when hired and continues throughout the member’s time in the Department through continuous and specialized training opportunities. The Department must meet Local, State and Federal requirements in the process.

Strategy 1: Provide Industry Recognized Recruit Training – As the Department continues hiring over the next five years to replace anticipated retirements, the future of the Fire Department will make its way through the Department’s Division of Training through the Recruit Academy. The Academy provides the baseline of training for all new members. As the Department moves toward a State Fire Marshal standard for its recruits, training curriculum needs to be consistently updated to take account of any industry changes or gaps discovered. This also includes the support of training instructors, by having a sufficient pool of fire suppression and EMS members to support the incoming academies, as well as assist with probationary training.

Action Steps

- Continue to fund and support incoming recruit classes to increase staffing levels to remain ahead of the retirements and growth of the City
- Adapt the Department’s current training curriculum to follow the standards established by State Fire Marshal (State Fire Training)
- State-certify current and future Department Training staff in all disciplines of recruit training
- Develop an increased pool of qualified H-28 Lieutenants and H-33 EMS Captains to staff the recruit classes and provide probationary testing
- Maintain 19th/Folsom and Treasure Island Training Facility State Fire Marshal Local Academy and Technical Rescue Accreditations, which are due for re-accreditation in 2019 and 2024.
- Update Department manuals and the recruit handbook to follow current standards towards training and certification
- Explore additional training personnel resources to improve efficiency and effectiveness of training, such as restoration of the video coordinator and additional EMS training personnel

Strategy 2: Improve The Quality Of In-Service Training To Reflect Current Emergency Service Trends

– Department members face a wide variety of challenges and scenarios in their day-to-day response in the field. The goal of the Department’s Training Division is to replicate those scenarios as much as possible in a training environment, so that members will have as much experience as possible and be as prepared as possible before encountering the situation in the field. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including additional drills and exercises internally and with external Department partners, enhanced scenario-based trainings, and the availability of additional training courses.

Action Steps

- Increase inter-agency MCI/ICS exercises
- Tailor additional training offerings based on National and Departmental CQI findings
- Increase specialized hands-on/live training including, but not limited to, live-burns, MCI, high-rise, BART, HazMat, water rescue and active police incidents
- Conduct training scenarios involving below grade operations, active shooter, roof operations and hose leads
- Create public and private partnerships for assistance with training on the buildings and structures on Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island
- Coordinate advanced clinical hospital training
- Coordinate trainings with the California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee
- Provide additional integrated EMS/Suppression training, including Fire Ground and Battalion based modules
- Provide online Continuing Education to all Divisions









