



AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Fire Services – Improving the Administration and Effectiveness of Firefighter Training and Recruitment

Date:	September 16, 2013
To:	Audit Committee
From:	Auditor General
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The Auditor General's Work Plan included an operational review of Toronto Fire Services. Specifically, the objective of this audit was to review training activities at Toronto Fire Services in order to identify opportunities for improving the management, administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment programs.

The review identified a number of issues that highlight the need for a multi-year strategic plan to help guide Toronto Fire Services in managing training and recruitment resources more effectively and efficiently, while meeting its financial, operational, and legal obligations. Opportunities for improvement include the following:

- Developing a multi-year strategic plan for training
- Evaluating performance through the development of key performance indicators
- Enhancing operational efficiencies in training programs to reduce opportunity costs
- Improving compliance with training requirements, policies and procedures
- Improving training records management and functionality of the electronic learning management system

This report contains 32 recommendations along with a management response to each of the recommendations. The implementation of these recommendations has the potential to improve the overall administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment processes at Toronto Fire Services.

Although recommendations in this report focus on improving administration and effectiveness over firefighter training and recruitment, certain recommendations included in this report may be relevant to the City's Agencies and Corporations and should be reviewed, evaluated and implemented as deemed appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Auditor General recommends that:

1. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to update and finalize the multi-year Fire Master Plan in a timely manner, ensuring the plan addresses firefighter training and recruitment issues. The plan be flexible to accommodate Toronto Fire Services' service priorities and changing workforce.
2. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that all of the issues identified in this report are incorporated into the updated Fire Master Plan where applicable.
3. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to take the necessary steps to evaluate the goals and activities of the Professional Development and Training Division. Such steps should include but not be limited to:
 - a. Developing and using relevant and consistent key performance indicators that are aligned with the strategic goals of the Fire Master Plan;
 - b. Determining the reporting requirements of training goals and activities, such as content, frequency, and recipients; and
 - c. Ensuring necessary tools and information for measuring, monitoring and reporting activities consistently are available.
4. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that diversity efforts are aligned with service priorities, and specific goals and action plans be incorporated into the Fire Master Plan.
5. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to evaluate Toronto Fire Services' diversity initiatives to determine whether these programs are successful in meeting Toronto Fire Services' diversity goals and are cost-effective. Additionally, the Centennial College partnership agreement be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with all terms and conditions of the agreement, including insurance policy requirements.
6. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review the recruit training program for operational efficiencies that can yield opportunity cost savings, while, at the same time, meet Divisional diversity goals. The review should include, but not be limited to:

- a. Ensuring recruits are placed in the training program reflecting their qualifications; and
 - b. Evaluating the feasibility of eliminating the general stream by adding the Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training Program Certificate as a minimum recruitment requirement.
7. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure mandatory training courses are conducted for the full amount of time as prescribed in the Collective Agreement. Such time requirements and expectations be communicated to all staff, including all training staff and firefighters.
8. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review all mandatory training course lesson plans and daily agendas to ensure training-related activities and time requirements are accurately reflected and updated accordingly.
9. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, together with Professional Development and Training and Operations Division Chiefs, to conduct a review into the underlying reasons for the lack of instructor availability, and evaluate ways to address those reasons.
10. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that corrective action be taken, and documented, for cancelled in-service training when determined to be required. Additionally, the commitment to minimizing in-service training cancellations be communicated to all staff.
11. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that trainer-facilitators are certified by the Ontario Fire College, proper records are maintained, and documentation is submitted to the Ontario Fire College when required.
12. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that all shift training instructors are qualified and trained for the delivery of programs in accordance with internal standard operating guidelines and the Collective Agreement. Further, management take further steps to identify and formalize specialty training requirements. In addition, all qualification records be standardized and adequately maintained.
13. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that:
 - a. Lesson plans align with the course syllabus;
 - b. Lesson plans exist for every course in the program; and
 - c. Lesson plans are updated on a regular basis.

14. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to reassess the overall necessity of Ontario Fire Marshall exams. If exams are determined to be required, to take the necessary steps to ensure exam eligibility requirements are met. Such steps should include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Ensuring each recruit is evaluated on final performance tests by a certified trainer-facilitator;
 - b. Ensuring required supporting documentation is completed, signed off, and maintained on file; and
 - c. Giving consideration to obtaining and reviewing exam results to identify opportunities for training program improvement.
15. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure mandatory online training is completed on a timely basis. When firefighters fail to complete mandatory online training requirements, appropriate corrective action be taken. Any such corrective actions be incorporated into the standard operating guideline, and reiterated in staff communications.
16. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, in consultation with appropriate Professional Development and Training Division and Operations Division staff, to review the progress reporting process, and determine the appropriate types, frequency and content of reports needed to ensure mandatory online training requirements are met. Further, the standard operating guideline be updated accordingly.
17. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure regular progress reports coincide with training due dates and be provided to appropriate staff on a timely basis. Progress reports be stored and accessible to appropriate staff.
18. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure requirements for the Toronto Fire Services' Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Certification Program are complied with on a timely basis, and corrective action be taken where instances of non-compliance are identified.
19. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to formalize and retain all individual firefighter annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus certification records to ensure that successful completion of the annual certification program is verifiable.
20. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review the Toronto Fire Services' Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Certification Program to ensure all standards and requirements are incorporated. Any changes to the program be communicated to and understood by all staff. The program as outlined in the standard operating guideline be updated accordingly.

21. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a process to ensure opportunities for course feedback are made available to course participants, and the feedback reviewed by management. The Division Chief, Professional Development and Training, or designate, to review all feedback and to ensure suggestions are considered and where appropriate incorporated into future training courses.
22. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to undertake a detailed review of National Fire Protection Agency's standard on Recommended Practices for Fire Service Training Reports and Records to ensure Toronto Fire Services' standard operating guidelines are aligned with recommended practices, where appropriate, and standard operating guidelines are updated accordingly.
23. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to consult the City's Human Resources Division, the Ontario Fire Marshal, and other municipal fire services and consider whether Toronto Fire Services can benefit from evaluation methodologies being used elsewhere.
24. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, in consultation with appropriate Professional Development and Training staff, to review and update all standard operating guidelines that relate to training processes and procedures, and ensure that current practices and requirements are accurately and appropriately documented. Any updated guidelines be communicated to all staff in a timely manner.
25. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a records management policy. The policy should include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Ensuring standard operating guidelines dealing with records management practices and procedures are consistent and align with City policies; and
 - b. Ensuring standard operating guidelines are complied with, such as obtaining and maintaining all required documentation on file.
26. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a quality assurance process to verify the completeness, accuracy, and consistency of training records and ensure internal guidelines are followed.
27. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure automatic external defibrillator certification documents are maintained appropriately, and filed in an orderly and timely manner, and the electronic record be updated at the same time.

28. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that external training requests are approved before enrolment.
29. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that shift training instructors submit payment requests on a timely basis. Further steps be taken to ensure that payments are accurately processed and supporting documentation is properly maintained.
30. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to define the information and reporting needs of the Professional Development and Training Division and, in consultation with Information and Technology Division, assess the merits and feasibility of implementing system enhancements to improve functionality in order to meet those needs.
31. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure controls are implemented that provide for timely, complete, and accurate data entry. Further, controls should include a data entry verification process.
32. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to consider the use of integrated technology devices, such as barcode scanners, to improve the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of training attendance records.

Financial Impact

The implementation of recommendations in this report has the potential to improve the administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment processes at Toronto Fire Services. The extent of any resources required or potential cost savings resulting from implementing the recommendations in this report is not determinable at this time.

DECISION HISTORY

An operational review of Toronto Fire Services was included in the Auditor General's 2012 Work Plan. The focus of the review was expected to be Fire Services fleet acquisition, utilization and maintenance.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/au/bgrd/backgroundfile-42374.pdf>

A cross-corporate service efficiency review of fleet management, which included Toronto Fire Services, was completed on September 19, 2011. The key findings of the review, including the recommendation to consolidate fleet functions from other City Divisions/Agencies (Police, Fire, EMS, TTC (non-revenue fleet) with Fleet Services Division, were reported to Budget Committee at its meeting of January 9, 2012.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.BU21.1>

The audit work plan is intended to be flexible and is subject to amendment based on emerging issues or new developments. In light of the service efficiency review of fleet

management, the Auditor General revised the project description to include a review of firefighter training and recruitment at Toronto Fire Services.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

As the City's only all hazards response agency, Toronto Fire Services (TFS) is tasked with mitigating emergency incidents while ensuring reduced risk to residents, life and property. Success in fulfilling this mandate is based on the level of firefighter preparedness in reacting to emergency incidents. Therefore, the City's 2,700 firefighters are trained in a wide range of knowledge and skills, including basic recruit training, specialized rescue, emergency medical services and incident management.

