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**Item No. 7**  
**Budget Committee**  
**February 12, 2025**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Budget Committee  
(Standing Committee of the Whole on Budget)

**SUBMITTED BY:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** January 30, 2025

**SUBJECT:** **Proposed 2025/26 Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Budget and Business Plan**

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#### **ORIGIN**

As per Administrative Order 1 and the Budget and Business Plan consultation schedule presented to Regional Council on November 19, 2024, staff are required to present the draft 2025/26 Business Unit Budget and Business Plans to the Budget Committee for review and discussion prior to consideration by Regional Council.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

1. Incorporate the Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency proposed 2025/26 Budget and Business Plan, as set out and discussed in the accompanying plan and supporting presentation, into the Draft 2025/26 Operating Budget.

#### **BACKGROUND**

On January 12, 2021, Regional Council adopted a Strategic Planning Framework, establishing priority outcomes for their term, and directed staff to develop plans to advance these outcomes.

As part of the design of the 2025/26 Budget and Business Plan development process, the Budget Committee is reviewing each business unit's budget and proposed plans, in advance of completing detailed municipal Budget and Business Plan preparation.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Staff has prepared the proposed 2025/26 Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Budget and Business Plan consistent with the 2021- 2025 Strategic Priorities Plan approved on December 1, 2020.

Following direction from the Budget Committee, staff will proceed to prepare the detailed Budgets and Business Plans for inclusion in the proposed 2025/26 HRM Budget and Business Plan documents to be presented to Regional Council's Budget Committee, as per the process and schedule approved on November 19, 2024.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendations in this report will lead to the development of a proposed 2025/26 Budget. There are no immediate financial implications from this recommendation. The broader financial implications will be discussed and debated as the budget is developed in more detail.

### **RISK CONSIDERATION**

Although there is no immediate risk associated with this report, there may be risks associated with individual decisions during the budget debate that could favour short-term results over longer-term strategic outcomes. Individual decisions made during budget debate will, however, be considered for both short- and long-term impacts to levels of service, asset condition, and cost.

In addition, the administration seeks to reduce these risks in three ways: by providing Regional Council with several fiscal options to assist in the achievement of longer-term strategic outcomes, by assessing both corporate and capital project risk, and by providing the opportunity to draw Regional Council's attention to project or program related risks when reports are presented for consideration.

Enterprise risks are reviewed as part of the strategic planning process and mitigating initiatives incorporated into business planning activities to reduce or eliminate the impact and likelihood of the risk occurring.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The 2025/26 budget process seeks to solicit public comment by inviting members of the public to provide feedback prior to each business unit budget and business plan presentation.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications were identified.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Budget Committee could choose to amend the Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the supporting presentation through specific motion and direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the Budget and Business Plan for inclusion in the proposed 2025/26 HRM Budget and Business Plan documents.

Budget Committee could also choose to specifically amend the Budget and Business Plan through the following motion:

1. That the Budget Committee include an increase of \$65,000 to increase staffing by ten FTE Firefighters and include a one-time increase of \$150,000 for required uniforms and personal protective equipment to ten FTE Firefighters as outlined in Briefing Note BN004 within the proposed 2025/26 Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency budget to the Budget Adjustment List as an operating over budget option for consideration.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Halifax Charter, section 35 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer shall (b) ensure that an annual budget is prepared and submitted to the Council.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 – 2025/26 Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Proposed Budget and Business Plan
- Attachment 2 – Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Additional Slides
- Attachment 3 – Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency 2024 Fact Sheet
- Attachment 4 – BN004 – Ten Firefighter FTEs and Equipment
- Attachment 5 – 2025/26 Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Budget and Business Plan Presentation

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Wendy Gauthier, Coordinator, Corporate Planning & Performance, Finance & Asset Management

Financial Approval by: Jerry Blackwood, CFO, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management

Report Approved by: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Administrative Office

# HALIFAX REGIONAL FIRE & EMERGENCY

2025/26 BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN







## MISSION




OUR MEMBERS ARE DEDICATED TO ENHANCING AND PRESERVING QUALITY OF LIFE, PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENT THROUGH EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP, PARTNERSHIPS AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES TO ENSURE THE CITIZENS OF HRM LIVE IN SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES.



## READING THE BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN

Council and Administrative Priorities are represented within the *Budget and Business Plan* using the legend below. Estimated Completion (EST) applies to deliverables carried over from previous business plans and is the estimated date of completion. Target (T) applies to new deliverables and is the original target completion date.

Council Priorities	
	Prosperous Economy
	Communities
	Integrated Mobility
	Environment

Administrative Priorities	
	Responsible Administration
	Our People
	Service Excellence

## LENSES

Lenses enable the municipality to consider a problem, decision, or action to be undertaken from different points of view. They highlight foundational guideposts that will always be a priority for the municipality. The municipality has adopted the following lenses through which business unit work is planned.

Environment and Climate Action (ENV)	Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA)	Risk Management / Continuous Improvement (RM/CI)
The municipality recognizes that its success in addressing the climate crisis and protecting the environment (implementing HalifACT) requires the integration of environment and climate action in all corporate and community planning, policies, infrastructure, investments, and services. In its decision-making, the municipality prioritizes environment and climate action to achieve net-zero emissions, safeguard communities and infrastructure, and protect ecosystems.	The municipality recognizes that to enable success, it must value, understand, and draw on the diverse views, ideas, lived experiences, skills, and knowledge of its residents and employees. In its decision-making, the municipality applies an EDIA lens to build more inclusive communities, programs, and services, and to actively remove systemic barriers. This approach ensures that all voices are considered in shaping the future, promoting fairness and access for everyone.	The municipality recognizes that success requires evidence-based decision-making and effective management of operational and strategic risks. In its decision-making, the municipality applies a RM/CI lens to identify, assess, and appropriately manage risks, while also driving continuous improvement in processes and service delivery. This approach ensures the organization remains adaptable, resilient, and focused on enhancing overall performance.

The municipality ensures consistent use of the lenses in its operations and planning. The following are examples of some applications of the lenses in the budget and business plan.

## Environment and Climate Action

- HRFE Wildland Urban Interface Strategy Phase 2

## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

- Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Priorities and Action Plan

## Risk Management / Continuous Improvement

- Public Education and Curriculum Roadmap
- Volunteer Sector
- Staff and Operationalize New West Bedford Station 1
- Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) Advancement
- Structural Fire Training Prop
- Fleet Assessment

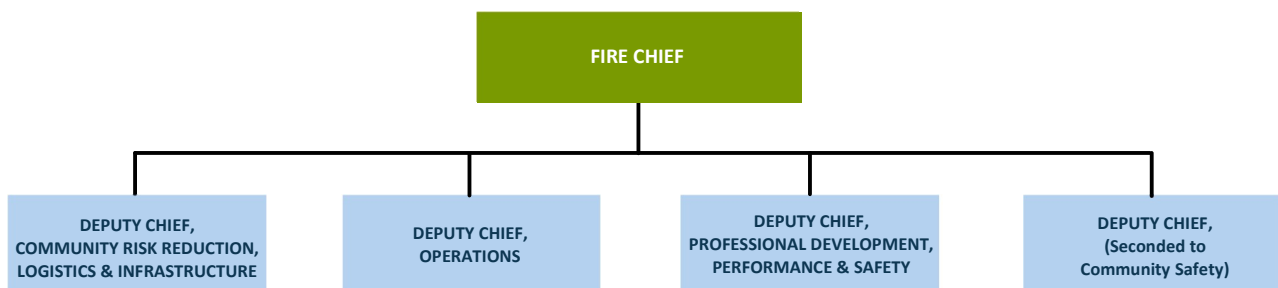
# OVERVIEW

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) is committed to supporting Council and Administrative Priorities through leadership of community safety initiatives, collaboration in holistic community planning and growth, and providing service excellence using innovation and best practices.

