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### A MESSAGE FROM

### FIRE CHIEF KEN STUEBING

On behalf of Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE), I am proud to present our inaugural Annual Report.

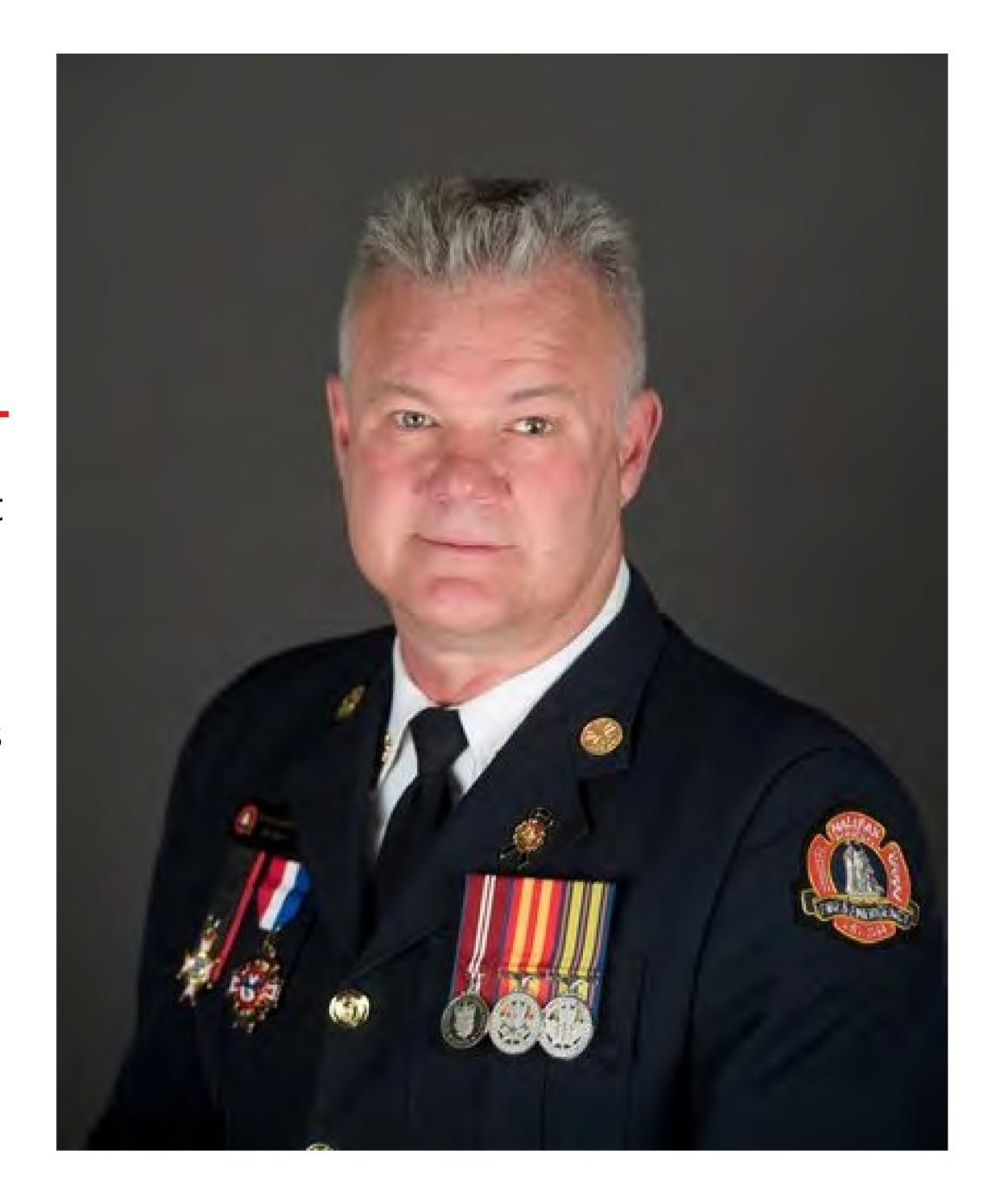
Each day, the dedicated members of HRFE are here for you. This was particularly evident over the past year during Hurricane Dorian's crash landing into HRM, as well as during numerous severe winter storms. The commitment of our front line crews, logistics team as well as the behind-the-scenes support from our administration and support members who pulled together and made sure that HRFE was able to continue to provide the essential fire and emergency services HRM depends on during a crisis.

This report highlights some of the great work our teams do each day, while providing some insight into the types of issues and challenges that HRFE faces. It was important to me to share with you not just our 'best moments', but also to be fully transparent and show you what types of challenges we face, and how we are utilizing the resources approved by Regional Council to protect the citizens and visitors of HRM.

The metrics in this report provide some insight into where we are close to meeting response times as mandated by Regional Council in our Administrative Order, but also where we still fall short of meeting those targets. Continuous service improvement is always top of mind for our team, and you will note some of the key projects and initiatives that we worked on this year, including:

- Developing our Key Performance Indicators Catalogue
- Community risk reduction research and initiatives
- Increasing our organizational knowledge and developing a diversity and inclusion action plan
- Re-engaging in the Federal HUSAR
   Program
- Commenced Business Continuity Plans for all of HRM's Business Units

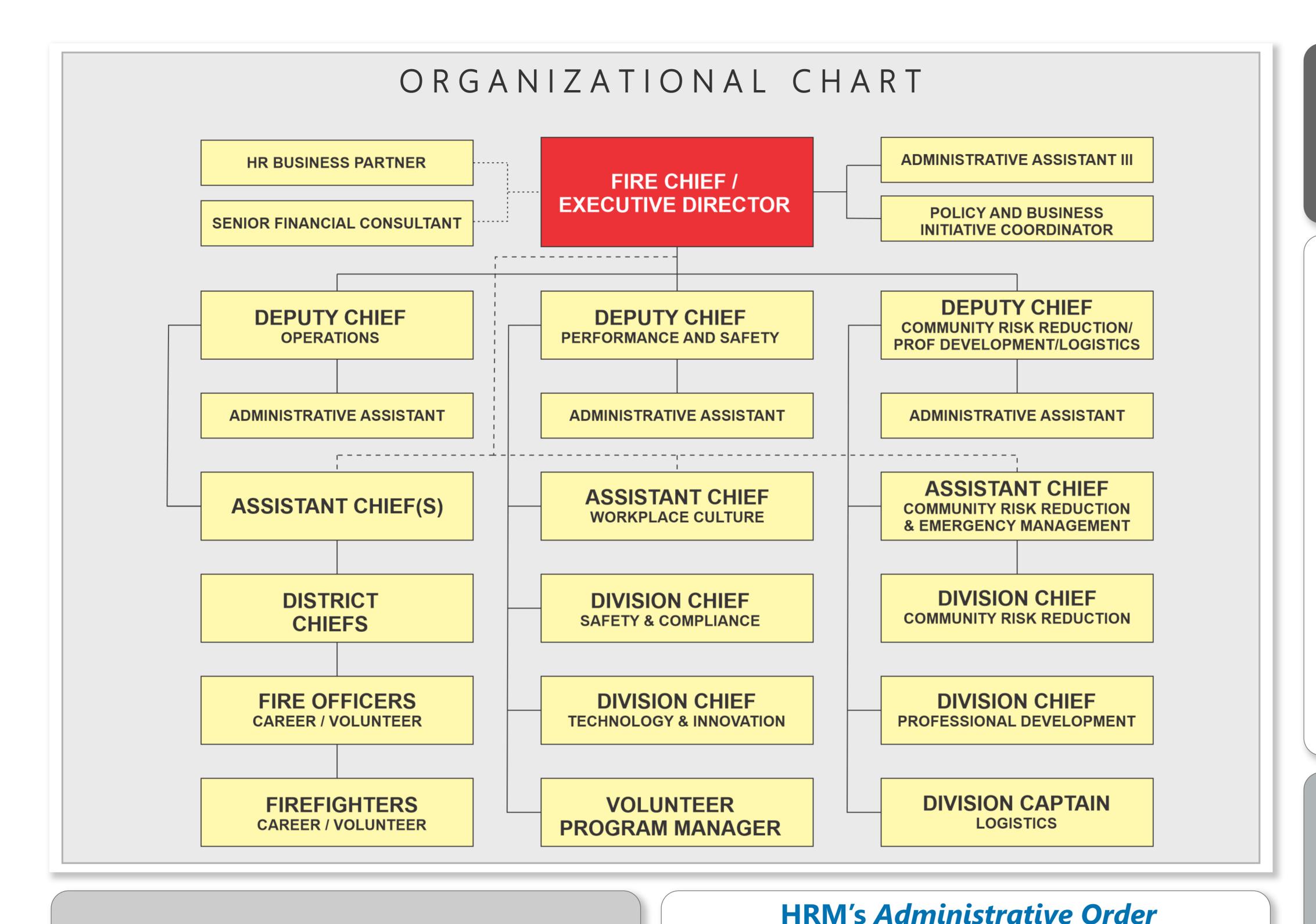
HRFE prides itself on being a transparent organization, and to us, that means providing the citizens of HRM and our Mayor and Councillors with this additional opportunity to



learn about our services and performance. The success of HRFE over the past year could not have been possible without the support of our community, the contributions of each HRFE member, and also the support from our CAO, Mayor and Regional Council. I hope you find this report to be useful, and we encourage you to reach out to us with suggestions you may have for next year's report.

Sincerely,

Ken Stuebing, Executive Director, Fire Chief 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

2018-006-OP Respecting HRFE outlines the types of services that we are to provide, and the level of service. It also outlines our responsibility for Emergency Management Coordination, By-Law E-100, fire prevention, and responsibility as the Local Assistant to the Fire Marshal with respect to inspections, investigations, public education and code enforcement

