

Meeting Date: 8/9/2016

Report Type: Staff/Discussion

Report ID: 2016-00794

Title: Fire Department Standards of Response Coverage Review Findings and Recommendations

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Receive and file.

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Department: Fire

Division: Office Of The Fire Chief Adm

Dept ID: 12001011

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-Background (SOC Findings and Recommendations)

City Attorney Review

Approved as to Form
Gary Lindsey
8/4/2016 9:08:49 AM

Approvals/Acknowledgements

Department Director or Designee: Walter W. White - 7/21/2016 5:06:29 PM

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: On August 8, 2015, the City Council authorized the City Manager to execute an agreement with Citygate Associates, LLC for consulting services to conduct a Standards of Cover study of the Fire Department's service delivery (deployment) system.

The Standards of Cover study has been completed and includes 18 key findings and 3 recommendations for immediate implementation. The study included a review of the adequacy of the current fire station resource deployment system, the risks in the community, and the emergency incident outcomes desired by the community.

Policy Considerations: Conducting a Standards of Response Cover study is consistent with and supports the Public Health and Safety-Fire Services goals and policies set forth in the 2035 General Plan.

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations: This report concerns administrative activities that will not have a significant effect on the environment, and does not constitute a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") [CEQA Sections 15061 (b) (3); 15378 (b)(2)].

Sustainability: None

Commission/Committee Action: None

Rationale for Recommendation: An overview of the Standards of Cover study findings and recommendations are presented to allow for discussion and contemplation of the current resources and operations of the Fire Department.

Financial Considerations: None.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Sacramento Fire Department (the Department) retained Citygate Associates, LLC to perform a Fire Department Standards of Response Coverage (deployment) review. This study included reviewing the adequacy of the current fire station resource deployment system, the risks to be protected, and the emergency incident outcomes desired by the community. This study revealed 18 key findings and produced 3 specific recommendations. The findings and recommendations are as follows:

FINDINGS

1. The City Council has not adopted, in one document, a commonly worded and complete best-practices-based deployment measure.
2. The Department has a standard response dispatching plan that considers the risk of different types of emergencies and pre-plans the response.
3. Minimum apparatus staffing per unit on engine and ladder truck companies at four is a recognized best practice for the city's size and risks.
4. Using the current 24 fire station locations, not including automatic aid stations, only the downtown, most-developed population density areas are within 4 minutes travel time of a fire engine.
5. Only the city's core areas are within 8 minutes travel time of an Effective Response Force assignment of four engines, two ladder trucks, one ambulance and two Battalion Chiefs, with no traffic congestion.
6. The city is too large and has too much traffic congestion for only three command chief officers to cover in 8 minutes travel. The addition of a fourth command chief and relocation of others to balance coverage should be further explored.
7. The city is too large and has too much traffic congestion for two ladder trucks to cover together in 8 minutes travel. While the second ladder within 8 minutes is a desired asset, it does not need to be on-scene within 8 minutes.
8. At least four to six of the eight gaps identified beyond the adopted 4-minute travel time coverage should strongly be considered for permanent fire stations as economics permit.
9. A four-station increase would also add resource depth to the Department at peak hours of the day and when other units are assigned out of their station area for training.
10. The highest volume hours for incidents span from 8 am through 8 pm, and

later on Friday and Saturday. Given this, where additional units are needed, they could be peak-hour ambulances for 12 hours per day for at least 5-6 days per week.

11. National best practices as recommended by NFPA 1710 are for call processing to be 90 seconds, 90% of the time, and 120 seconds, 99% of the time. The call sorting processing and crew alerting requires additional time, and is currently taking 144 seconds for 90% of calls.
12. National best practices recommend turnout time to be 80 seconds for fires and 60 seconds for EMS incidents.
13. In the 2014/15 measurement period, the Department had a 90% travel time Citywide of 5:55 minutes/seconds. This travel time is 1:55 minutes longer than national best practice publications for metro/urban areas. This travel time is fairly consistent across urbanized areas of the City, and none of the Battalions or station areas in Sacramento met a 4-minute goal.
14. As measured from crew dispatch to the first unit arrival, none of the City's fire station areas perform under the Department's goal of 5 minutes.
15. Due to longer dispatch and travel times, with the current quantity of fire stations, the Department has only one station areas performing better than a Citygate-recommended Call Receipt to Arrival time of 7:00 minutes/seconds.
16. While some engines reach 20% Unit-Hour Utilization workloads, no engines approach a Citygate recommended threshold of 30%. At peak hours of the day, while many engines are busy with EMS events, adding engines into existing stations at this time is not necessary.
17. Ten of the City's 15 ambulances exceed a Citygate recommended 30% Unit-Hour Utilization rate for most of the daylight hours seven days a week. In Battalion 1, four ambulances exceed 30%; in Battalions 2 and 3, three ambulances per Battalion exceed 30%.
18. The workload on the ten busiest ambulances is past the critical saturation point and crew effectiveness, training, and availability for incidents suffers. Reliever ambulances are needed for peak hours of the day as soon as possible in all three Battalions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Add at least three peak-hour ambulances Monday through Saturday, one in each of the three Battalions. The ambulance system should be deployed using full- and part- time units to deliver transport services where needed to patients, within 8 minutes travel time, or 11:00 minutes/seconds

total response time from fire dispatch receiving the call for assistance.

2. Identify the funding and timing to restore closed Fire Station 9 and add a fire station in the Delta Shores expansion area along with at least two other infill fire stations in the larger service gap areas.
3. The City's elected officials should adopt updated, complete performance measures to direct fire crew planning and to monitor the operation of the Department. The measures of time should be designed to deliver outcomes that will save patients medically salvageable upon arrival and to keep small, but serious fires from becoming greater alarm fires.