HRFE serves and protects over 500,000 residents in a 5,577 km<sup>2</sup> area. Strategically located in 51 fire stations throughout the Halifax Regional Municipality. Career and volunteer fire crews provide a full range of services including:

- Fire prevention (fire inspections and code enforcement, fire investigations, plans examination, and public fire safety education)
- Fire suppression and rescue, technical rescue (auto extrication, machinery, ice-water, high and low angle rope, trench, and confined space rescue, collapse rescue, hazardous materials response (chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear, and explosive), and HUSAR.
- Pre-hospital emergency medical first response
- Emergency management (planning, response, mitigation, and recovery)

# ORGANIZATION CHART



## FULL TIME EQUIVALENT COUNTS

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Change Details		
<b>Approved 2024/25 FTEs:</b>		<b>626.7</b>
Net Positions:		
Position	Rationale	Count
Firefighters	Service Enhancement	10.0
Division Chief - Logistics	Service Enhancement	1.0
Storeperson	Service Enhancement	1.0
Bunker Gear Warehouse Technician	Service Enhancement	1.0
Assistant Chief (Externally Funded)	Other	1.0
Fire Application Analyst	Capital Project	1.0
Transferred Positions		
Net Transfer Positions		1.0
Total Changes		16.0
<b>Total Budgeted 2025/26 FTEs</b>		<b>642.7</b>

Includes full, part-time, and permanent positions.

Some opening balances have been restated to be consistent with how an FTE is counted.




## SUCCESSSES

Successes from the 2024/25 fiscal year to date include:

- Station 38 (Middle Musquodoboit) was converted to a 24-hour composite staffing model in November 2024.
- Station 65 (Upper Tantallon) was converted to a 24-hour composite staffing model in January 2025, until the renovation at Station 50 (Hammonds Plains) is complete. Station 50 will then be converted to a 24-hour composite staffing model and Station 65 will be reverted to a 10.5 hr business day composite staffing model.
- Phase one of the Station Alerting project has been completed. This included installation of the primary hardware and dispatch integration. This technology is expected to reduce the total response time to emergencies by providing timelier notifications. Crew notifications are now visual with heart healthy audio.
- HRFE was the successful recipient of a Government of Canada research grant through the Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) – Canadian Safety and Security program. The grant is valued at \$2 million over three years for research and development into the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning for first responders resource allocation and decision support. This is an exciting opportunity for HRFE and our partners which includes DRDC, Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, Western University, the University of Waterloo, Nova Scotia Health Authority, Nova Scotia Department of Health & Wellness, Nova Scotia Emergency Health Services (EHS), other municipal business units, and private industry. Some of the key areas of research focus include AI real time dynamic fire apparatus and EHS resource allocation (move up strategy), AI decision support tools to reduce incident commander cognitive load using natural language processing radio system user interface, human factors overcoming cognitive dissonance during firefighter MayDay events, and data analytics for quality and community risk assessment.
- HRFE program managers and leads from all pillars worked diligently this year to successfully accomplish the fire service accreditation self-assessment and Standards of Cover (SoC) for the peer review process in preparation for the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) Commission of Fire Accreditation International

(CFAI) site visit. The site visit is designed to review, evaluate, and make recommendations for HRFE's SoC in advance of presenting in front of the CFAI Board.

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Initiative	Description	Priority & Outcome
Implementation of HRFE's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan	HRFE published its CAO-approved Strategic Plan in 2024 and will continue working towards these strategic priorities through the budget and business planning processes.	 Well-Managed
Agency Accreditation	As part of HRFE's work to become an accredited Fire Service, this year HRFE will receive feedback on our Standards of Cover (SoC) that was completed following a community risk assessment and thorough program review for a peer assessment and site visit from the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) in early 2025. Following the feedback, HRFE will amend the SoC (as required) and prepare to defend the SoC to the CPSE's Commission of Fire Accreditation International Board for accreditation.	 Well-Managed
HRFE Wildland Urban Interface Program	In recognition of the increased risk of wildland fires due to climate change, and to assist the municipality in increasing its climate resilience, HRFE will update and continue to implement our Wildland Urban Interface Program, including addressing recommendations outlined in HRFE's Upper Tantallon Wildfire Post Incident Analysis (PIA).	 Community-Focused

## BUDGET

### SERVICE AREA BUDGET OVERVIEW

Service Area	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	Δ 24/25 Budget	Δ %
	Actual	Budget	Projections			
Office Of The Fire Chief	\$ 1,010,551	\$ 1,385,600	\$ 1,758,300	\$ 1,878,800	\$ 493,200	35.6
Professional Development, Performance And Safety	6,749,317	7,154,000	7,926,300	7,408,300	254,300	3.6
Operations	73,358,150	77,263,500	79,480,000	81,042,900	3,779,400	4.9
Community Risk Reduction, Logistics & Infrastructure	5,984,744	7,365,100	5,552,600	7,644,400	279,300	3.8
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$ 87,102,762</b>	<b>\$ 93,168,200</b>	<b>\$ 94,717,200</b>	<b>\$ 97,974,400</b>	<b>\$ 4,806,200</b>	<b>5.2</b>

## SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE

Expenditures	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	Budget	2025/26	
	Actual	Budget	Projections		Δ 24/25 Budget	Δ %
Compensation and Benefits	\$ 85,398,911	\$ 89,140,300	\$ 91,041,100	\$ 93,791,500	\$ 4,651,200	5.2
Office	336,231	239,100	301,500	304,100	65,000	27.2
External Services	619,696	617,400	663,900	497,400	(120,000)	(19.4)
Supplies	1,231,653	1,118,700	1,189,900	1,148,700	30,000	2.7
Materials	3,918				-	-
Building Costs	523,271	528,600	657,600	453,600	(75,000)	(14.2)
Equipment & Communications	1,016,944	876,900	1,026,800	1,036,900	160,000	18.2
Vehicle Expense	(1,777)				-	-
Other Goods & Services	2,293,241	1,400,900	1,372,800	1,795,900	395,000	28.2
Interdepartmental	21,804		13,300		-	-
Other Fiscal	(1,782,071)	15,000	15,000	15,000	-	-
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>89,661,821</b>	<b>93,936,900</b>	<b>96,281,900</b>	<b>99,043,100</b>	<b>5,106,200</b>	<b>5.4</b>

Revenues	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	Budget	2025/26	
	Actual	Budget	Projections		Δ 24/25 Budget	Δ %
Fee Revenues	\$ (21,146)	\$ (21,100)	\$ (21,100)	\$ (21,100)	\$ -	-
Other Revenue	(2,537,913)	(747,600)	(1,543,600)	(1,047,600)	(300,000)	40.1
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>(2,559,059)</b>	<b>(768,700)</b>	<b>(1,564,700)</b>	<b>(1,068,700)</b>	<b>(300,000)</b>	<b>39.0</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$ 87,102,762</b>	<b>\$ 93,168,200</b>	<b>\$ 94,717,200</b>	<b>\$ 97,974,400</b>	<b>\$ 4,806,200</b>	<b>5.2</b>