### **OUR VISION**

Creating a safe community through protection of life, property and environment

### **OUR CORNERSTONES**



Public Safety and Trust



Workplace



Performance and Brand Integrity



Teamwork and Leadership

### **OUR VALUES - SPIRIT**

**SAFETY:** commitment to a safe community and workplace

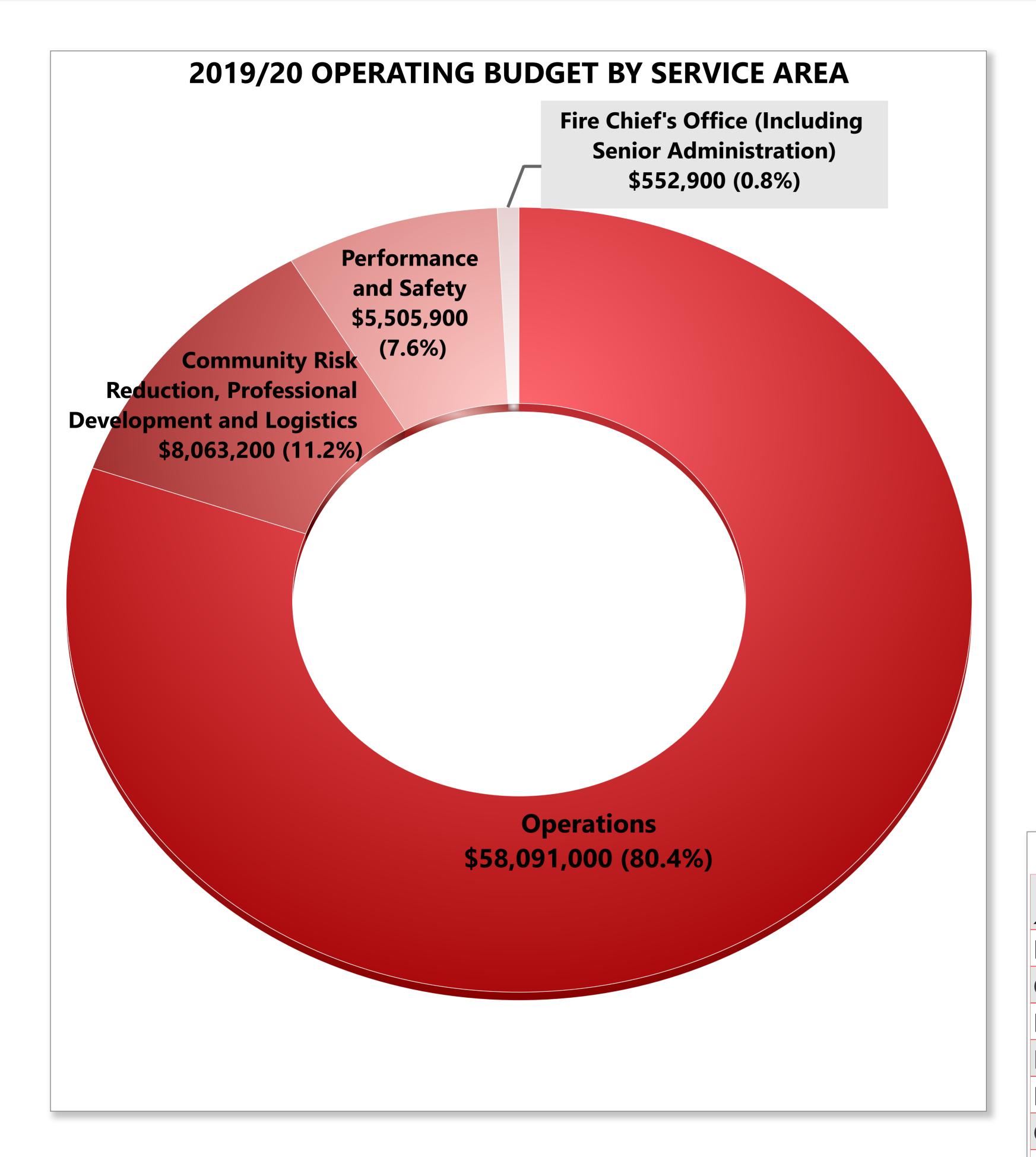
PRIDE: in our performance, the service we provide and the communities we serve

**INTEGRITY & ACCOUNTABILITY:** in everything we do, an organization that is trusted by those we serve

**RESPECT:** the uniqueness and diversity of others. All our actions and interactions with others reflect on HRFE

**INNOVATION:** building a sustainable emergency service strategy for the future and remaining relevant in a changing landscape

**TEAMWORK & COMMUNICATION:** together we are better open, honest, timely and respectful communications are always welcome



# Total Budget

\$72,213,000

EXPENDITURES SUMMARY						
Expenditures	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget				
Building Costs	\$171,600	\$171,600				
<b>Compensation and Benefits</b>	\$68,312,100	\$69,233,900				
<b>Debt Service</b>	\$637,200	\$400,900				
<b>Equipment &amp; Communications</b>	\$408,300	\$408,300				
<b>External Services</b>	\$487,500	\$262,500				
Office	\$252,100	\$252,100				
Other Fiscal	\$192,500	\$185,300				
Other Goods & Services	\$904,900	\$954,900				
Supplies	\$589,000	\$596,200				

## 2019/20 BUDGET



Fire Prevention

Division completed

46 in-depth fire investigations.



430,000 permanent residents and 5,577 square kilometres are protected by HRFE personnel.



HRFE responded to 12,989 incidents.
36 calls per day on average.





149 burning and other events permits were issued.



199 Firefighter & Family Assistance Program referrals made.



28,485 unit runs.
78 times per day
on average.



337 public education events were delivered.

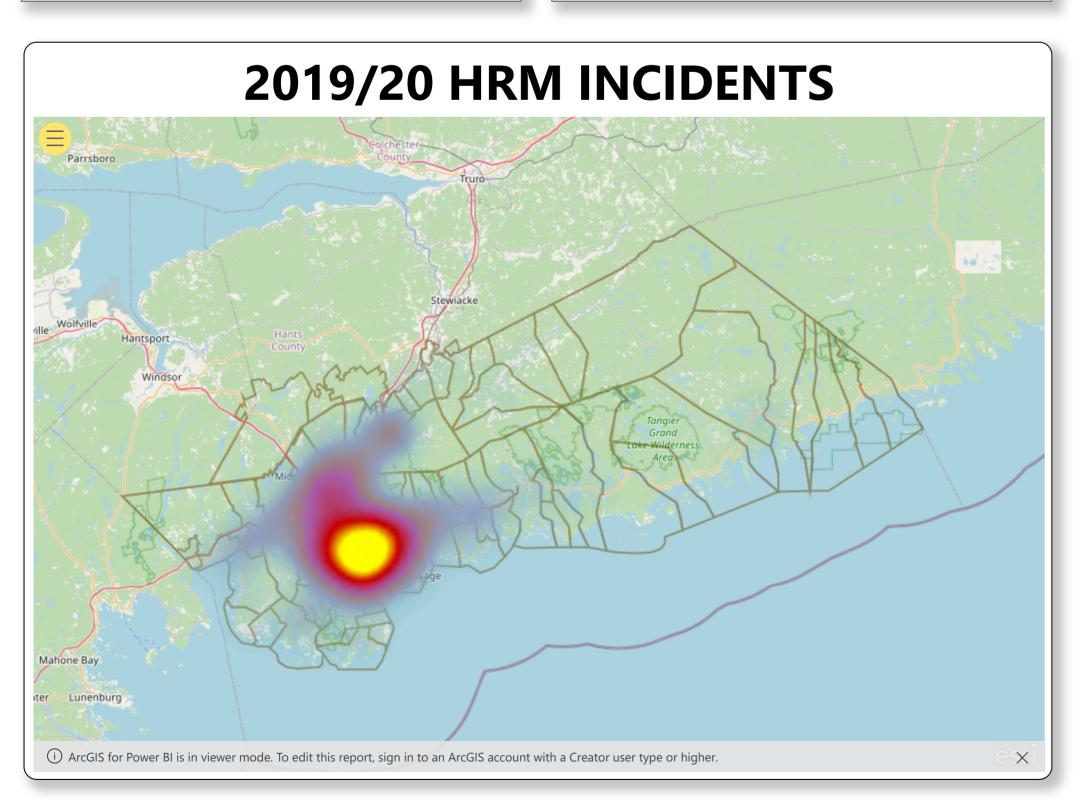


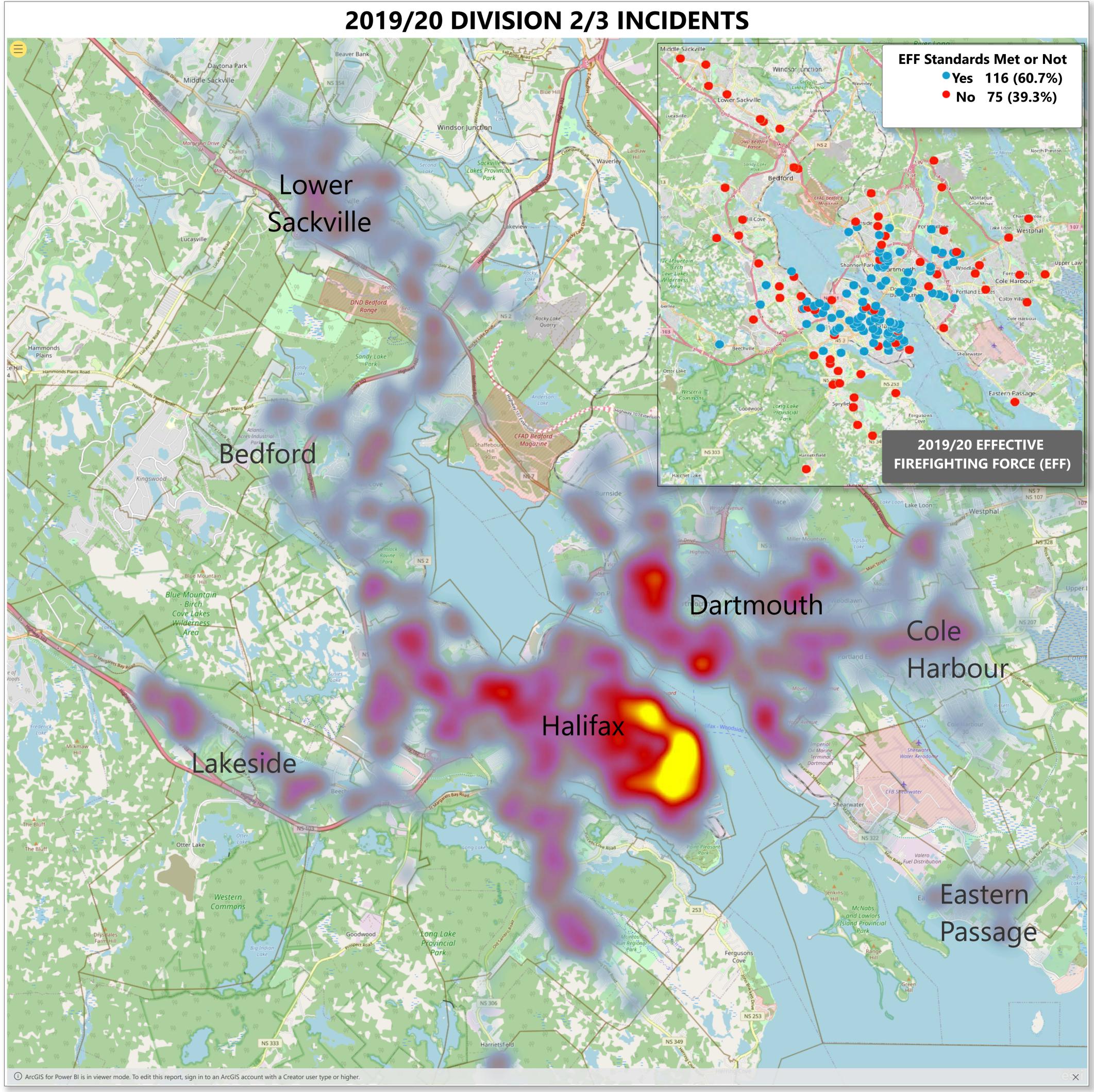
96% respondents surveyed who had contact with HRFE were confident HRFE will respond to emergency calls in a timely manner. 98% were satisfied with the services provided.

2019/20 QUICK FACTS

Station	# of Incidents		
Number			
02	1016		
03	760		
04	342		
05	621		
06	560		
07	679		
08	574		
09	394		
10	260		
11	55		
12	755		
13	392		
14	464		
15	312		
16	187		
17	416		
18	218		
19	71		
20	121		
21	215		
22	72		
23	311		
24	123		
25	31		
26	96		
28	110		

Station	# of		
Number	Incidents		
_			
29	27		
30	41		
31	14		
33	22		
34	19		
35	33		
36	66		
38	46		
39	48		
40	95		
41	159		
42	60		
43	29		
45	262		
47	395		
48	150		
50	376		
52	142		
54	211		
55	156		
56	155		
58	397		
60	156		
63	134		
65	300		
Total	12,648		
10001	/		





## INCIDENT HEAT MAP

**Operations** is led by a Deputy Chief and provides firefighting and emergency services through a composite service delivery model consisting of over 1,000 members (525 career and 514 volunteer firefighters).

