

Fire and Rescue Department

LOB #239:

TRAINING

Purpose

The training division provides quality professional training to career, volunteer personnel, and recruitment classes. The division coordinates and supports current and future training and educational needs to improve service delivery and effectiveness through suppression training, driver training, professional development curriculums and command officer development courses. The Training Division strives to provide high quality training, skills maintenance, and all hazards situational awareness through continuing education and technical updates to approximately 1,400 uniformed members and approximately 400 Volunteers of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (FRD). These activities support excellence in service to the citizens and visitors of Fairfax County.

Description

The seven distinct training areas are identified as follows:

- The *Basic Training Section* is responsible for the training of all new career members. New FRD recruits undertake an intensive 22-week school that involves certification as Emergency Medical Technician Basic (defined by the Virginia Department of Emergency Services), firefighter (compliant with National Fire Protection Association 1001 Firefighter I and II level), Emergency Vehicle Operations (as defined by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs), and Hazardous Materials First Responder - Operations (Occupational Health and Safety Administration 1910.120 and NFPA 472). The number of recruit schools held each year and the number of recruits hired is dependent upon the number of positions required to fill vacancies through retirement and attrition, in addition to new personnel who are required for new stations.
- The *EMS Training Section* ensures department personnel acquire and maintain all the necessary educational requirements for EMS certification and re-certification in accordance with the relevant Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services, National registry of Emergency Technicians and the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) Emergency Medical Technician National Standards. All operational career personnel and volunteers are certified as Emergency Medical Technician EMT-Basic providers, with approximately one-third certified as Advanced Life Support providers. A state-of-the-art EMS Simulation Center was opened at the Fire & Rescue Academy in 2013 to provide EMS continuing education. As a Community Training Center (CTC) for the American Heart Association, the section oversees all Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) training. The Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) program is designed to familiarize businesses with the advantages of early defibrillation and assist with the implementation of a program for their facilities.
- The *Field Training Section* develops and delivers essential continuing education, advanced skills training and re-certification training to all personnel within the FRD. This is accomplished through three sessions of Operational Academy Rotations (OARs), the development of training bulletins, and the acquired structure program. In the latter, donated structures that are slated for demolition are acquired after they have met certain criteria and have been inspected for stability. This program provides real-time controlled training in an actual working residential environment. In addition, the Field Training Branch supports testing and evaluating new and innovative equipment. The field Training section also supports the delivery of department specialty training includes the training of personnel assigned to unique functional areas such as the mitigation of hazardous materials operations, technical rescue (ropes and confined spaces) and marine operations. This training is critical to supporting the mission functions performed by the operational personnel assigned to specialty units and personnel assigned to the department's USAR - Virginia Task Force 1.

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- *Volunteer Training* section provides training to new operational volunteer personnel who are required to attain the same certification levels as career firefighters. This training is offered during evening and weekend hours to accommodate the availability of the citizens who volunteer their services. In addition to basic training, operational volunteers must undertake re-certification training, and may opt for specialty courses which are coordinated through this section.
- *Administrative Services* maintain individual career and volunteer training records, issues certificates (as a delegated VDFP authority), and provides reporting for command staff. This includes managing records, including providing copies of training records to students. The administrative area generates recruit training manuals for each recruit school, supports each recruit graduation program, and maintains individual training records in an electronic training database. In addition, the administrative area serves as the department's Training Coordinator, managing County training registrations for approximately 1,400 uniformed staff and 400 civilian staff. National Fire Academy class registrations are also coordinated through this group. They provide administrative support to the Academy staff and ensure the "must answer" Academy line is answered from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Virginia Department of Fire Programs Instructor and Officer class registrations are coordinated through the Professional Development area as well as the Veteran's Administration reimbursement program.
- *Training support* provides audio/visual (A/V) support and maintains an A/V library consisting of over 4,000 training videos, slides, overheads, pictures, and manuals. Services provided include a videographer, video-editing capabilities, providing loaner equipment, A/V library requests, and video duplication.

Benefits

FRD conducts its own recruit school and EMS training in accordance with established standards. All FRD uniform personnel must attend basic training even if they have prior firefighting and EMS experience. The recruit school is designed to enhance firefighting and EMS skills as well as familiarize the recruits with the techniques, equipment and apparatus used in Fairfax County. Internal training allows for standard consistency throughout the department and integrates new recruits into the system. Consistency in terminology, firefighting tactics, and emergency response procedures enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire department.

Ongoing field training is critical to department operations. Field Training ensures personnel remain highly training and skilled for emergency response incidents.

Volunteer Training ensures operational volunteers are trained to the same level as career firefighters. The same training requirements improves confidence for volunteer members knowing they have been trained and equipped to do their job properly. It also reassures them they can achieve high levels of competency and productivity and it provides consistency allowing for volunteer and career firefighters to work side-by-side without confusion on terminology or process.