## OPERATING – SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Change Description / Service Impact	Amount
<b>Approved 2024/25 Budget</b>	<b>\$ 93,168,200</b>
Service Enhancements	
10 New Fire Fighters (Feb. 2026 Start)	65,000
New recruit outfitting/personal protective equipment	150,000
Logistics Positions (3)	411,000
Inflation/Service Pressures	
Collective agreements and other compensation adjustments	3,312,800
Net increase in overtime	800,000
Communications, software and supplies	105,000
Training	300,000
Revenue Changes	
Increase in recoveries	(300,000)
Other/Transfers	
Reduction to equipment & Information Technology costs (re: transfer to Information Technology)	(200,000)
Other various adjustment	100,000
Position transfer from the Chief Administrative Officer's (CAO) office	62,400
<b>Total Changes</b>	<b>\$ 4,806,200</b>
<b>2025/26 Budget</b>	<b>\$ 97,974,400</b>

## SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

- **10 New Fire Fighters (February 2026 Start).** In February 2026, HRFE will onboard ten additional FTEs to address growth pressures and improve HRFE's Effective Firefighting Response in our urban core. This will equate to two additional firefighters on duty 24/7 in the urban core.
- **New Recruit Outfitting/ Personal Protective Equipment.** The required uniforms and personal protective equipment required for these ten career firefighters (one time cost in 2025/26).
- **Logistics Positions (3).** This year, HRFE expanded its Community Risk Reduction, Logistics & Infrastructure service area Logistics Division by hiring a Logistics Division Chief, a Logistics Stores Person, and a Bunker Gear Warehouse Technician. The Logistics Division Chief provides leadership to logistics personnel, drives research for technological advancements, and oversees the implementation of an asset and inventory control system. The Bunker Gear/Warehouse Technician is responsible for the maintenance, inspection, and repair of all bunker gear, and manages an expanded inventory of spare bunker gear. Additionally, the new Stores Person supports the timely shipping, receiving, and distribution of inventory, addressing the increased numbers of firefighters and support staff. These roles enhance HRFE's efficiency and readiness, ensuring we are equipped to meet the growing demands of the logistics division

## SERVICE AREA PLANS

### OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF

The Office of the Fire Chief provides strategic leadership in the advancement of HRFE's mission and vision to serve and protect the residents of Halifax Regional Municipality.

#### Services Delivered

**Fire Chief.** "Fire Chief" means the senior official appointed by Regional Council, within and in charge of HRFE. HRFE means all full-time, composite, and volunteer firefighting services provided by and for the municipality.

**Local Assistant to the Fire Marshal** The Fire Chief, appointed as a Local Assistant to the Fire Marshal, oversees fire-safety inspections, appoints municipal fire inspectors, and a Division Chief of Fire Prevention for fire safety, cause determination, public education, and Fire Code enforcement.

**Public Enquires Response.** This service is responsible for responding to public enquiries via phone and/or email regarding fire prevention, fire education, general inquiries, volunteer recruitment, and special events.

**Event Organization.** This service is responsible for organizing events on behalf of HRFE both formal and informal which recognize significant achievements.

**HRFE Records management.** This service is responsible for HRFE's records management program and FOIPOP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy) releases, providing operational, legal, legislative, financial and audit support.

**HRFE Social Media Management.** This service is responsible for the maintenance and updates of HRFE social media channels.

## OPERATIONS

Operations is committed to supporting Council Priorities through the provision of emergency service to every part of the municipality operating out of 51 fire stations with over 500 career and 550 volunteer firefighters and officers:

- 8 – 24hr Career Firefighter Stations
- 14 – 24hr Composite Stations (Career & Volunteer Firefighters)
- 7 – 10.5hr E Platoon Composite Stations (Career & Volunteer Firefighters)
- 22 – Volunteer Firefighter Stations

### Services Delivered

**Fire & Emergency Services.** This service consists of career and volunteer firefighters providing a full range of emergency and fire fighting services.

**Volunteer Program.** This service provides marketing, outreach and recruitment of new volunteer firefighters across the municipality in alignment with the two Volunteer Recruit Training classes held annually. This is in addition to supporting all volunteer benefit and administrative needs, overseeing recognition and retention initiatives such as honorariums, awards, attendance and performance metrics.

**Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Program.** The Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Program is HRFE's plan for communities, external agencies and HRFE to organize, plan and prepare for properties to become wildfire resistant.

**PUSH Program (Practice Using Safety at Home).** This service is a residential safety program which includes the inspection and/or installation of residential smoke detectors.





**Fire Service Maintenance Program (FSMI).** This service supports HRFE's mandated frequency of building inspections, by having Operational crews provide initial and follow up inspections of less complex building types including multi-occupancy, bars, restaurants and places of worship.

**Public Education.** This service includes formal and informal community interaction and education generally delivered through station tours, school and group visits and public education events.




### Service Delivery Performance Measures

Type	2024
Community Risk Assessments Catalogued <sup>1</sup>	28
Advanced Home Assessments Catalogued <sup>1</sup>	145
Notes: 1) Assessments catalogued since launching the new Wildfire Mitigation Program	

## Key Deliverables

2025/26 Key Deliverables		Priority & Outcome	Target (T) / Estimated Completion (EST)
Name	Description		
Equipping Spare Apparatus	This year HRFE will equip two spare apparatus with required emergency equipment, based on findings from HRFE's Upper Tantallon Wildfire Post Incident Analysis (PIA), and to facilitate life cycling of emergency response equipment.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26
Wildland and Wildland Urban Interface Program Training and Equipment	Wildland training will be delivered virtually with a hot session in March and April 2025. Wildland pumps will be placed into service late winter 2025 upgrading current equipment. Two Sprinkler Protection Units will be placed in service with specialized training specifically targeted to response and support in strategic locations. Three wildland trucks have been ordered to upgrade our current wildland (brush truck) response.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26
Volunteer Sector	<p>HRFE will continue to recruit volunteer firefighter applicants to best meet the needs of the municipality. Emphasis will be placed on recruiting volunteers in rural communities, especially those with low or declining membership, as well as outreach to underrepresented and equity seeking communities. Alternative approaches to volunteer recruitment including minimizing barriers, targeted marketing campaigns, prior learning assessments and best use of support roles are ongoing.</p> <p>A volunteer firefighter engagement survey was conducted in early 2024. These recommendations will inform action plans to maximize volunteer engagement and retention moving forward.</p>	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26
New West Bedford Fire Station 1 and Headquarters Campus	Over the next year, planning will start in preparation to operationalize the new West Bedford Fire Station 1 and Headquarters Campus. This planning involves the upstaffing of career and volunteer firefighters for Fire Station 1, and the movement of staff and equipment from two logistics locations, as well as the fire prevention and headquarters locations.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26



2025/26 Key Deliverables		Priority & Outcome	Target (T) / Estimated Completion (EST)
Name	Description		
Heavy Urban Search and Rescue	Advance the three-year HUSAR capability development plan including enhancing mobility, team membership and policy development.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26
Rostering	Support the corporate Time and Attendance project and move the Fire Roster Project to testing and production.	 Well-Managed	T – Q4 2025/26
Fleet Assessment	Complete a fleet assessment to optimize the location and placement of new apparatus, light fleet and new capabilities such as brush trucks and Sprinkler Protection Units, while improving response capability.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26

## COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION, LOGISTICS & INFRASTRUCTURE

Community Risk Reduction, Logistics & Infrastructure focuses on enhancing safety through three key divisions: Fire Prevention, Logistics, and Medical. This pillar is also responsible to address capital infrastructure needs that includes functional station improvements, and leading efforts in community risk reduction.