HRFE firefighters cover all 5,500 square kilometres of HRM and respond from 51 fire stations across the whole municipality.

In addition to responding to fire and emergency calls, Operations supports the first two lines of defense of public education and fire prevention through activities such as the Practice Using Safety at Home (PUSH) Program, public education with station tours and community events as well as Fire Code enforcement with Facility Safety Maintenance Inspections (FSMI).

### Successes

# Implementing the Regional Council Approved Emergency Response Time Targets

This includes the setting and measuring of emergency response time targets for medical and fire emergency incidents in both the Urban and Rural settings to improve service delivery, efficiency and effectiveness.



## Converting Station 45 to a 24/7 Composite Staffing Model

Given changes to population density and identified risks, Regional Council approved converting Station#45 (Fall River) from a 10.5 hour composite staffing model to a 24/7 hour composite staffing model to increase services to the community.

## Federal Heavy Urban Search & Rescue Implementation

HRFE has re-entered the Federal Heavy Urban Search & Rescue (HUSAR) Program. This program offers heavy search and rescue capabilities, including building collapse rescue, that is cost shared with Public Safety Canada and part of a National disaster response plan. Resources include heavy equipment, drones, tents, vehicles, fuel pods & heavy generators. HRFE's team is designated as Task Force 5.

### Challenges

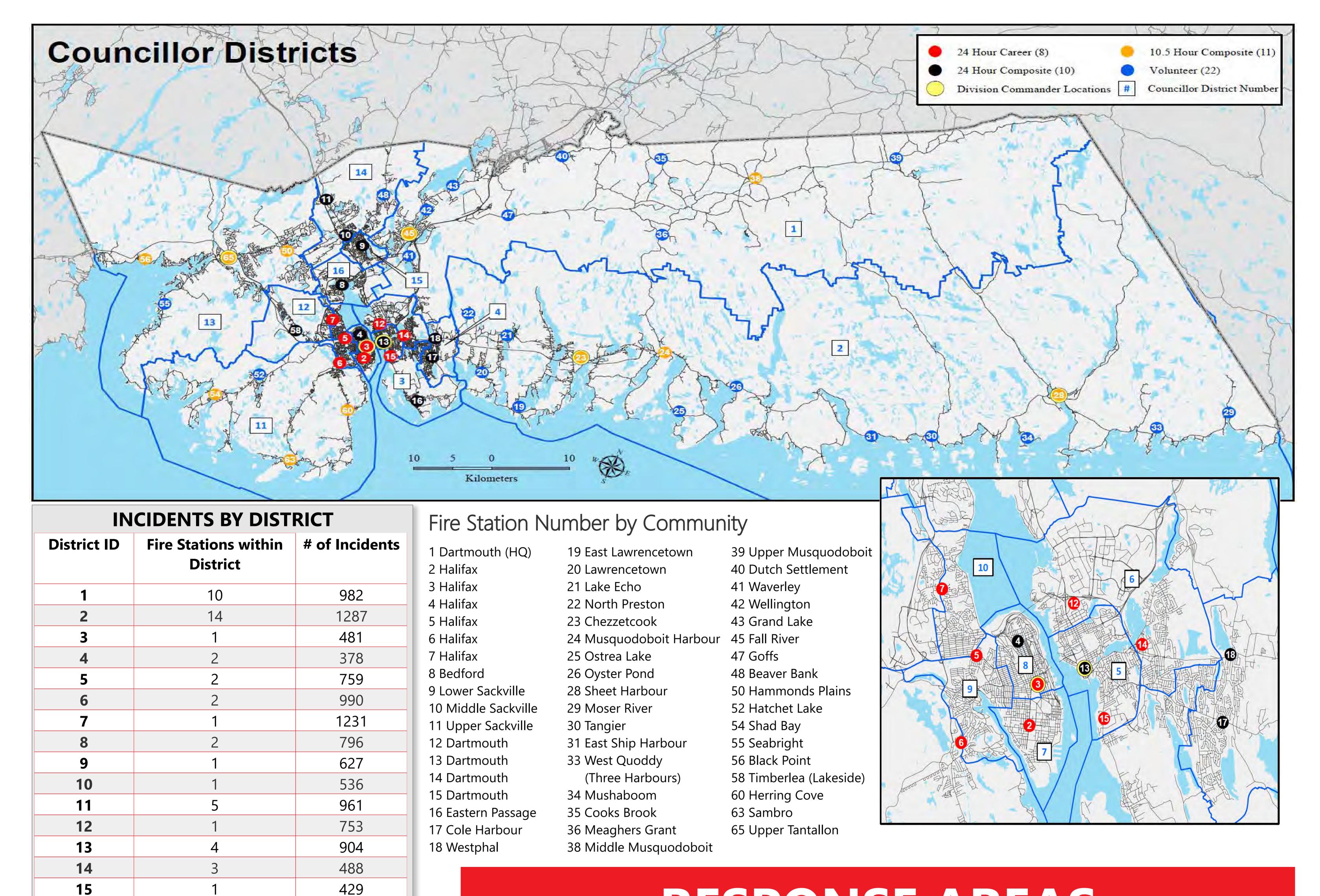
## **Changing Demographics in Rural Communities**

Changing demographics and shrinking rural communities, make maintaining a healthy volunteer compliment in rural communities difficult.

### **Aging Facilities**

Following amalgamation, HRFE inherited a number of buildings that were near end of life, and not designed to have firefighters staffed 24/7. Building new stations and designing functional improvements to old stations is costly, but has a direct impact on our ability to deploy staff efficiently and deliver service to the community.

## OPERATIONS

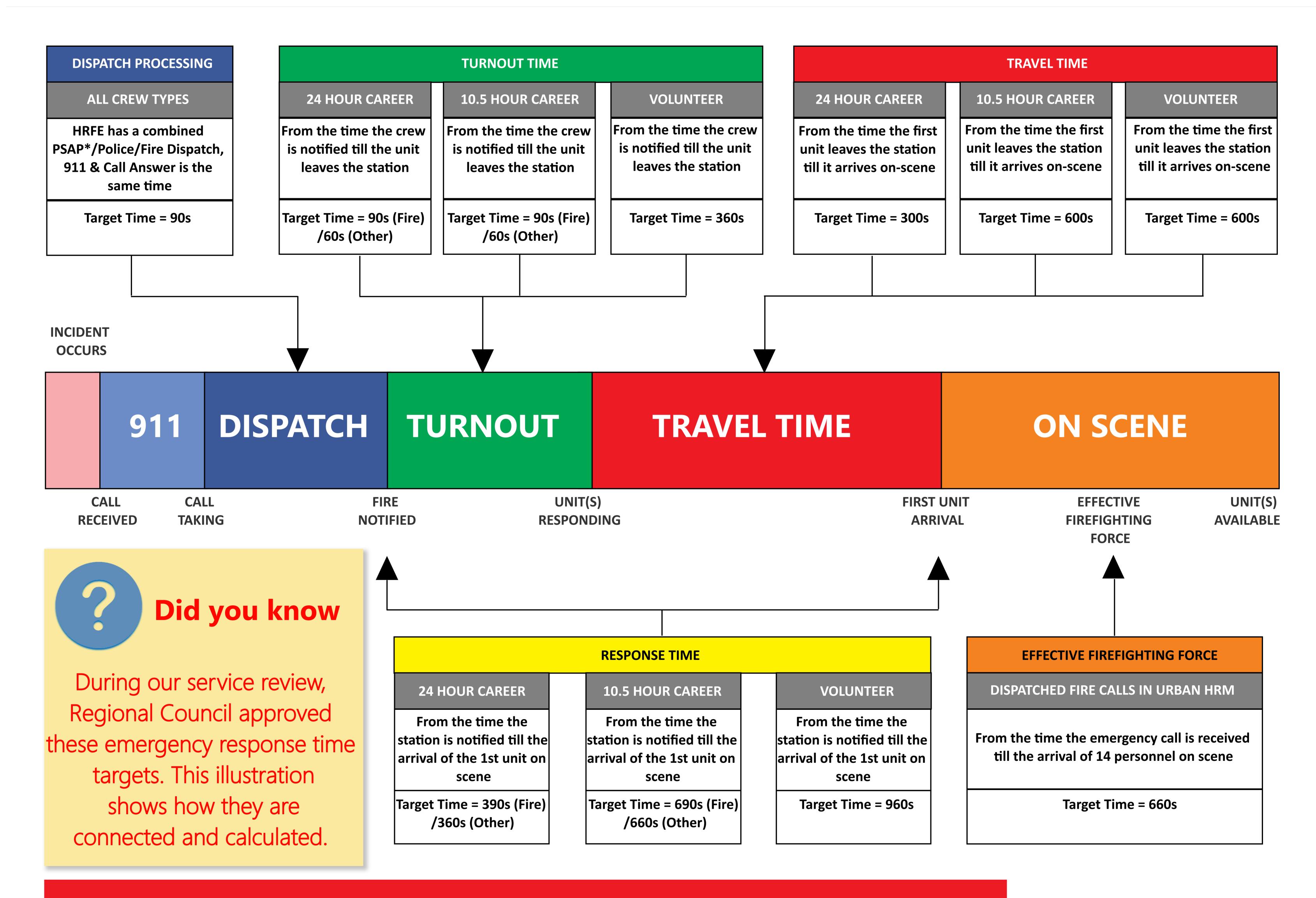


## RESPONSE AREAS

2019/20 ANNUAL REPORT

16

614



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE TIME TARGETS

\*PSAP refers to "Public Safety Answering Point".

78.8%

Total Response Time
First on Scene
to HRM Urban Fires
in 8 Minutes
Compared to 74.5% in 2018/19



## PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

85.8%

Total Response Time
Volunteer on Duty
First on Scene
to HRM Rural Medical Calls
in 17.5 Minutes
Compared to 84.6% in 2018/19



78.1%

Total Response Time
First on Scene
to HRM Urban Medical Calls
in 7.5 Minutes
Compared to 77.1% in 2018/19



90%

HRFE's target is to respond within these time targets, 90% of the time.