COMMENTS

The Auditor General's Work Plan included an operational review of TFS. The main objective of this audit was to review training activities at TFS in order to identify opportunities for improving the management, administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment programs.

This report contains 32 recommendations along with a management response to each of the recommendations. The implementation of these recommendations has the potential to improve the overall administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment processes at TFS.

The audit report entitled "Improving the Administration and Effectiveness of Firefighter Training and Recruitment" is attached as Appendix 1. Management's response to each of the recommendations contained in the report is attached as Appendix 2.

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SIGNATURE

Jeff Griffiths, Auditor General

12-FSD-01

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Toronto Fire Services - Improving the Administration and Effectiveness of Firefighter Training and Recruitment

Appendix 2: Management's Response to the Auditor General's Review of Toronto Fire Services - Improving the Administration and Effectiveness of Firefighter Training and Recruitment

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

**Toronto Fire Services
Improving the Administration and
Effectiveness of Firefighter Training and
Recruitment**

July 5, 2013

Jeffrey Griffiths, CPA, CA, CFE
Auditor General



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Auditor General's 2012 Audit Work Plan included an operational review of Toronto Fire Services (TFS). Specifically, the review focused on the administration and effectiveness of Toronto Fire Services' firefighter training and recruitment programs.

Toronto Fire Services is the largest fire service in Canada and has approximately 2,700 firefighters

TFS is the largest fire service in Canada and the fifth largest in North America. As the City's only all hazards response agency, TFS is tasked with mitigating emergency incidents while ensuring reduced risk to residents, life and property. Success in fulfilling this mandate is based on the level of firefighter preparedness in reacting to emergency incidents.

TFS' 2012 operating budget of \$369.8 million included an allocation of \$7.2 million to the Professional Development and Training Division which is responsible for the training of approximately 2,700 firefighters.

Training is fundamental

Firefighters are trained in a wide range of knowledge and skills, including basic recruit training, specialized rescue, emergency medical services and incident management. Training is fundamental to staff development, but ongoing training poses a constraint on scheduled work hours for firefighters because they are not available to perform firefighting or other operational duties while in training.

Objective of the audit

The main objective of this audit was to review Toronto Fire Services' firefighter training and recruitment activities in order to identify opportunities for improving the management, administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment programs. The audit covered the period from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2012.

Certain recommendations included in this report may be relevant to the City's Agencies and Corporations and should be reviewed, evaluated and implemented as deemed appropriate.

Issues identified in previous Auditor General reports

The Auditor General previously issued two other reports related to training services delivered by the Toronto Police Service in 2006 and by the Information and Technology Division in 2009. Certain issues in those reports such as the use of performance indicators, measuring the effectiveness of training programs, and ensuring divisional training needs are met also appear in this report.

Key findings

Our key findings and recommendations are highlighted as follows:

A Strategic Plan Helps Ensure Efficiency and Effectiveness

Complex training issues require a multi-year strategic plan

Training is essential for effective and responsive firefighting. Strategic planning helps to ensure training is relevant, effective, and properly delivered in a consistent and cost-effective manner.

The Toronto Fire Services' Fire Master Plan was last updated in 2007. The Fire Master Plan serves as a comprehensive strategic planning framework. The plan was a five-year plan and expired in 2011. Many of the issues identified in the balance of this report highlight the need to update the provisions of the Fire Master Plan that relate to the professional development and training of firefighters.

Demonstrate Accountability for Training and Recruitment

Training-specific key performance indicators should be developed and monitored

Key performance indicators measure the implementation and effectiveness of the strategic plan. TFS does not currently use such metrics to measure how well it is achieving training-related goals and activities. By developing and monitoring appropriate key metrics related to training, TFS could measure and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of training and recruitment programs.