### Services Delivered

**Fire Prevention.** This service is responsible for Public Safety Education, Fire Inspections/ Code Enforcement, Plans Examination, and Fire Investigations. These include: providing fire/life safety public education programs and training, responding to technical public inquiries, conducting mandatory fire safety inspections as well as those received by complaint and requests, plans examinations, and issuing permits to support fire safety activities.

**Logistics.** This service is responsible for the provision and maintenance of all personnel protective equipment, supplies and physical assets on a 24-hour a day, 365 days per year basis.

**Medical Training, Research and Continuous Quality Improvement.** This service is responsible for ensuring appropriate medical training for firefighters and members is evidence-based and follows industry best practices.

## Service Delivery Performance Measures

### Fire Safety Inspections

Inspection Type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Deficiency Inspections	155	318	312	305	598	500	739	635	331	238
FSMI Inspections	0	93	757	521	500	323	243	326	385	478
Level 1 Inspections	705	936	1,039	786	425	899	1,325	1,535	1,530	1,298

### Customer Service Requests

Request Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Public Education	150	337	71	36	109	190	190
Inspection	304	487	341	318	393	476	355
General	854	1,086	803	822	737	611	762

### Detailed Inspection Results – 2024

Occupancy Type	Number of Occupancies	Frequency	Inspections Required per year	Failed Inspections	Completed Cases	Per cent of Completed Case to Target
Assembly	2,506	3	835	319	207	25%
Daycare, Medical and Treatment	61	3	20	16	21	34%
Residential	5,242	5	1,048	389	227	22%
Business and Personal Services	3,115	5	623	84	178	29%
Mercantile	1,870	5	374	94	174	47%
Industrial F1	61	2	30	0	2	3%
Industrial F2	1,397	3	466	44	22	5%
Industrial F3	861	3	287	25	37	13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,113</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,683</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>24%</b>



### Fire Related Fatalities

Fire Related Fatalities	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fatalities <sup>1</sup>	3	5 <sup>2</sup>	2	2
Population	460,274	480,582	496,622	502,753
Civilian Fatalities (per 100, 000 population)	0.65	1.04	0.40	0.40
Notes: 1) Fatality data source: Nova Scotia Medical Examiner’s Service. 2) Includes one death that was not a structure fire, fatal injuries due to oxygen concentrator which caught fire.				

### Performance Measures Analysis

The Fire Prevention Division underwent staffing changes due to a restructuring initiative, which temporarily impacted work capacity in 2024. Several team members successfully transitioned to new roles, resulting in an estimated 20 per cent reduction in output. While this led to a short-term decrease output, it created an opportunity for HRFE to move forward with process improvements aimed at enhancing future efficiency and effectiveness. Despite these challenges, Fire Prevention staff remained committed to fulfilling their responsibilities under the Nova Scotia Fire Safety Act and Administrative Order. The number of completed files related to this mandate was consistent with the previous year, maintaining a completion rate of 24 per cent despite the staffing change and increased buildings.

### Key Deliverables

2025/26 Key Deliverables		Priority & Outcome	Target (T) / Estimated Completion (EST)
Name	Description		
Public Education and Curriculum Roadmap	Conduct internal and external stakeholder scan and develop engagement plan. Perform jurisdictional assessment, combined with Subject Matter Expert recommendations, to build a five-year road map for public education curriculum, online resources, print media and event planning.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26
Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Canada Task Force 5 Medical Sector	HRFE Medical Division will collaborate with Canada Task Force 5 (CAN-TF5) to lead the development and implementation of the HUSAR CAN-TF5 medical sector to meet the requirements of a deployable team.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2026/27

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, PERFORMANCE & SAFETY

The Professional Development, Performance & Safety service area and this HRFE pillar have four divisions: Communications and Technology, HRFE Safety, Professional Development and Training, and Workplace Culture / Diversity & Inclusion. They work together and across the organization to create a workplace that is safe, dynamic, and inclusive.

### Services Delivered

**Communications and Technology.** This service is responsible for communications and information management technology. This service also promotes innovation and the use of best practices to improve firefighter safety and emergency service delivery. This includes the collection, analysis and reporting of business unit performance.

**Professional Development and Training.** Responsible for ensuring appropriate fire and rescue training and certification of firefighters and members to meet industry and regulatory standards.

**HRFE Safety.** This service provides on-shift incident safety officers at emergencies, leads workplace inspections, supervises accident investigations and provides expert advice to all divisions of the organization. The Division Chief of Safety also leads policy and operational guideline development related to safety and supports the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

**Workplace Culture / Diversity & Inclusion.** This service oversees and provides Diversity & Inclusion programming, Critical Incident Stress Management services, Firefighter & Family Assistance Program services and advocates for HRFE’s ongoing initiative to develop competency and equity-based hiring practices and improve community outreach programs.

### Service Delivery Performance Measures

#### Training

Recruit Type	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of Career Firefighter Recruits Trained	0	40	40	44	39
Number of Volunteer Firefighter Recruits Trained	33	57	68	73	71
Number of new Volunteer Firefighters Recruited <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	90	111	106



Notes: 1) Number of new Volunteer Firefighters Recruited is a new performance measure added in 2022/23 to reflect the number of volunteer firefighters that graduated from the recruit training program, as the numbers do not always line up with fiscal years. There are also instances where recruits defer to a future class due to scheduling issues.

## Performance Measures Analysis

In addition to the recruit classes identified in the performance metric table above, the Training Division also trained 20 new driver operators, certified 26 instructors at International Firefighting Service Accreditation Congress Level One, and qualified 12 new captains as National Fire Protection Association fire investigators. A new aerial training program for operators was introduced and high-rise training was launched, including two practical sessions – one at the HRFE training ground and another at a high-rise at Canadian Forces Base Halifax in collaboration with Department of Natural Defense.

In addition to the Volunteer Firefighter Recruit Training programs, volunteer firefighters participated in 58,198 hours of training and contributed 24,402 hours of time in responding to emergencies. HRFE continues to have success recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters, which is critical to achieving our mission and supporting our composite response model.