93.1%

Total Response Time
Daytime Career on Duty
First on Scene
to HRM Rural Medical Calls
in 12.5 Minutes

Compared to 92.3% in 2018/19



85.7%

Total Response Time
Daytime Career on Duty
First on Scene
to HRM Rural Fires
in 13 Minutes
Compared to 75% in 2018/19



60.7%

**Effective Firefighting Force** 

for HRM Urban Fires

Compared to 50% in 2018/19

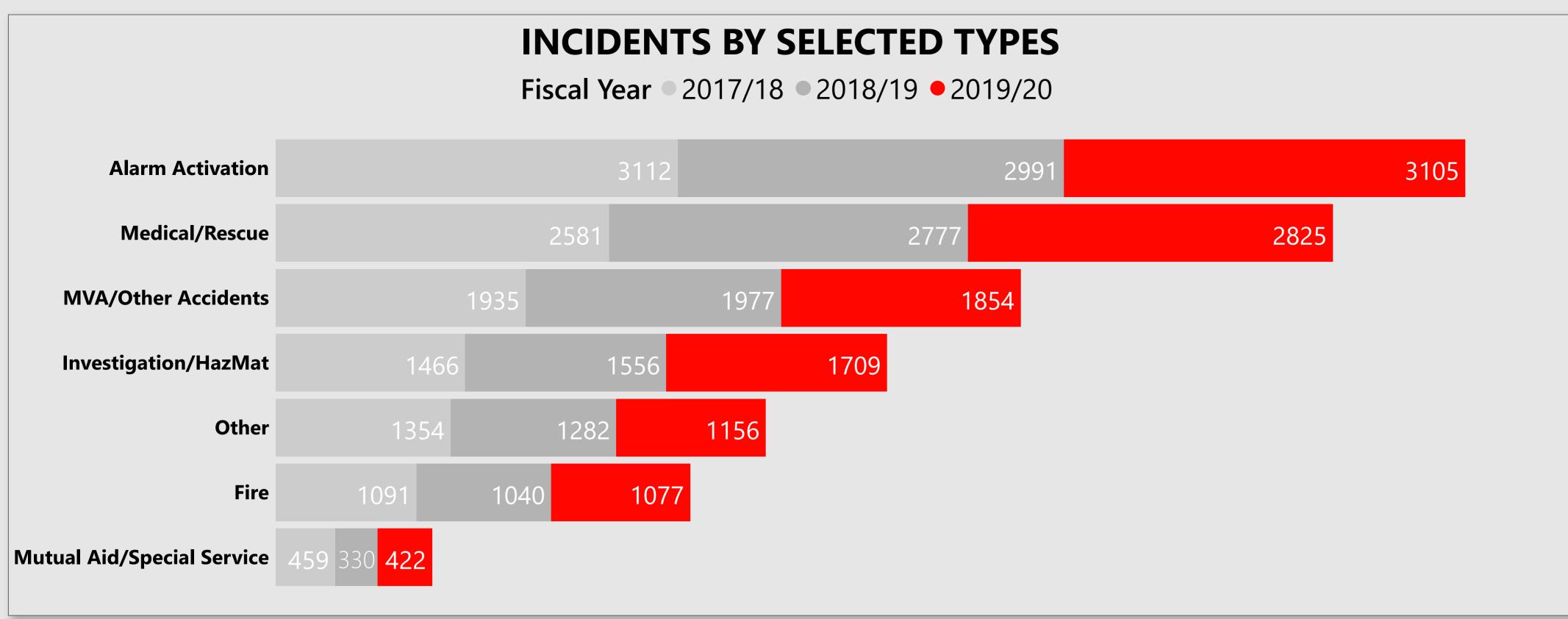
67.9%

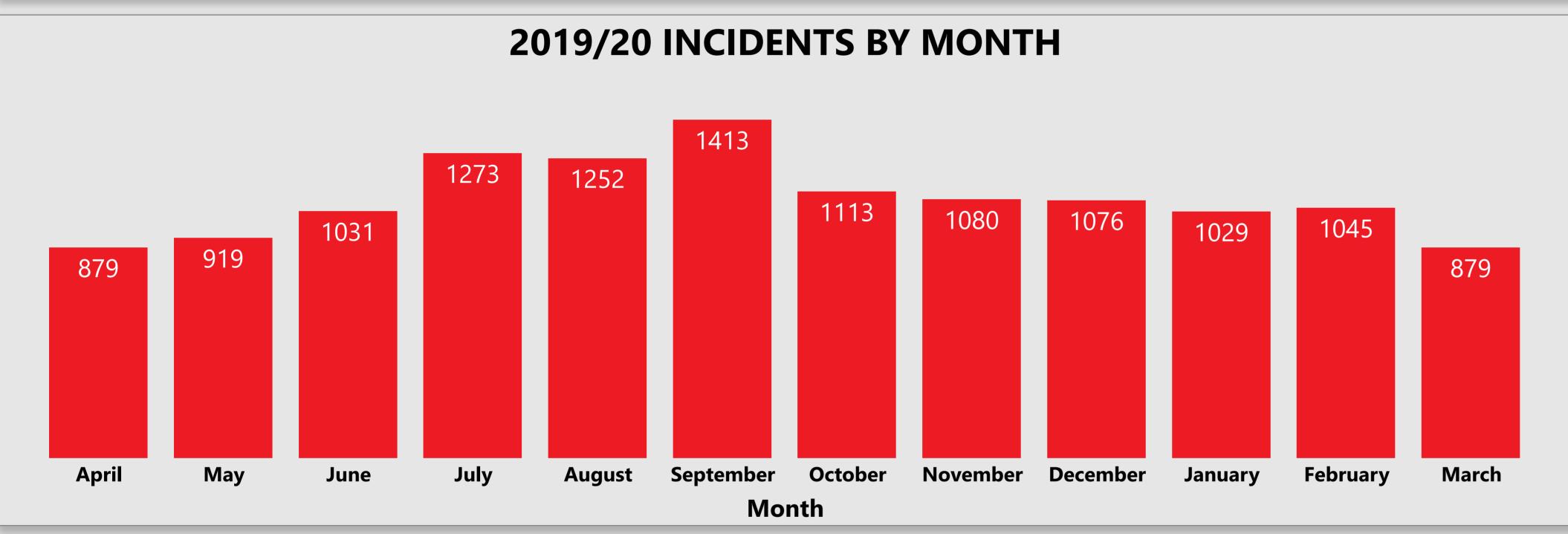
Total Response Time
Volunteer on Duty
First on Scene
to HRM Rural Fires
in 17.5 Minutes
Compared to 70.7% in 2018/19

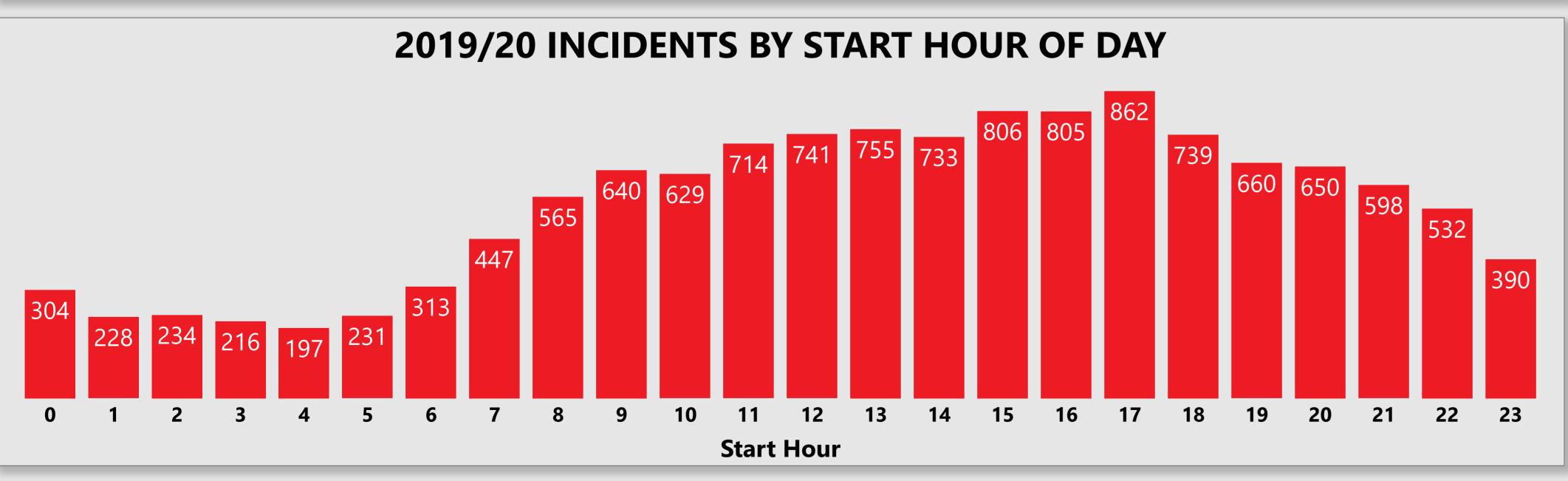


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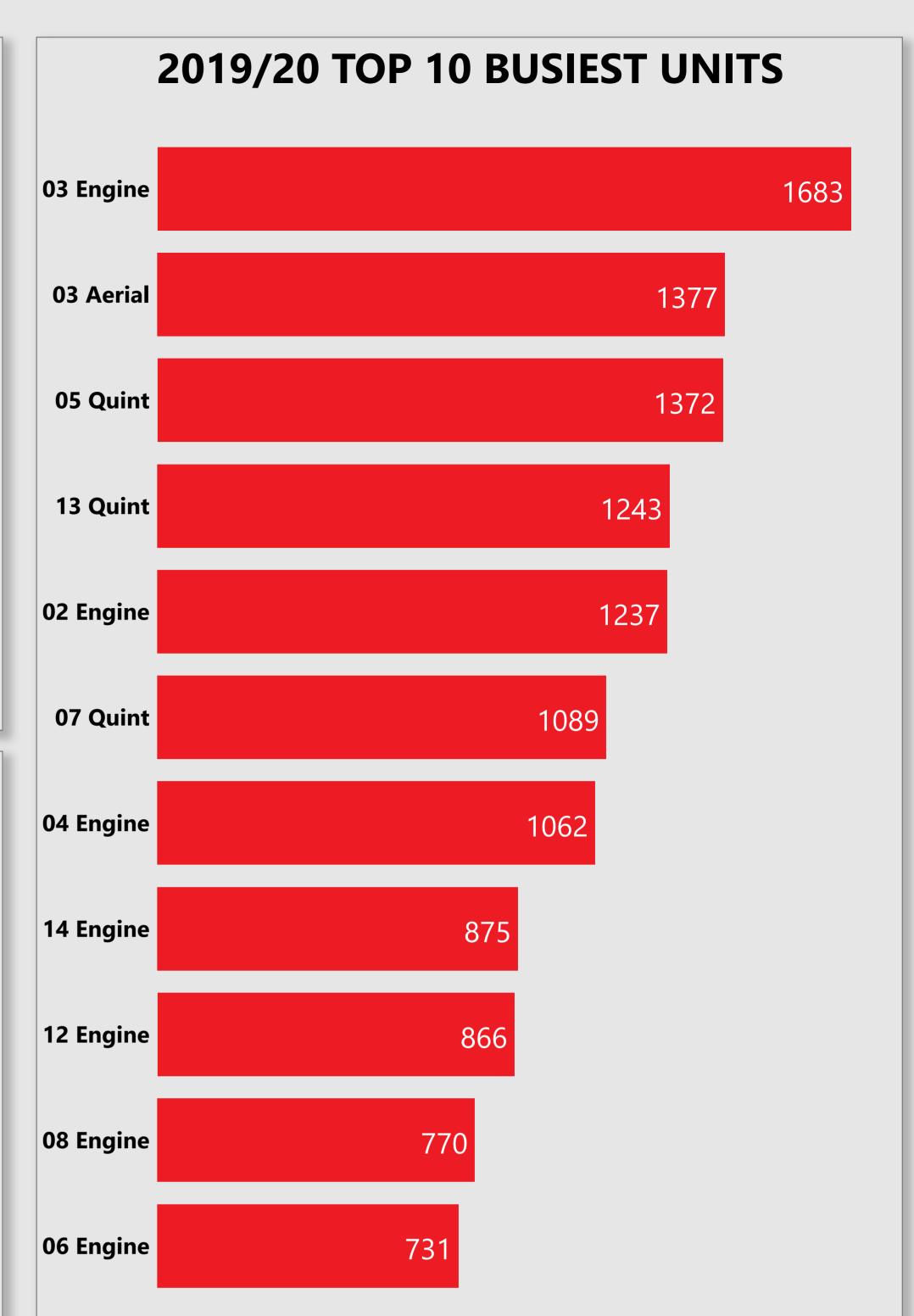
11

