
2013 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Toronto Fire Services Budget and Master Fire Plan Recommendations

Issue/Background:

- This briefing note responds to a motion requesting that the Fire Chief provide a briefing note on how the proposed budget meets the recommendations in the Master Fire Plan including staffing levels, available fleet complement and National Fire Protection Association 1710 response standards.
- The Master Fire Plan 2007 identified 81 recommendations and provided a strategic planning framework for policy, organizational, capital and operational decisions affecting TFS over a five year period, expiring at the end of 2011.
- In May 2011, Toronto Fire Services (TFS) provided an implementation status report which reported that TFS has made considerable progress in commencing and delivering many of the recommendations contained in the Master Fire Plan. The rehabilitation, replacement and construction of a number of fire halls has commenced, a number of key communications projects are underway and recommendations contained in the 2006 Auditor General's Operational Review have been successfully implemented.
- Despite these achievements, issues such as ongoing staffing shortfalls and an aging mechanical fleet are impacting on TFS' ability to meet and/or surpass a number of recommended standards and guidelines; particularly those contained in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710.
- TFS will continue to take measures to address the potential impact of the proposed reduction in service level. Response time improvements have been achieved in recent months through a focus on the components of response time that remain within the control of the Service, including turnout time, and call taking/dispatching time. This focus may mitigate some of the increases expected due to a reduction in the total number of vehicles in the system.
- In addition, TFS has included the purchase of predictive modeling software in its 2013 capital budget. This software works in conjunction with the Fire Services' computer aided dispatch system to aid in the deployment of fire vehicles to mitigate gaps in coverage and improve response times.
- Finally, TFS will strengthen the application of our attendance management program in 2013 in an effort to lessen the number of vehicles removed from service on a daily basis as a result of unscheduled absences, to provide the highest level of service possible. The combination of

the above efforts will help maintain the highest level of fire life safety service possible for the citizens of Toronto.

Key Points:

1. The TFS budget proposes the re-organization of Support Division staff and supervisors, allowing for various functions to be combined and provide opportunities to streamline services.
 - Although the re-organization will result in the deletion of positions and functions, current staff will be cross-trained to deal with various additional responsibilities. Instructional shortfall may result in increased use of shift training instructors.
 - Master Fire Plan speaks to organizational realignment to improve competencies, professional development and succession planning.

2. The TFS budget proposes the deletion of staff within the Operations Division including:
 - the closure of Fire Station #424 resulting in the deletion of 20.7 positions (this has been recommended through various studies since 1987 as well as the 2007 Master Fire Plan.)
 - the removal of Pumper 413 from service which will result in the deletion of 20.7 positions.
 - the deletion of staff within the Operations Division (deletion of positions will result in the removal of three additional vehicles from service and will require the reallocation of staff across other vehicles in the system to ensure remaining vehicles continue to be in service.)
 - It is anticipated that there will be a marginal increase in response times as a result of the deletions. Removal of secondary vehicles in fire stations will increase the number of runs for the remaining vehicle, as well as for vehicles in adjacent fire halls.
 - New station developments currently in the capital plan were planned to be staffed through the reallocation of existing vehicles, which may no longer be possible. These capital projects will be resubmitted in the 2014 budget process to include the operational impact of a vehicle and appropriate staffing.
 - Master Fire Plan identified the heavy vehicle complement as 128 vehicles with a recommendation to staff according to NFPA targets. The minimum staffing targets included the recommendation for an increase in 24 staff in the Operations Division to upstaff aerial crews in the downtown core. In 2012, TFS amended its dispatch protocols to support aerial vehicle by dispatching an additional vehicle to fire and fire alarm calls.

3. The TFS budget proposes the elimination of one District Chief in North Command resulting in the tasks and responsibilities currently assigned to these positions being transferred to the other three District Chiefs in North Command.

- The projected increase in call volumes for the other District Chiefs within North Command will bring up call volume levels at the same level as some of the busier District Chiefs within the City.
 - The current City-wide average for the First Chief dispatch to on-scene is 6 minutes and 53 seconds. The impact of this reduction will increase the City-wide on-scene average response time by 12 seconds with the direct impact for North Command increasing by 26 seconds.
 - Master Fire Plan is silent on the elimination of specific districts.
4. The TFS budget proposes to convert four Fire Fighting Captain positions assigned to the Fire Boat to four Fire Cause Investigator Positions. This reduction will make better use of Fire Services' existing staff resources.
- Master Fire Plan speaks to organizational realignment to improve competencies, professional development and succession planning.
 - Master Fire Plan recommendations 10 and 11 regarding Fire Prevention and Public Education include increasing the number of Fire Prevention Inspectors and Public Educators/request additional staffing of one Captain and five investigators in connection with the Fire Cause Determination project.

Prepared by: Toni Vigna, Division Chief, 416-338-9550, tvigna@toronto.ca

Further information: Debbie Higgins, Deputy Chief, 416-338-9055, dhiggin@toronto.ca

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