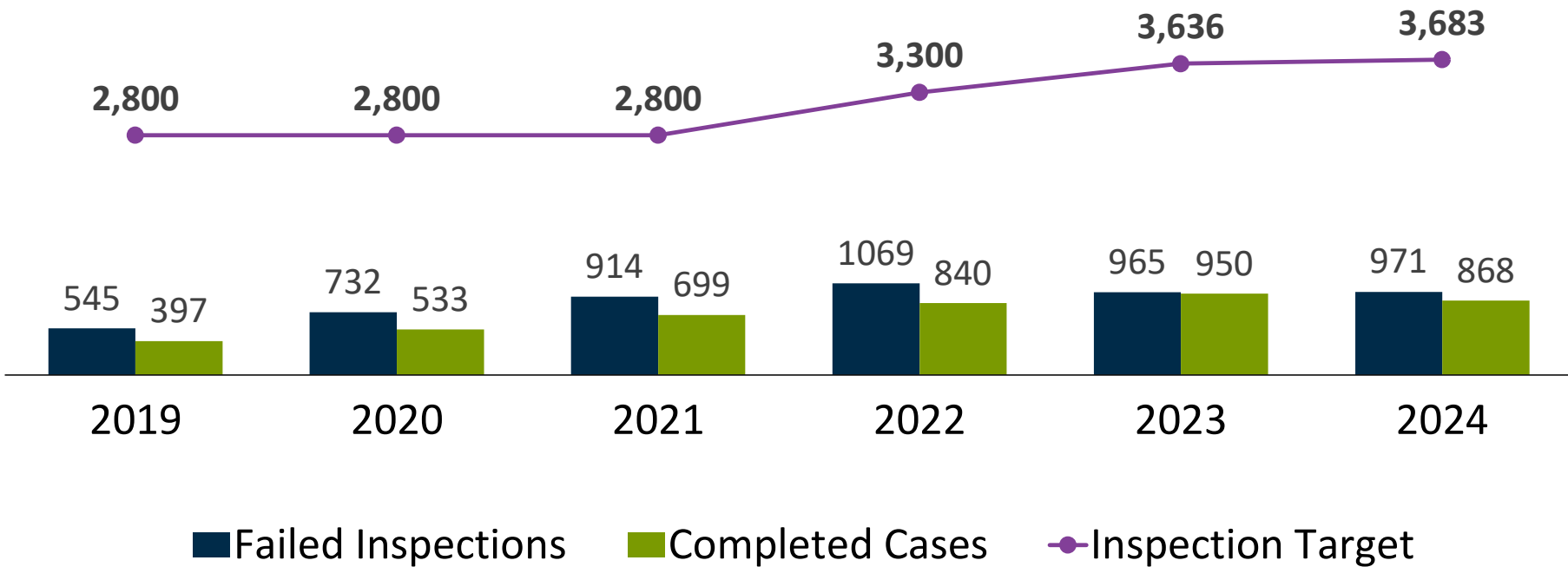
## Key Deliverables

2025/26 Key Deliverables		Priority & Outcome	Target (T) / Estimated Completion (EST)
Name	Description		
Structural Fire Training Prop	HRFE will arrange for a three-storey structural fire training prop to be built on HRFE's existing training grounds. This prop will include at least two simulated fire compartments with artificial smoke, along with spaces to allow for training on hose advancement, pump operations, search and rescue, fire attack, ladder operations, and incident management.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Priorities and Action Plan	HRFE will improve organizational cultural competency by finalizing and implementing our second five-year Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, continuing our Building a Better Fire Service educational programming, and hiring firefighters who are representative of the communities we serve.	 Safe Communities	T – Q4 2025/26



# Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency ATTACHMENT SLIDES

# Fire Inspection Results vs. Target



# First Unit on Scene – Urban Fires Calls

2024 Calendar Year

75.2%

↓ 6.2%

TARGET

90%

## Urban Fire Calls

Percentage of incidents where the first unit is on scene within 8 minutes from the time that 911 answers the call.

The decline of 6.2% in urban fire calls is not a statistically significant change, because of sample size.

2023	80.2%
2022	79.5%



# First Unit on Scene – Urban Medical Calls

2024 Calendar Year

70.4%

↓ 6.3%

TARGET

90%

## Urban Medical Calls

Percentage of incidents the first unit is on scene within 7.5 minutes from the time that 911 answers the call.

2023	75.1%
2022	71.7%

The decline of 6.3% in Urban medical calls is statistically significant. This decline is primarily related to increases in travel time between 2023 and 2024 for stations in Cole Harbour, Millwood and Eastern Passage. The average distance of calls from the station has not increased.

# First Unit on Scene – Rural Fire Calls

## 2024 Calendar Year

The following values are not statistically significant because of low sample size.

93.5% ↑ 15%

72.6% ↓ 7.8%

TARGET  
90%

Rural Fire Calls – Career on Duty  
First unit on scene within 13 minutes.

Rural Fire Calls – Volunteer Time  
First unit on scene within 17.5 minutes.

2023	81.5%
2022	75%

2023	78.7%
2022	73.4%

# First Unit on Scene – Rural Medical Calls

## 2024 Calendar Year

The following values are not statistically significant

85.3% ↓ 2.4%

77.5% ↑ 1.2%

TARGET  
90%

Rural Medical Calls – Career on Duty

First unit on scene within 12.5 minutes.

Rural Medical Calls – Volunteer Time

First unit on scene within 17.5 minutes.

2023	87.4%
2022	85%

2023	76.6%
2022	78%

# 2024 Effective Firefighting Force - Urban

**54.5%**

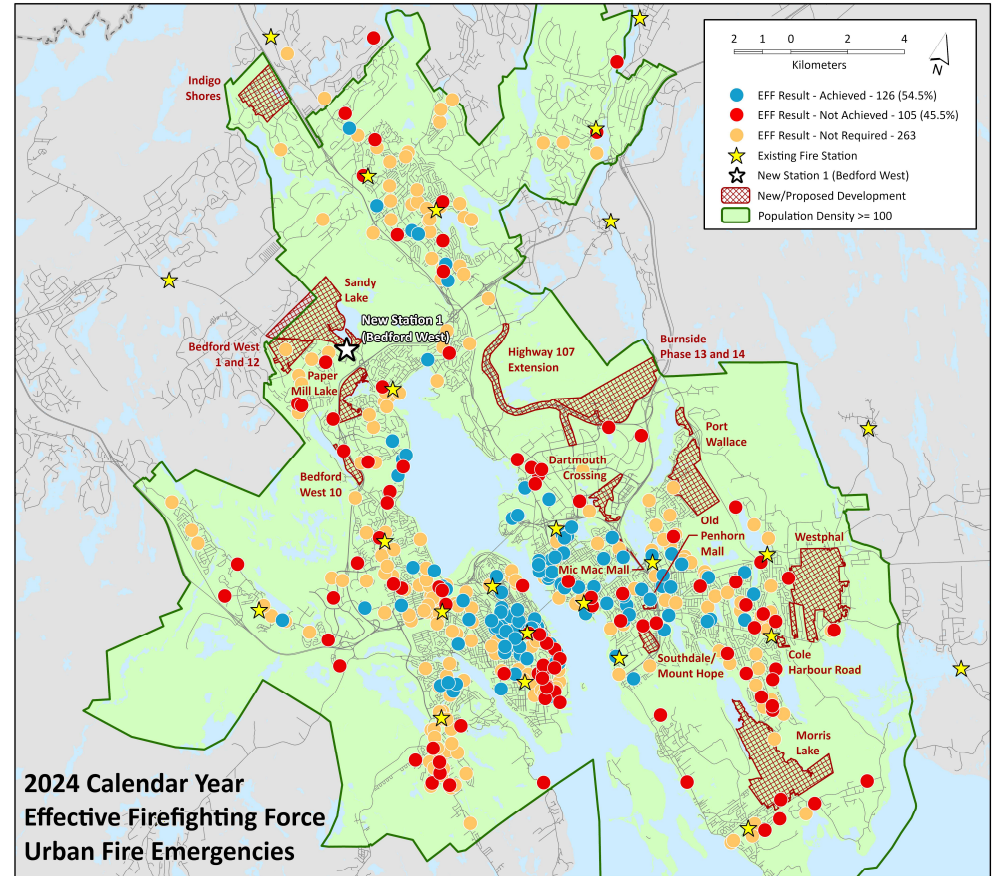


**4.6%**

Effective Firefighting Force (EFF) 14 firefighters on scene within 11 minutes.

**TARGET  
90%**

2023	59.1
2022	55.5





# HALIFAX REGIONAL FIRE & EMERGENCY

**2024  
FACT SHEET**

**MISSION** Our members are dedicated to enhancing and preserving quality of life, property and environment through education, leadership, partnerships and effective response to emergencies to ensure the citizens of HRM live in safe, inclusive and welcoming communities.