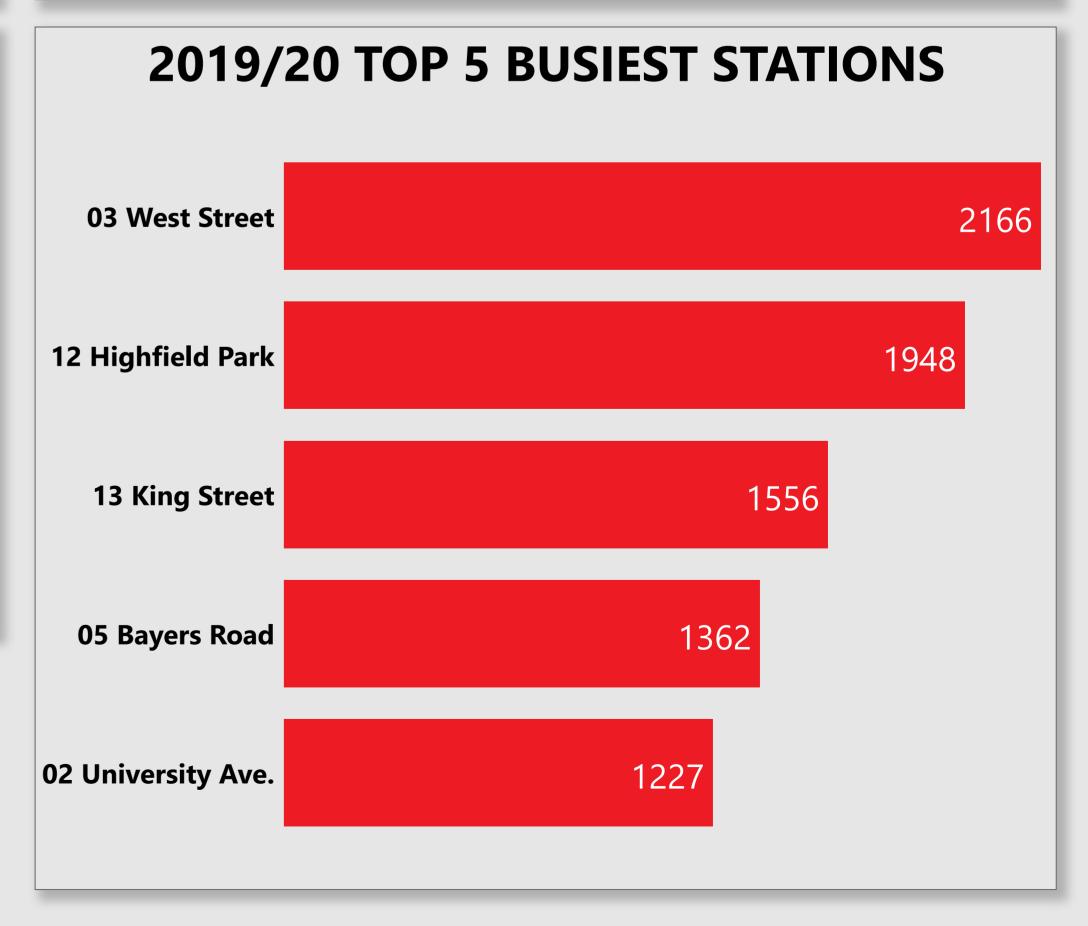












**Performance and Safety** is led by a Deputy Chief, and is responsible for 4 major areas:

- Occupational Health & Safety,
- Our People, Workplace Culture,
- Technology & Innovation, and
- the Volunteer Program.

The Deputy Chief is the Executive Officer and as part of this responsibility not only, represents the Fire Chief in their absence but also coordinates and manages media and public relations, labour relations and provides assistance and oversight to HRFE's Financial and Records Management processes.

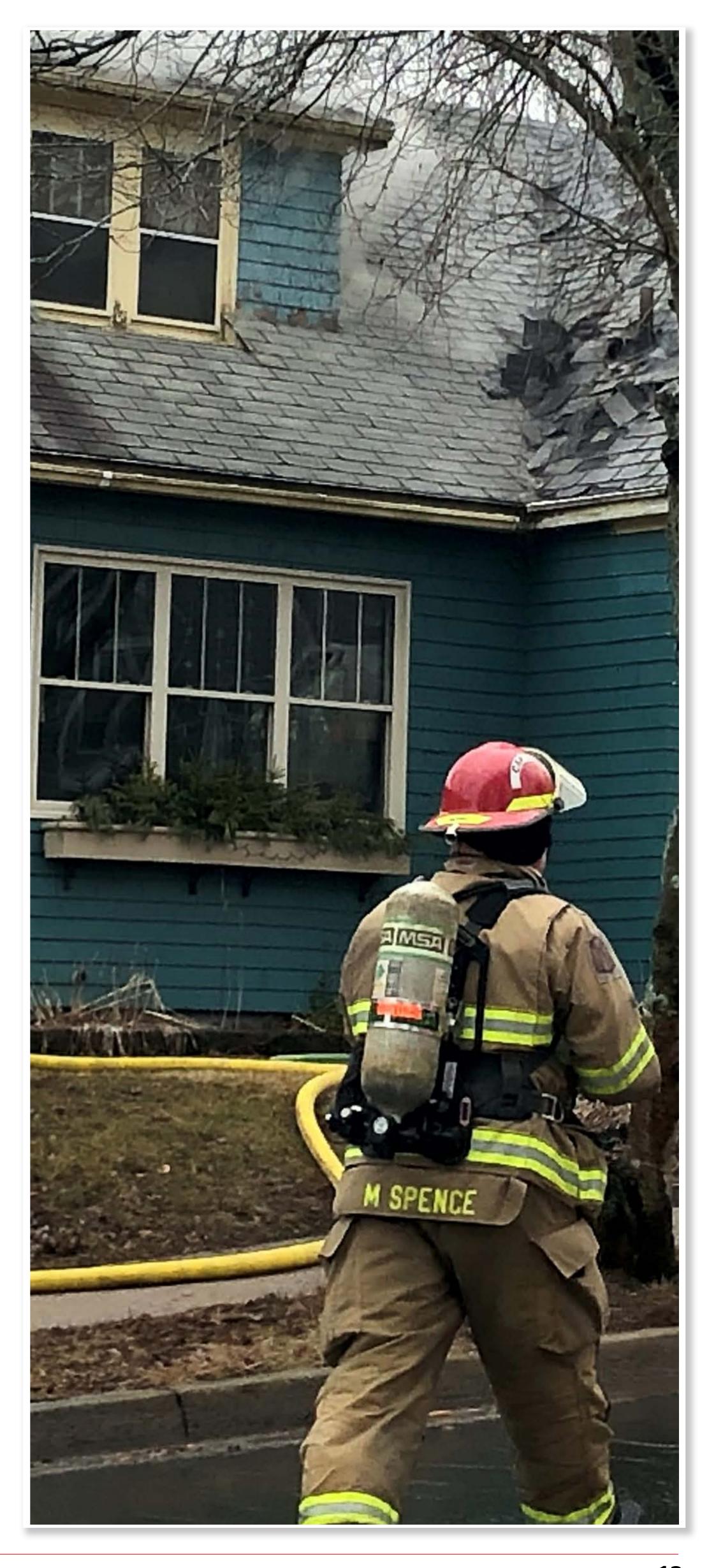
The Occupational Health & Safety Division provides oversight and support to on-shift incident safety officers at emergencies, workplace inspections and accident investigations. The Division Chief of Safety also supports policy and Operational Guidelines development related to Safety, and supports the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

The Workplace Culture Division provides leadership for all HRFE's Diversity &

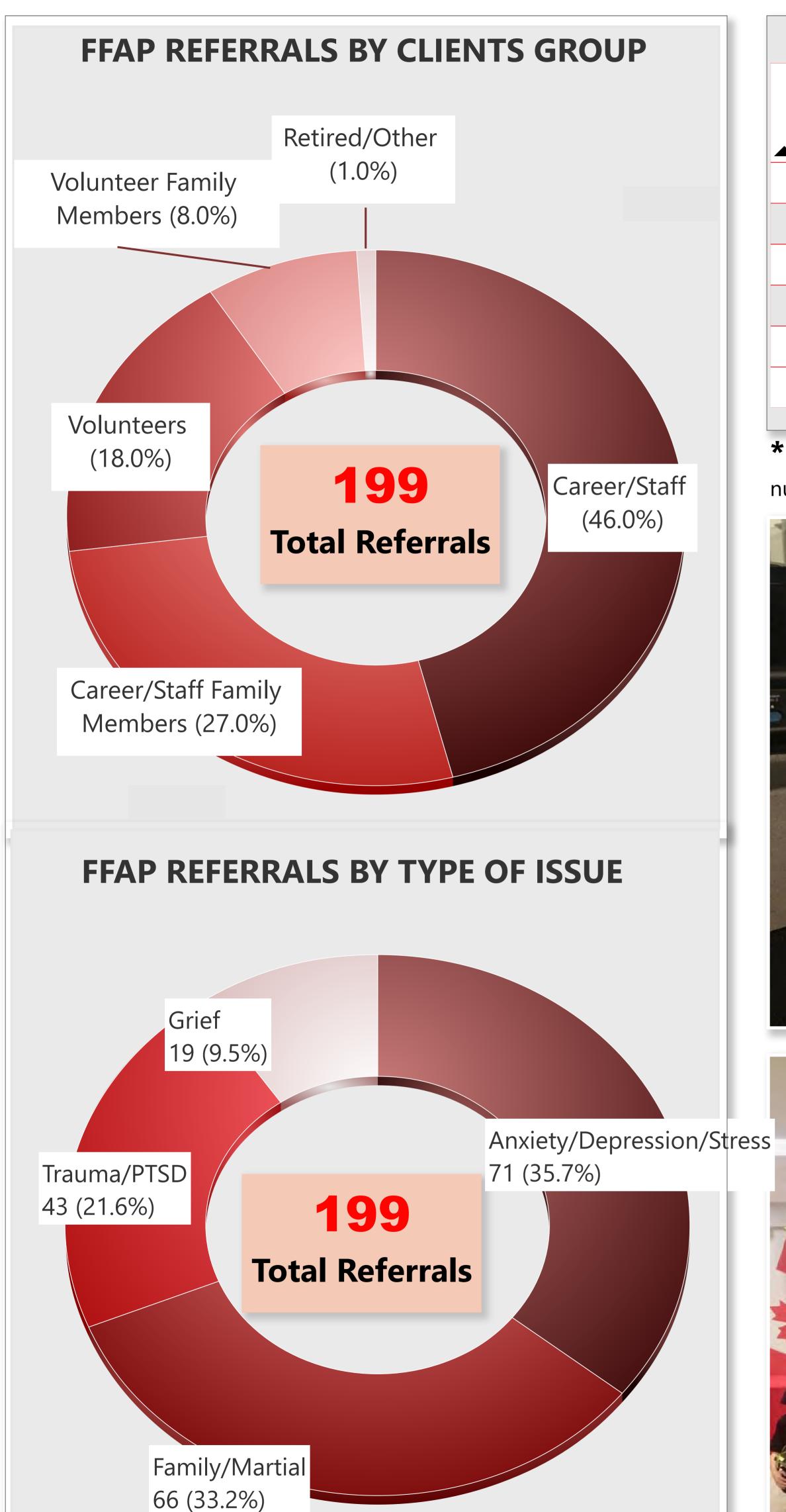
Inclusion programming and supports HRFE's number one asset "people" by overseeing Critical Incident Stress Management services, Firefighter & Family Assistance Services and builds stronger community ties through ongoing community outreach programs.