Administrative and Records Management Staff keep the division running efficiently and effectively making sure resources are available, paperwork is filed and organized, and ensuring the various sections have the resources they need to perform their jobs successfully.

Mandates

Career EMT/ Fire Fighter Training - Virginia EMS Rules & Regulations 12 VAC 5-31; Virginia Department of Fire Programs; National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1001 Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications; and OSHA Regulations (Standards - 29 CFR) Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response. - 1910.1

Career and Volunteer EMT (B) Recertification - Virginia EMS Rules & Regulations 12 VAC 5-31

Career and Volunteer CPR Recertification - Virginia EMS Rules & Regulations 12 VAC 5-31.

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Advanced Life Support Initial Certification Training - Virginia EMS Rules & Regulations 12 VAC 5-31

Advanced Life Support Continual Education Training & Recertification - Virginia EMS Rules & Regulations 12 VAC 5-31

Trends and Challenges

Basic training will continue to see larger class sizes due to existing vacancies and projected attrition. Larger class sizes present challenges with having adequate training staff, adequate classroom space and additional training equipment.

Maintaining the level of knowledge, skill and abilities of firefighters is paramount to ensuring the safety of residents, the firefighters involved in all hazard emergency response, and capacity to mitigate an increasing number of emergency situations. FRD will meet the training requirements as outlined by the Insurance Service Office (ISO) which will result in an increased number of training hours for department personnel. Additionally, as the number of operational personnel continues to rise, Field Training is experiencing an increased demand for training development and delivery. Qualified personnel able to provide the training, time in the work day to deliver the training and overtime dollars associated with training that cannot be delivered on scheduled work days, are some of the challenges training staff is working to overcome.

As a result of the increase in resources directed towards the driver training program it is expected FRD will realize a positive impact on driver safety resulting in a reduction in the number of vehicle accidents. The established training expectation is all personnel operating a department vehicle shall participate in annual driver training.

The ISO evaluation process identified an area of weakness in FRD was training records management. In response, FRD procured a new training system *Target Solutions*, which is expected to significantly aid in tracking training records. As a result of better records management, FRD will realize the ability to provide trend analysis to enhance FRD training programs.

Resources

| Category | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Adopted |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| LOB #239: Training | | | |
| FUNDING | | | |
| <u>Expenditures:</u> | | | |
| Compensation | \$4,206,026 | \$6,277,453 | \$5,876,920 |
| Operating Expenses | 533,298 | 610,955 | 421,122 |
| Capital Equipment | 27,414 | 0 | 27,017 |
| Total Expenditures | \$4,766,738 | \$6,888,408 | \$6,325,059 |
| General Fund Revenue | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund | \$4,766,738 | \$6,888,408 | \$6,325,059 |
| POSITIONS | | | |
| Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) | | | |
| <u>Positions:</u> | | | |
| Regular | 24 / 24 | 28 / 28 | 28 / 28 |
| Total Positions | 24 / 24 | 28 / 28 | 28 / 28 |

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Metrics

| Metric Indicator | FY 2013 Actual | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Estimate | FY 2017 Estimate |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Career Recruits enrolled | 60 | 71 | 93 | 80 | 80 |
| Operating Costs Per Career Recruit | \$69,034 | \$68,133 | \$62,444 | \$72,857 | \$73,579 |
| Percent of Recruit Firefighters that graduate | 87% | 83% | 87% | 91% | 91% |
| Number of Live Burns conducted | NA | 10 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Number of personnel attending EVOC 3 training | NA | NA | 360 | 360 | 360 |

FRD is budgeted for two 24 student recruit schools. As a result of large vacancies and ongoing attrition, it is expected the department will continue to hold larger than planned for recruit schools. As FRD continues to increase the size of the recruit schools, it further strains the budget in terms of recruit salaries, overtime for instructors and operating costs such as books and fire ground simulation equipment. Cost per recruit is projected to increase as a result of salary increases and inflationary increases to supplies and equipment.

Maintaining the level of knowledge, skill and abilities of firefighters is paramount to ensuring the safety of the residents and the firefighters involved in all hazard emergency response. Field training uses a variety of delivery methods to accomplish on-going training, one method being live burns to study fire behavior. Live burns provide firefighters the hands-on training experience in an environment that cannot be replicated in a propane or natural-gas burn facility. It is the goal to train on one live burn each month; however, limitations such as availability of an acquired structure and funding have resulted in FRD scaling back to six per year.

Firefighters are required to be trained in Emergency Vehicle Operators Course (EVOC) – 3, a state required course for all firefighters offered through the Office of Emergency Management Services (OEMS), to drive vehicles over 26,000 lbs. It is projected training numbers will remain relatively constant as the training division strives to remain in compliance with OEMS standards. It is expected increased driver safety and a reduced number of vehicle accidents should be realized in the future.