## OUR SERVICE AREA



**5,577**

Square Kilometres

## OUR SERVICES



**15,561** ↓

15,879 in 2023

INCIDENTS RESPONDED



**32,311** ↓

33,637 in 2023

APPARATUS RESPONSES

## OUR CUSTOMER



**502,753**

Estimates for 2024/25 Forecast



**355** ↓

476 in 2023

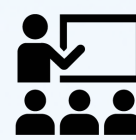
FIRE INSPECTION  
REQUESTS



**762** ↑

611 in 2023

GENERAL CUSTOMER  
SERVICE REQUESTS



**190**

190 in 2023

PUBLIC EDUCATION

## OUR LOCATIONS



## THESE INCIDENTS INCLUDED:



**192**

Structure Fire



**783**

Other Fire



**5172**

Medical Assistance



**2096**

Vehicle Incidents -  
MVC/Other Incidents



**1832**

General Investigation



**564**

Special Services



**4172**

Other Alarm Activation



**750**

Other

## OUR PEOPLE



**548**

(560\*)

CAREER FIREFIGHTERS



**565**

(805\*)

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

**25**

ADMINISTRATION

**19**

COMMUNITY  
RISK REDUCTION

**18**

TRAINING  
AND RESEARCH

**10**

LOGISTICS  
AND SUPPORT

\*Total number of positions including vacancies.

## OUR OPERATING BUDGET



**\$93,168,200**

2024/25 FISCAL YEAR



## STATISTICS ABOUT THE 192 STRUCTURE FIRES



**37%**

Property Classification  
Detached Dwelling



**14%**

Fire Origin Area  
Cooking area/Kitchen



**14%**

Possible Cause  
Improperly Discard



**14%**

Igniting Object  
Smoking Articles



**8%**

First Ignited Material  
Plastic



**26%**

Ignition Fuel  
Electricity

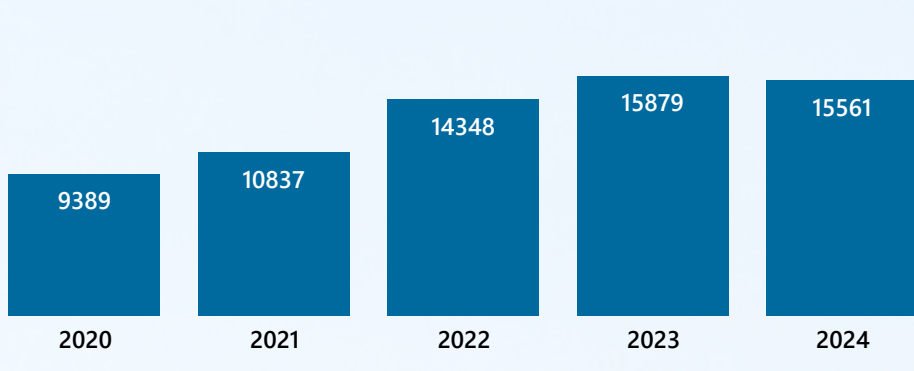




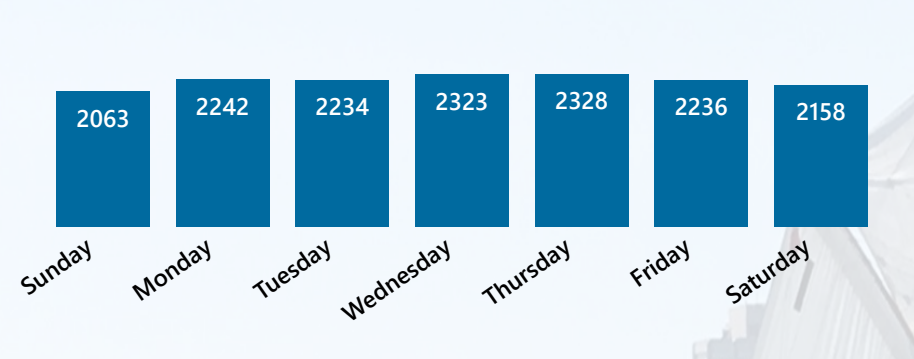
# HRFE CALL VOLUMES SUMMARY

## 2024

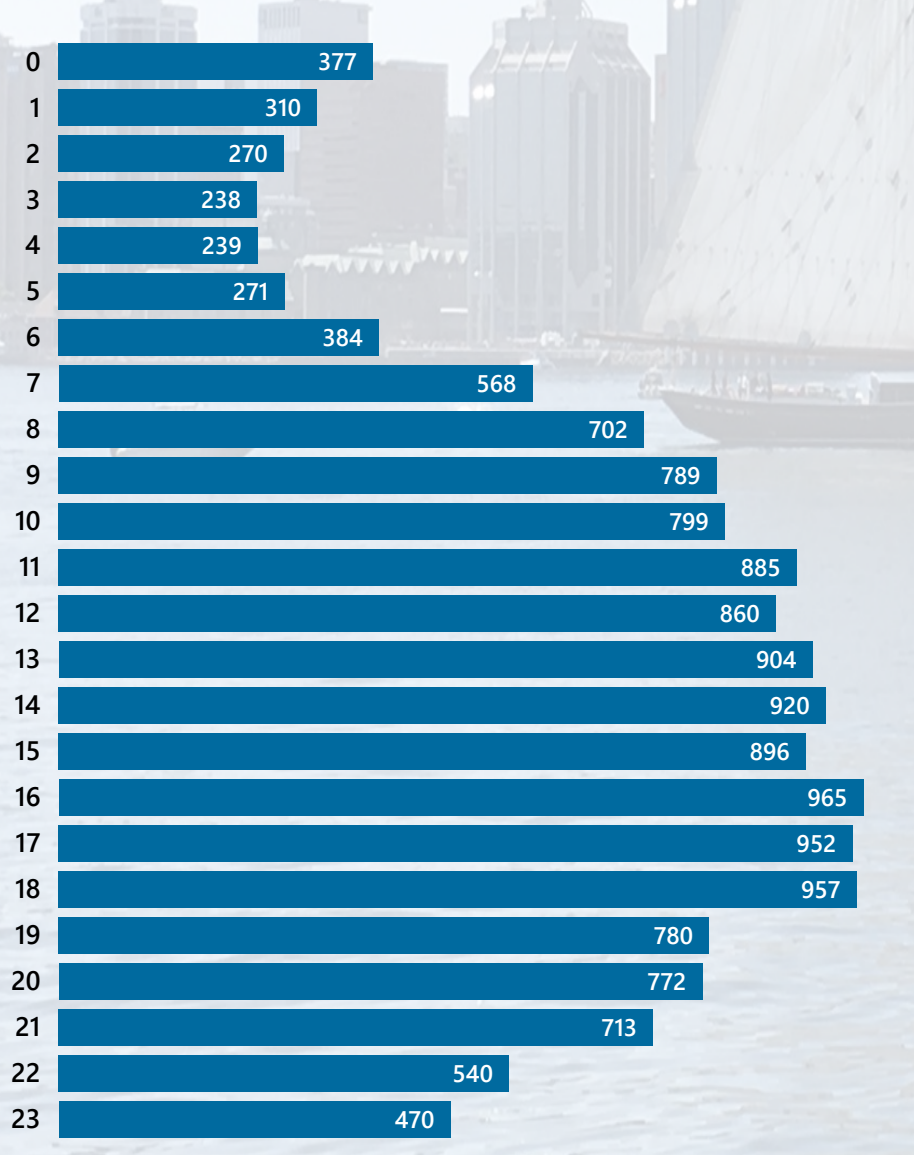
TOTAL CALL VOLUMES BY CALENDAR YEAR



TOTAL CALL VOLUMES BY DAY OF WEEK



TOTAL CALL VOLUMES BY INCIDENT START HOUR



Primary Station	Count of Calls
2	1173
3	884
4	374
5	769
6	600
7	686
8	798
9	1075
10	578
11	146
12	941
13	451
14	438
15	395
16	441
17	974
18	499
19	66
20	99
21	238
22	54
23	463
24	81
25	17
26	89
28	109
29	19
30	32
31	12
33	34
34	12
35	15
36	23
38	58
39	61
40	85
41	145
42	44
43	26
45	179
47	118
48	145
50	371
52	157
54	186
55	197
56	149
58	406
60	129
62	198
65	225
Other	97

Note: Incidents reported for previous years differ due to new collection methodology resulting in more accurate data.

**Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note  
Ten Firefighter FTEs and Equipment**

**COW Date:** February 12, 2025

**Business Unit:** Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	
BN004 (BALO##)	Operating	\$65,000 (Ongoing)	\$150,000 (One time)	\$696,000	
<b>Four Year Impact</b>	Staffing costs are pro-rated for the first year for a February 2026 start and will increase to \$1.2M by Year 4 for full year impact of their salary range. Equipment costs are required in the first year and then will be refreshed as part of the normal refresh cycle for the equipment.				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	\$215,000	\$696,000	\$957,000	\$1,158,100	\$3,026,100
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	Maximize training capabilities to address performance gaps in relation to Regional Council’s Emergency Response Time Targets (ERTT) and growth by adding another 10 FTEs (career firefighters) to the complement with a start date of February 2026 (ongoing cost).				
	The required uniforms and personal protective equipment required for these 10 career firefighters (one time cost in 2025/26).				
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Communities – Safe Communities				

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) is proposing maximizing training capabilities to address performance gaps in relation to Regional Council’s ERTT and growth by adding another 10 FTEs (career firefighters) to the current complement with a start date of February 2026.

HRFE conducted a robust Community Risk Assessment for the development of their Standards of Cover (SoC), approved by the CAO, as outlined last year in their business plan. The SoC was thoroughly reviewed by a peer assessment team who has recommended HRFE for accreditation with the Centre for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). As part of this process HRFE completed a four-year resource and capital plan to address the gaps identified through these assessments.

In keeping with the municipality’s Council Priority of Communities, and the Administrative Priorities of Responsible Administration and Service Excellence, and in a time of unprecedented vertical growth and densification and community risk in relation to HRFE’s ability to respond, HRFE continues to assess their emergency response capacity and has developed a four-year resource plan to address the areas of concern where HRFE does not meet emergency response times.

HRFE assigns resources based on Regional Council’s ERTT as outlined [here](#) along with community risk assessments. HRFE’s performance in relation to an Effective Firefighting Force (EFF) has dropped to 55.5% in the urban city center. HRFE conducted significant assessments on the impacts of approved developments and community risk in developing their SoC. Regional Council’s ERTTs identify performance for single-family dwellings, not for the more complex multi-family, high-rise, or institutional structure fires typically found in urban settings, which present significantly greater challenges in terms of response and resource requirements. HRFE’s assessment includes both past performance and predictive analysis based on changes in the street network, GIS mapping, and approved developments by Planning & Development. Based on these assessed impacts, HRFE anticipates a drop in EFF performance by 10% in the next four years. It is also expected that there will be a significant drop in performance for first unit on scene times for fire and medical calls in the urban areas. HRFE’s methodology has been validated by an independent third-party vendor and includes the Darkhorse predictive analytics application. HRFE is utilizing technology where possible to improve performance but even with these strategies emergency response times will be adversely impacted if additional resources are not added.

The addition of 10 career firefighters is in alignment with the resource plan to address the gaps identified and considers HRFE’s training capabilities. This proposal would enable the staffing of the new West Bedford Station in the Summer of 2026 with new firefighters and avoid reducing the current staffing and service levels of two apparatus and six career firefighters on duty 24x7 at both Station 8 (Bedford) and Station 9 (Sackville) as is the case with two apparatus and six career firefighters on duty 24x7 at both Station 12 in Dartmouth and Station 3 in Halifax. These additional positions would also improve ERTT performance to the Clayton Park, Burnside, Fall River, Dartmouth, and Upper Hammonds Plains areas.

The addition of these firefighters would help smooth out the increased staffing required over four years to address the growth and community risk identified in the gap analysis in a way that the training division is able to accommodate the new staff. HRFE’s training and operations divisions can only train two classes of 20 firefighters per year, including the new employees onboarded to replace retirements. Typically, one class of 20 firefighters will accommodate a year’s worth of requirements due to attrition, leaving only one class per year of 20 firefighters to increase the complement of firefighters in any given year. If Regional Council opts not to approve this proposed adjustment, it will increase the risk to the community and firefighter safety by not having adequate resources to respond in a timely manner to the vertical densification and growth.

Total Change	24/25	Change	23/24	Change	22/23	Change	21/22	Change	20/21
91.20	626.70	17.10	609.60	36.00	573.60	25.60	548.00	12.50	535.50

The table above outlines the number of positions that have been added to Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency over the past four years.



Attachment 5

**HALIFAX**

12 February 2025



# Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

## 2025/26 Budget and Business Plan

# Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

## Mission

Our members are dedicated to enhancing and preserving quality of life, property and environment through education, leadership, partnerships and effective response to emergencies to ensure the citizens of HRM live in safe, inclusive and welcoming communities.

## Service Areas

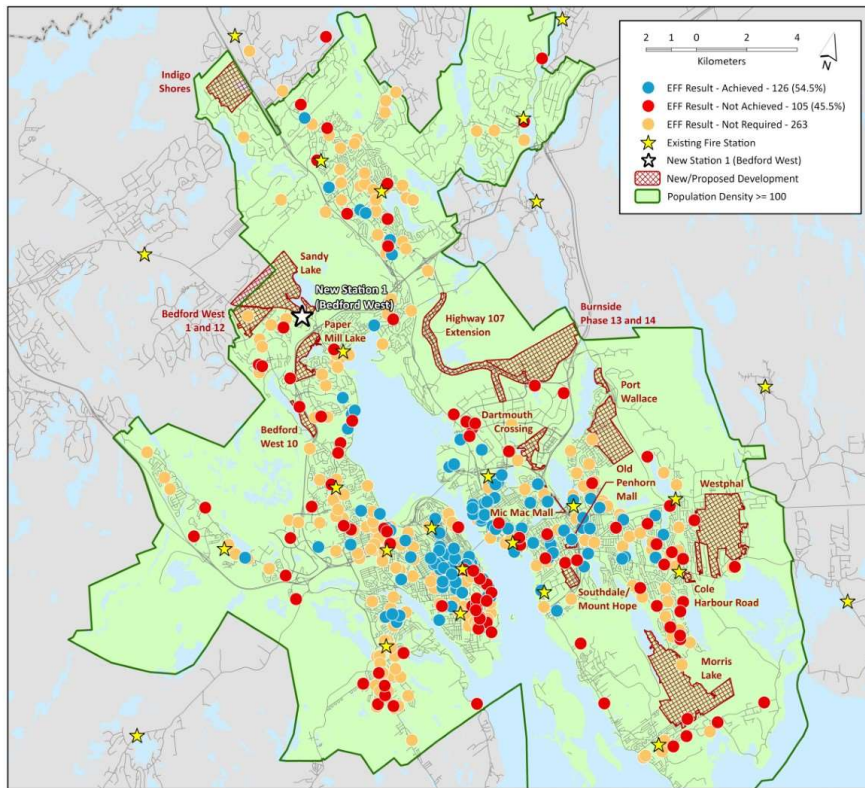
- Community Risk Reduction, Logistics & Infrastructure
- Operations
- Professional Development, Performance & Safety