The Technology & Innovation Division is focused on enhancing HRFE's ability to make timely data driven decisions and measuring success. The Division also manages all HRFE's technology including radio, telephone and computer-based communications systems to all stations and vehicles including all data recording, analysis and visualization services.

The Volunteer Program conducts recruitment of volunteers for 32 communities within HRM, provides oversight for promotional and selection processes, manages the Volunteer Recognition Program, develops policies and procedures and advises leadership at all levels on matters relating to volunteer recruitment, retention and effectiveness.



### PERFORMANCE AND SAFETY



SAFETY PROGRAM SUMMARY						
Incident Category	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20			
Accident	43	34	19			
Exposure	2	6	13*			
First Aid	28	31	32			
MVA	66	82	64			
Near Miss	33	30	39			
Total	172	183	167			

<sup>\*</sup> Due to small numbers and some significant structure fires, the number of exposure doubled in 2019/20 fiscal year.





### Successes

## Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) Training

This past year, HRFE introduced "Road to Mental Readiness" (R2MR) training. In collaboration with national partners, HRFE developed trainers and personalized curriculum developed for first responders. Mental resilience training was provided to many of our team, and we continue until all have had the opportunity to participate. This training is a crucial tool for first responders to protect themselves and their colleagues from the harmful impact of stress injuries.

### **Mobile Data Terminals**

Volunteer firefighters were trained on the use of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) and they were installed on 25 volunteer fire apparatus. Because of this work, volunteer firefighters now have access to the same vital information in vehicles as career firefighters during emergency responses helping them work better together.

### Realignment of the Safety Division

This year, the position of a Platoon Captain was redeveloped to focus on Occupational Health and Quality Assurance. By shifting the focus from administrative tasks to safety inspections and program development, HRFE has been able to advance our overall safety program without additional cost to the municipality.

### Challenges

### COVID-19

The emergence of COVID-19 in the early winter required a pivot of all OH&S resources to meet the evolving threat. The Safety Division was instrumental in the development of policies, procedures, training and equipment preparations. HRFE continues to maintain full levels of public service throughout this pandemic, however this required moving resources away from previously planned objectives.

### **Stress Injury Resource Pressures**

Over the past year, HRFE experienced increased levels of members seeking help for personal and work-related stress injuries. Responding proactively to this stress led to serious budget pressures and workload for Firefighter & Family Assistance Program (FFAP) staff and volunteers. Additional insurance coverage was put in place for volunteer firefighters as one part of an overall plan to support mental wellness needs of our people.

## Data Collection and Storage System Limitations

HRFE's data collection and storage systems require development. Efforts to report timely data to senior staff and Regional Council were challenged by incomplete data collection systems, including AVL/GPS systems. In

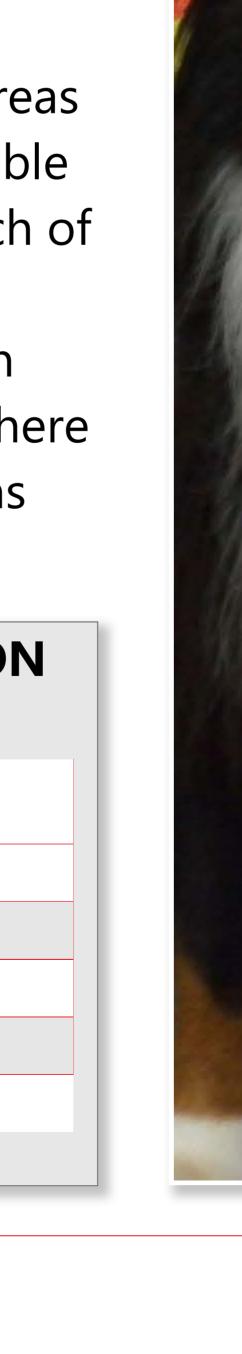
addition, the records management system requires updates to configuration and more work is needed to increase data visualization. In 2020/21, HRFE in collaboration with ICT, will begin work on planning out a revised incident reporting module in the records management system, cleaning and assessing the data currently available in the HRM data warehouse and expanding the use of visualization software to help our stakeholders "see" what data is telling us and how we are performing.

## Volunteer Recruitment in Rural HRM

During the past two decades, there has been a decrease in the number of volunteer firefighters throughout North America, including HRM.

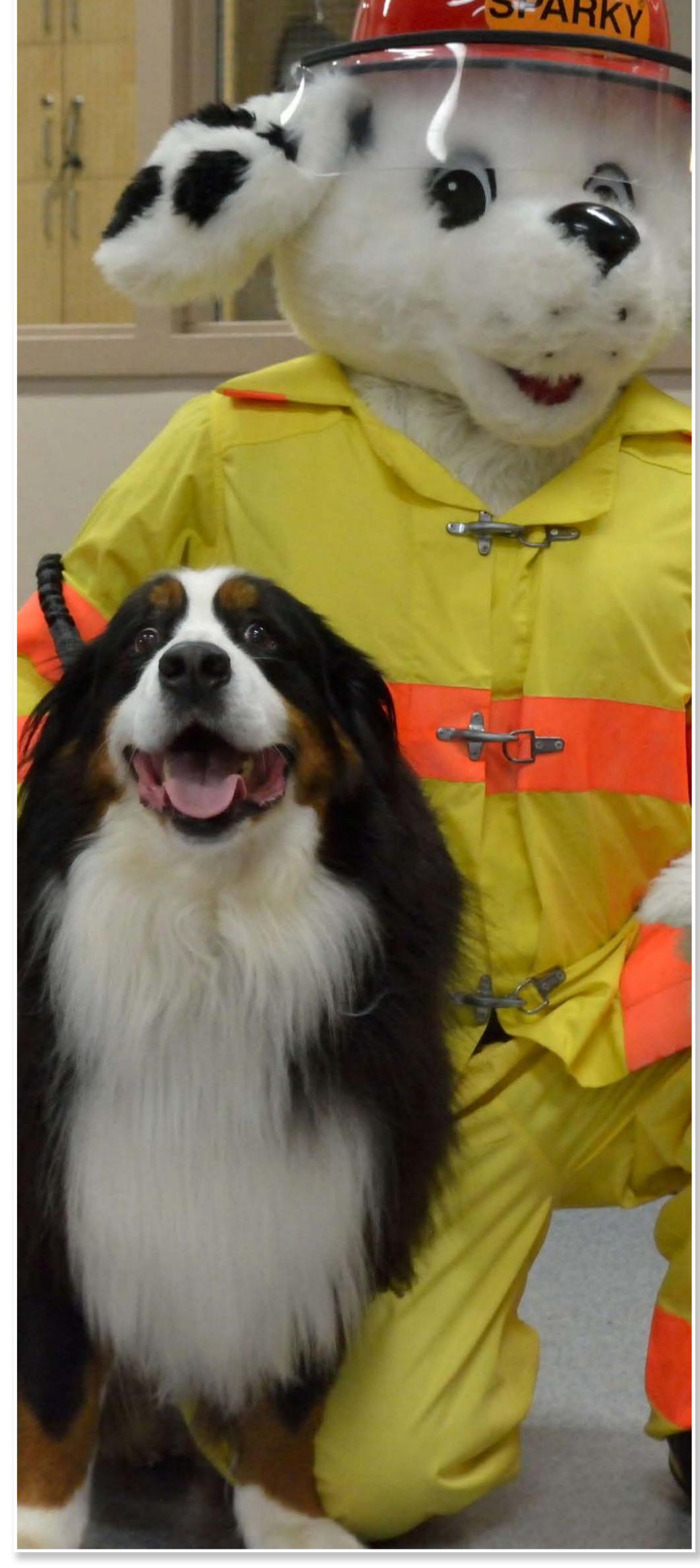
Declining and aging populations in rural areas are impacting the number of people available to volunteer. Between 2006 and 2011, much of the eastern half of HRM lost 12% of its population. Recruitment efforts currently in progress are working well in areas where there is a large population, and core area stations never struggle with recruiting.

# NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS BY DIVISION (SUPPORT MEMBERS INCLUDED) Fire District Firefighters Vacancy 1 116 85 2 60 0 3 80 10



101

147



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137

# Community Risk Reduction Division, Professional Development and Logistics is led by a Deputy Chief.

The Community Risk Reduction (CRR)

Division is focused on reducing community risk for all of HRM and includes mitigation, preparation and public education. CRR also includes fire code inspections and code enforcement. HRFE works closely with many partners to achieve the vision of community risk reduction and others to assist in building a safe and more resilient community.

The Public Education component includes communication on our social media platforms to promote fire safety and prevention, event coordination, addressing 311 Customer Service inquiries, and the distribution of various pamphlets and brochures in multiple languages.

A variety of programs such as Practice
Using Safety at Home (PUSH), Arson
Prevention Program for Children (TAPP-C)
and Alarm and Ready are developed and
promoted throughout the year but
highlighted during the Annual Fire
Prevention Week, station tours,
presentations and school visits.

The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for Code Compliance/Enforcement and conducts risk based Inspections as outlined

in the Fire Safety Act (Fire Code) for all mandatory inspections, or Regional Council's M200 By-Law. In addition, Fire Prevention conducts Fire Inspections received by request or complaint and issues summary offense tickets and /or prosecution as needed for compliance and assists with building plans and permit reviews.

The Division is also responsible for conducting Fire Investigations under the Fire Safety Act, and all fires investigated by HRFE through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Province of Nova Scotia.

HRFE is responsible for the municipality's Emergency Management (EM) Program. EM is part of the community risk reduction division and includes: prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Some of HRM's external partners include: Halifax Water, Port of Halifax, Emergency Health Services, Provincial and Federal EMO, Red Cross, Department of National Defence (DND), Special Care Emergency Provider Association (SCEPA) and the Bridge Commission.

HRFE has 6 Joint Emergency Management (JEM) teams that work closely with the 4



Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) teams are all community volunteers. In times of crises, EMO will activate JEM groups to coordinate humanitarian response within the JEM coverage area. One of the main tasks for these volunteers is to establish comfort centres during an emergency.

## COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOGISTICS

1,083

Fire
Inspections
compared to
1109 in 2018/19

**530** 

Properties
Inspected
compared to
581 in 2018/19





337

Public Education Events compared to 150 in 2018/19

8,586

PUSH Visits
compared to
2837 in 2018/19

### **TOP 10 FIRE INSPECTION VIOLATION TYPES** 2019/20 **Violation Type** 2018/19 Accumulation of Combustible Materials 188 195 Administration - Records Made and Retained 419 449 Application - Fire Emergency Procedures Provided 147 305 Damage to Fire Separations 395 390 Inspection of Self-contained Emergency Lighting Unit Equipment 178 168 Inspection Testing and Maintenance - Portable Extinguishers 121 211 Maintenance - Means of Egress 208 168 Posting of Fire Emergency Procedures 256 Signs - Occupancy Loads be Posted 183 Use and Maintenance - Electrical Installations 426 528

### Successes

### **Risk-based Inspection Model**

HRFE has implemented a risk-based inspection model that improves efficiencies in our inspection program.