# Staff Counts

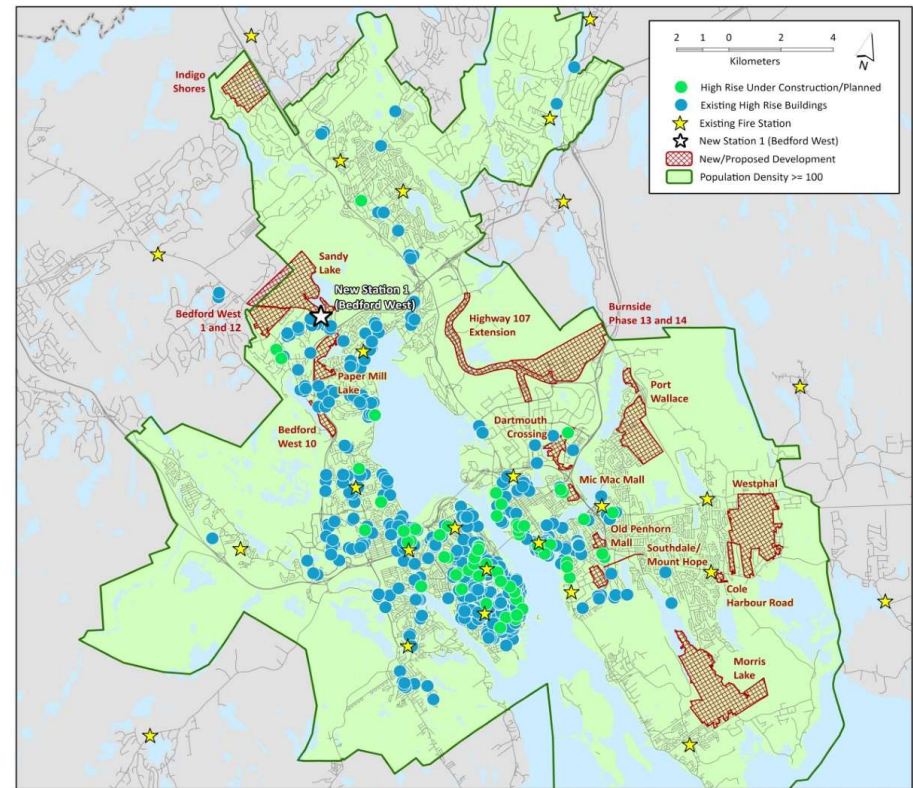
Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Change Details		
<b>Approved 2024/25 FTEs:</b>		<b>626.7</b>
Net Positions:		
Position	Rationale	Count
Firefighters	Service Enhancement	10.0
Division Chief - Logistics	Service Enhancement	1.0
Storeperson	Service Enhancement	1.0
Bunker Gear Warehouse Technician	Service Enhancement	1.0
Assistant Chief (Externally Funded)	Other	1.0
Fire Application Analyst	Capital Project	1.0
Transferred Positions		
Net Transfer Positions		1.0
Total Changes		16.0
<b>Total Budgeted 2025/26 FTEs</b>		<b>642.7</b>

# Enhancements

Current capability to achieve EFF for Single Family Dwelling of 14 Firefighters in 11 min



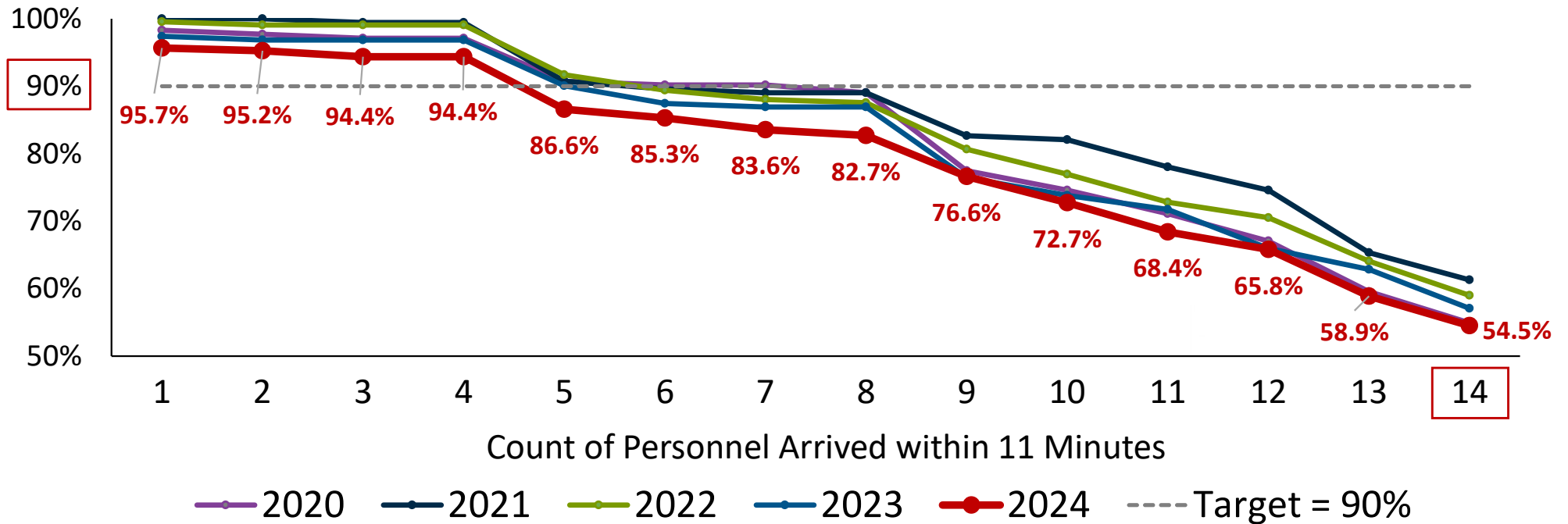
Current and developing High-Rise leading to Vertical Response Challenges



# Enhancements

## Effective Firefighting Force

Target: 14 firefighters within 11 minutes, 90% of the time



# Operating Budget Summary of Changes

Change Description / Service Impact	Amount
<b>Approved 2024/25 Budget</b>	\$ 93,168,200
Service Enhancements	
10 New Fire Fighters (Feb. 2026 Start)	65,000
New recruit outfitting/personal protective equipment	150,000
Logistics Positions (3)	411,000
Inflation/Service Pressures	
Collective agreements and other compensation adjustments	3,312,800
Net increase in overtime	800,000
Communications, software and supplies	105,000
Training	300,000
Revenue Changes	
Increase in recoveries	(300,000)
Other/Transfers	
Reduction to equipment & Information Technology costs (re: transfer to Information Technology)	(200,000)
Other various adjustment	100,000
Position transfer from the Chief Administrative Officer's (CAO) office	62,400
Total Changes	\$ 4,806,200
<b>2025/26 Budget</b>	<b>\$ 97,974,400</b>

# Options Over Budget

Over Description / Service Impact	Revenue / Expense	One-time / On-Going	2025/26 Amount	2026/27 Amount
Increase staffing by 10 Firefighters.	Expenditure	On-Going	65,000	696,000
Equipment	Expenditure	One-time	150,000	
<b>Total Increases</b>			<b>\$ 215,000</b>	<b>\$ 696,000</b>