## Practice Using Safety at Home Program (PUSH)

The **PUSH** Program is a "boots on the ground" public safety campaign provided by firefighters asking residents to Practice Using Safety at Home. The focus of the PUSH Program is on civic



number visibility, working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, home escape planning, and emergency preparedness.

### Challenges

While efficiencies have been achieved in our inspection process, keeping up with legislated inspections continues to be challenging due to geography, density and pausing of Fire Safety Maintenance Inspections (FSMI) by Operations due to COVID-19.

# Last year, HRFE responded to 169 structure fires



### Cooking area/Kitchen 9%

Stay in the kitchen and pay attention when cooking.

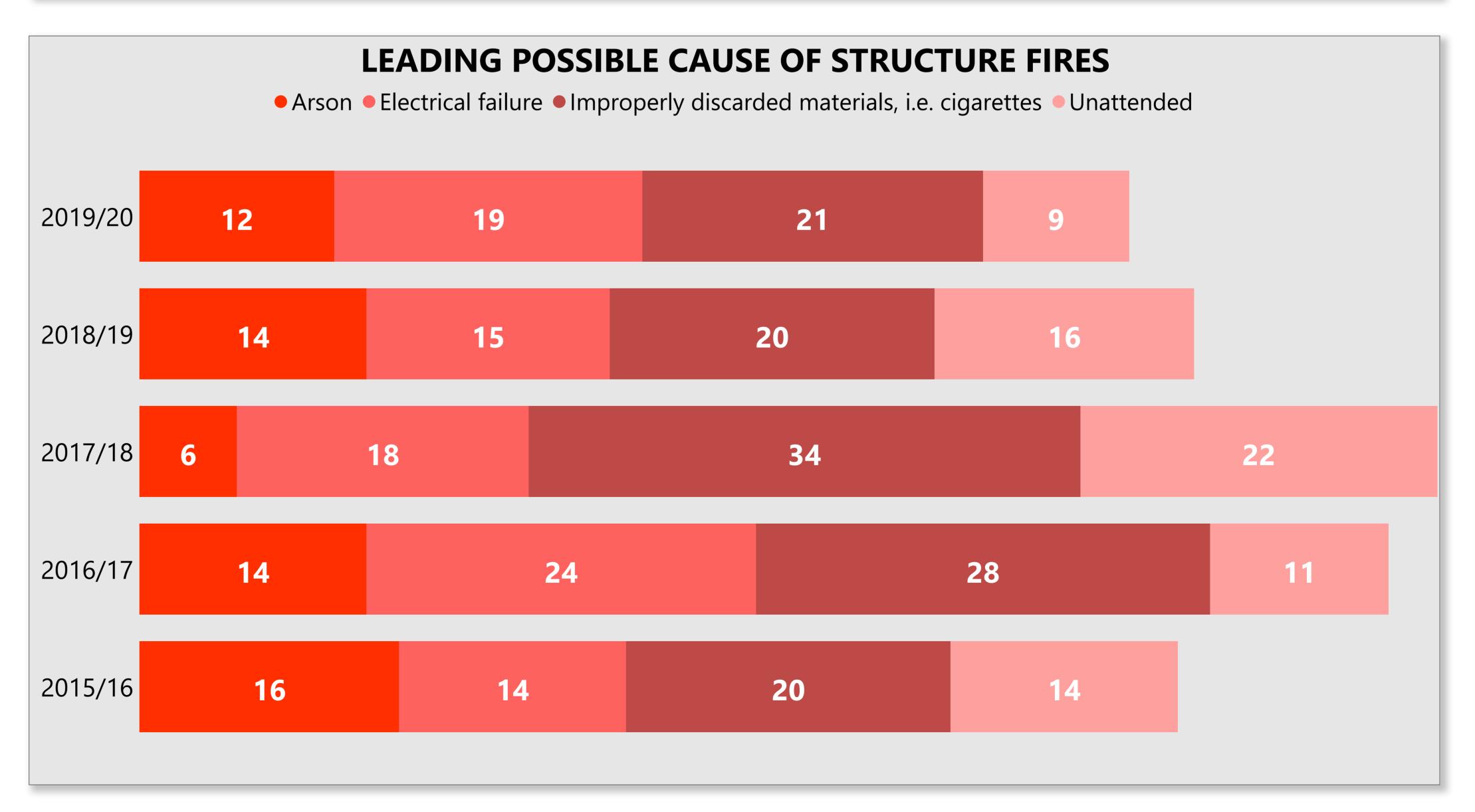
### Sleeping area/Bedroom 9%

Don't smoke in bed. Smoke outside and safely dispose of smoking materials. Ensure electrical cords are not running across doorways or under carpets.

### Deck, patio or terrace 7%

Keep the yard clear of excess clutter and debris. Store items outside in a safe place. Safely dispose of smoking materials.





Corey Beals, Deputy Chief Craig March, Captain Paddy Conrad, Captain Mike Dorey, Captain Edward de Zeeuw, Station Chief **Dennis Pitts, District Chief** Stephen Turner, District Chief Vince Conrad, Division Chief Bruce Sangster, Platoon Captain Joe Barbati, Captain **Duane Dodge,** Captain Geoff Garber, Captain Marcheta Fitzgerald, Division Captain Drew MacCulloch, Captain Adam MacNeil, Captain Jason Moores, Captain Mark Haverstock, Captain Harry Creemer, Captain Annette Thompson, Captain Mike Sampson, Training Officer Sherry Thibault, Captain Sherry Dean, Captain Kevin Guy, Captain Debra Archibald, Captain Cory Barrington, Lieutenant Scott Boyle, Lieutenant Mark Burgess\*, Station Chief Douglas Burgess\*, Lieutenant

John Casey, Lieutenant George Collard\*, Station Chief Ryan Crain, Station Chief Rachael Dent-Flynn, Lieutenant David Estabrooks, Station Chief **Arthur Francis,** Lieutenant Viola Fraser, Station Captain Robert Kay\*, Station Chief Gordon Long\*, Lieutenant Joel Miller, Lieutenant Joel Misson, Lieutenant **Donald Mosher\***, Lieutenant **Dan Nelson,** Lieutenant Graeme Ross, Lieutenant Marc Rothwell, Lieutenant Robert Sandeski\*, Lieutenant Darren Smith\*, Lieutenant Nicolas C Stewart, Lieutenant Myles Tonner\*, Lieutenant Benjamin Towns, Lieutenant Colin White\*, Station Chief Paul Williams, Lieutenant Mark Zawidzki, Lieutenant Peter Ziobrowski, Lieutenant Shawn Leveque, Lieutenant Connie Leaman, Lieutenant Angela Hanrahan, Lieutenant Note: \* refers to "reappointed".

### HRFE 2019/20 PROMOTIONS

The **Professional Development Division** is responsible for the development and delivery of training programs and professional development of more than 1000 HRFE career and volunteer firefighters. This includes implementation and maintaining professional certifications and qualifications of members, and continuous evaluation and skills development to ensure competency and proficiency in service delivery.

















In 2019/20, 17 career firefighters were trained and graduated in early December 2019. HRFE will commence a new recruitment campaign. These campaigns can take up to 18 months.

In 2019/20, 60 new volunteers were trained and graduated. HRFE anticipates training another 65 volunteers next year.

17

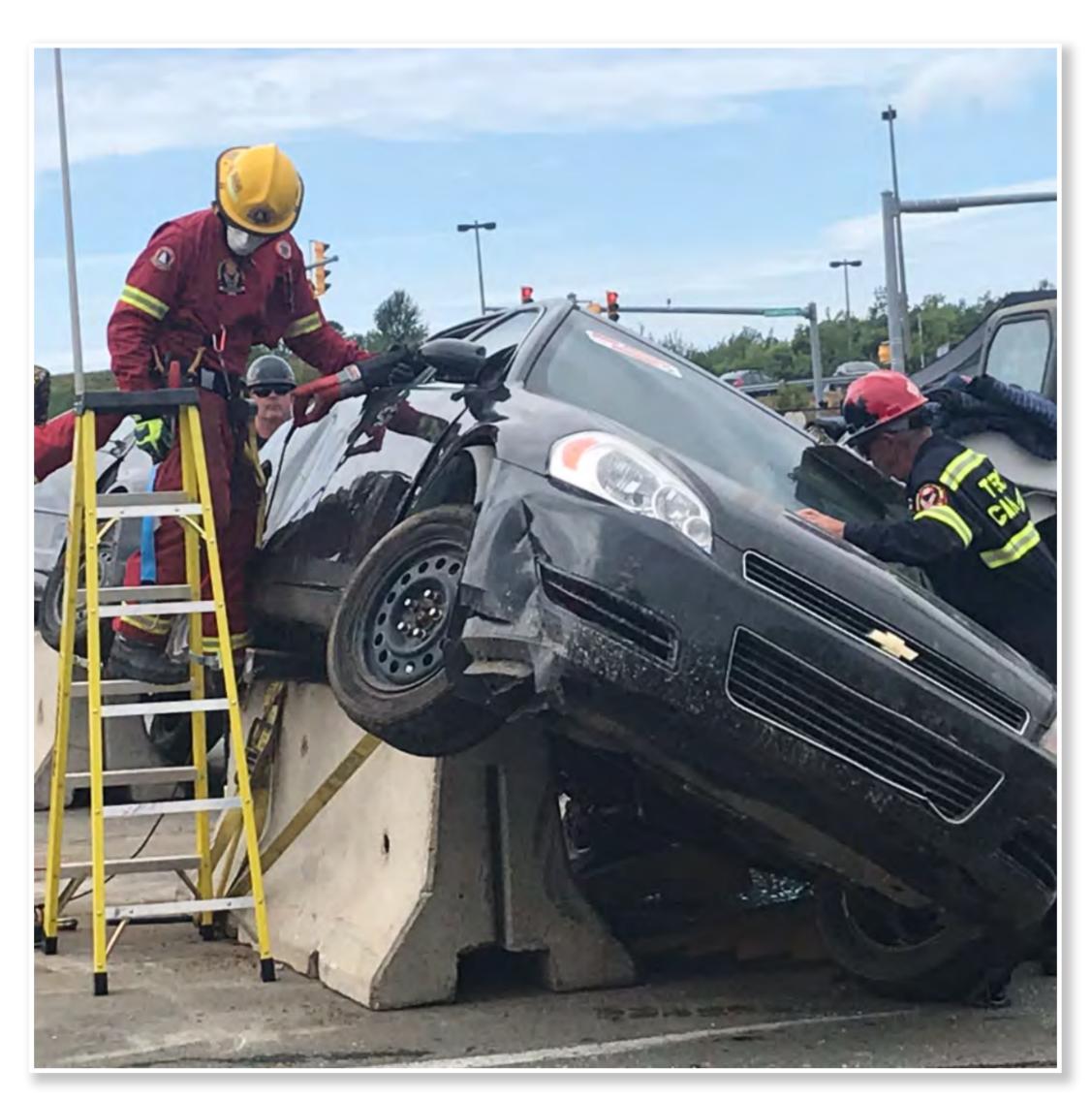
New Career Firefighters Trained

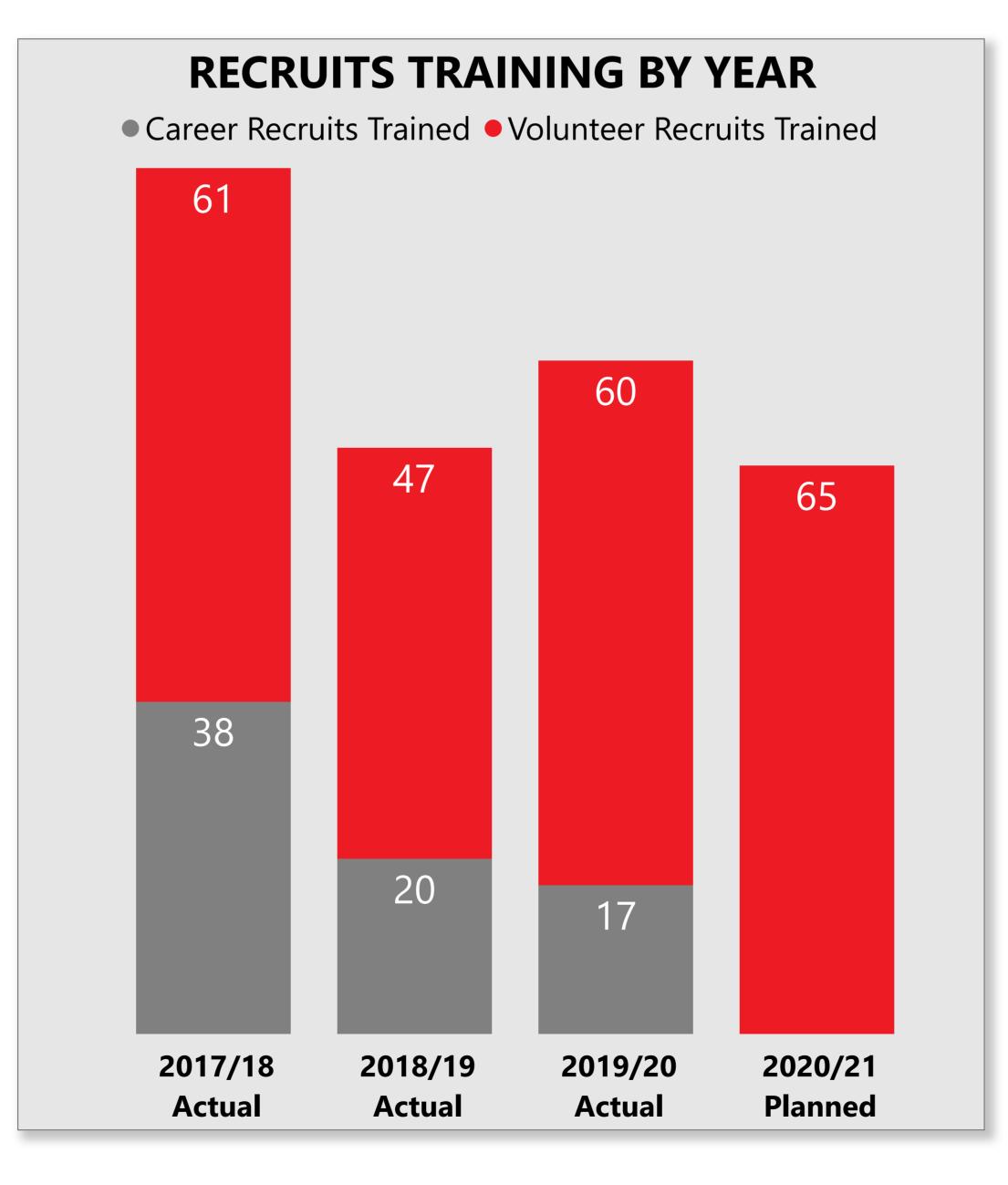
46,355

Total Number of Volunteer Training Hours

60

New Volunteer Firefighters Trained





### Successes

### **Fire Officer One Course**

The development and implementation of the Fire Officer One Course included a class of 13 members who completed the online content that consisted of knowledge for the position as well as preparation for certification. This training is part of the future plans for HRFE to meet IFSAC and Pro Board Accredited Certification, and part of our overall succession planning strategy.

### Challenges

### **Inadequate Training Facilities**

The Training Division continues to be challenged with the lack of training facilities, to support crew and live fire training for both career and volunteers. HRFE is in need of a central training facility, as well as smaller remote training props for volunteer training outside of the core.

## Training for Rural Career and Volunteer Firefighters

Due to a lack of training facilities, providing hands on practical training for our firefighters in the rural areas of HRM continues to be a challenge. HRFE plans to address this issue by acquiring and deploying new strategically located training props and facilities in rural areas that are challenged by travel and resource issues.

The **Logistics Division** plays an integral role in providing logistical support to all divisions within HRFE. During emergency incidents, this Division is instrumental in providing critical logistical support for HRFE staff and other emergency responders and partners. These functions include replenishment of emergency supplies, rehabilitation of crews and supporting Incident Command as required, purchasing, storage and distribution of personal protective equipment and clothing, and sourcing equipment, repairs and maintenance.

### Successes

### **New Fire Station 62**

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency has awarded the design-build RFP for the design and construction of the new Fire Station 62 to Bird Construction. The new facility will be operational in December 2020, and will be a community resource and provide an inclusive and productive work site for volunteer and career firefighters.

### Challenges

HRFE continues to be challenged with managing the aging infrastructure of 51 fire stations that require constant maintenance and upkeep. Station repairs, equipment replacement and upgrades increase financial pressures to an already strained budget but are imperative to ensure the safety of our members.





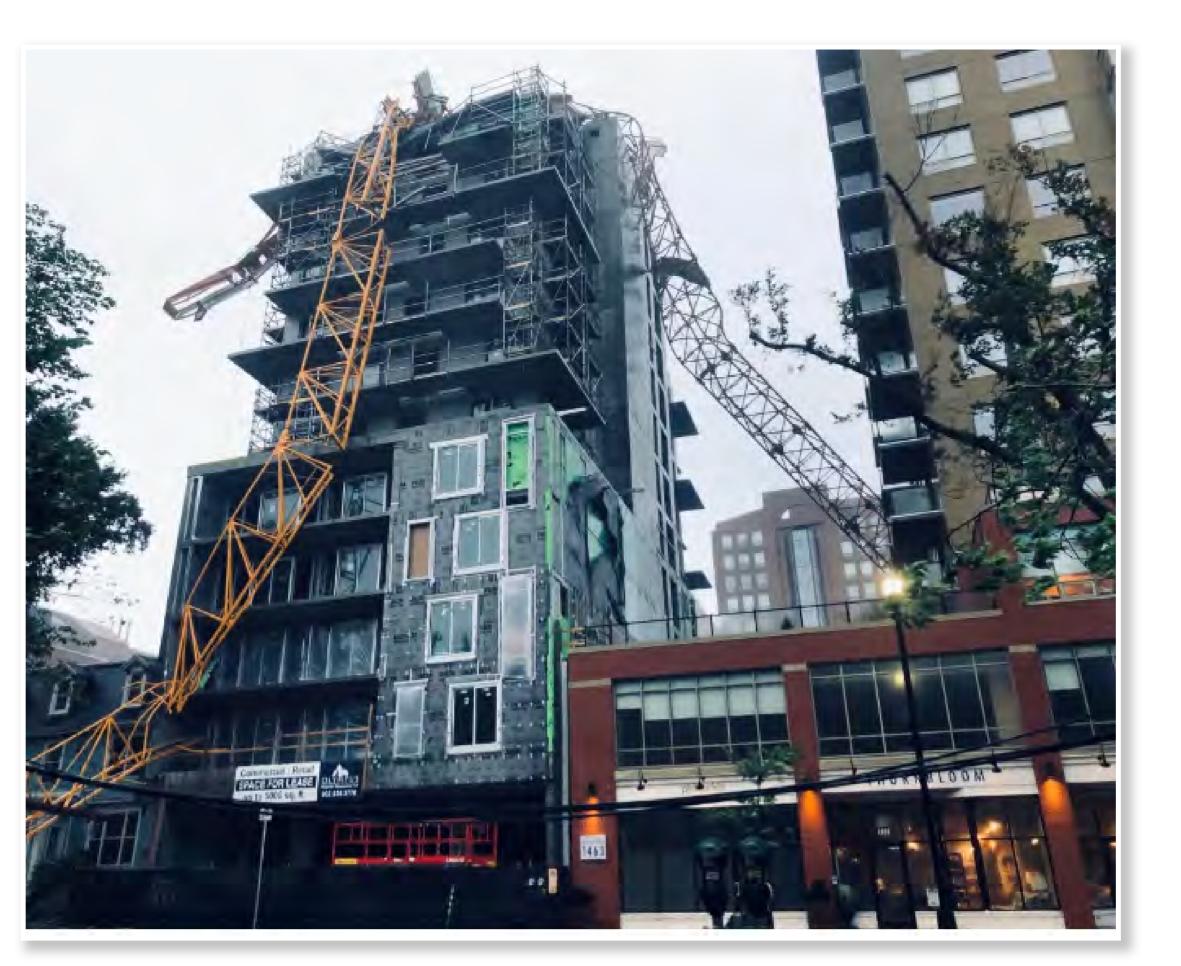


HRFE Logistics Division with HRFE Fleet resources resupplied fuel to multiple Halifax Water and RCMP Detachments who didn't have power. They also filled gas-fueled generators across the municipality.

Two shelters, one in St. Margaret's Bay and the Canada Games Centre in Halifax, were opened to accommodate residents who voluntarily sheltered in addition to 55 residents who needed to be evacuated due to damage to apartment buildings.

**Emergency Management supplied** food to multiple comfort centres including: Mulgrave Park, North Preston, Musquodoboit, Canada Games Centre, St Margaret's Bay, Moser River Community Hall, Watt Section/Sheet Harbour Legion, Musquodoboit Harbour Lions Club, Gaetz Brook Legion.

Assistance provided by fire departments from Enfield, Mount Uniacke, Lantz, Hubbards and Elmsdale.



### On Saturday, September 6, 2019,

Halifax Regional Municipality was impacted by Hurricane Dorian, which was categorized as a post-tropical cyclone when it made landfall. Estimated winds sustained at landfall were 100 kph with the same strength as a Category 2 Hurricane. Dorian caused significant damage to HRM including widespread tree damage, localized flooding and power outages. At its peak, Dorian disrupted power to 375,000 residents and caused a construction crane to fall onto an adjacent building, eventually leading to the declaration of a localized state of emergency and evacuation of nearby residents.



There were 183 emergency calls in total between 3pm Sept. 6 and midnight Sept. 7, including 9 outside HRM that HRFE responded to.

28 Investigation

12 Fire

**13** Medical **Assistance** 

**Water Leak** 

**Electrical/Other Wire Problems** 

**Motor Vehicle Accident** 

61 **Other Alarm Activation** 

34 **Other Calls in** HRM



367 units dispatched 312 units responded Busiest units were Engine 03 (dispatched 19 times) and Quint 07 (dispatched 16 times)



Responding Personnel: 158 Career Firefighters 249 Volunteer Firefighters 5 Support Staff

## HURRICANE DORIAN













## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



### Follow Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency:



**@hfxfire** 



@hfxfire
@HRFE\_Incidents

### **Regional Headquarters**

40 Alderney Drive, Suite 302 Dartmouth, N.S., B2Y 2N5

### **Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, N.S., B3J 3A5

Email: hrmfire@halifax.ca

Hours of Operation: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Non-Emergency Phone: 902.490.5530 or 311