Diversity efforts should align with service priorities and should be evaluated

TFS has engaged in a number of initiatives aimed at promoting and increasing workforce diversity. In order to demonstrate alignment of TFS diversity efforts and service priorities, specific goals and action plans should be incorporated into the strategic plan. Furthermore, diversity initiatives should be evaluated to determine whether TFS has moved closer to achieving its diversity goals, whether initiatives are cost-effective, and whether modifications are required.

Enhance Operational Efficiencies for Potential Cost Savings

Opportunity cost of firefighter training is the availability of firefighters for operational duties

Training is fundamental to the development of staff, but the time spent on training must be balanced against financial and opportunity costs. The opportunity costs for TFS is the impact of firefighter training on the availability of firefighters for day-to-day operational duties. Improving the operational efficiency of training programs could yield opportunity cost savings.

Improve Compliance with Training Requirements and Policies and Procedures

Instances of non-compliance with OFM requirements and TFS policies and procedures

TFS follows the Ontario Fire Marshall recruit curriculum and must therefore meet certain requirements. Additionally, TFS has many standard operating guidelines that help ensure that other training standards are met. We found instances where TFS could not demonstrate compliance with certain requirements or internal policies and procedures.

Strengthen Administrative Practices

Record-keeping practices need improvement

Adequate documentation and records provide a reliable and verifiable source of evidence and should be properly maintained. We noted many instances where good record-keeping practices were not followed, such as incomplete attendance records and certification documents, lack of required recruit hiring and training documents, and inadequate storage and security of files. A records management policy should be developed and implemented.

Improve Information Systems To Support Monitoring and Reporting

Improvements to electronic learning management system is needed

There are opportunities to improve the functionality of the existing electronic learning management system and to strengthen controls over data entry in order to facilitate the information and reporting needs of the Professional Development and Training Division.

Conclusion

This report presents the results of our review of Toronto Fire Services. Many of the issues identified throughout this review highlight the need for a multi-year strategic plan that will help guide Toronto Fire Services in managing resources more effectively and efficiently, while meeting its financial, operational, and legal obligations.

This report contains 32 recommendations. Implementation of the recommendations in this report have the potential to improve the administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment processes at Toronto Fire Services.

BACKGROUND

Toronto Fire Services is the largest fire service in Canada

Toronto Fire Services (TFS) is the largest fire service in Canada and the fifth largest in North America. As the City's only all hazards response agency, TFS is tasked with mitigating emergency incidents while ensuring reduced risk to residents, life and property. Success in fulfilling this mandate is based on the level of firefighter preparedness in reacting to emergency incidents.

Firefighter training is required by law

TFS is governed by the Ontario Fire Code and the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA) for the Province of Ontario to provide the delivery of fire protection services, which includes firefighter training.

Professional development is a core value

Toronto Fire Services' core values regarding professional development is as follows:

- *“Commitment to continually expand the abilities of personnel.*
- *Funding and time available for professional, academic and practical courses.*
- *Management training before and after promotion.*
- *Career planning and similar expanded services.*
- *Encouragement and nurturing of employees.”*

\$7.2 million budget allocated for the training of 2,700 firefighters

TFS' 2012 operating budget of \$369.8 million included an allocation of \$7.2 million to the Professional Development and Training Division. The Division is responsible for the training of approximately 2,700 firefighters involved in the provision of fire protection, rescue and emergency services.

Five training sections

At the time of our audit, the Professional Development and Training Division consisted of the Division Chief, five District Chiefs and approximately 35 training captains. The training sections included:

1. Recruit Induction
2. Operations
3. Special Operations
4. Emergency Medical Services
5. Officer Development

Firefighters are trained in a wide range of knowledge and skills

Firefighters are trained in a wide range of knowledge and skills including basic recruit training, specialized rescue, emergency medical services and incident management. Training is delivered through practical in-classroom sessions, online courses, and in-station drills. Firefighters may also attend other training courses or programs provided by external parties.

Shift training instructors supplement training capacity

Shift training instructors are used to supplement the Division's training capacity. Shift training instructors are on-duty firefighters qualified to provide training through a process set out in the Collective Agreement.

Electronic training records are maintained in CourseMill

The Division is also responsible for maintaining firefighter training records in CourseMill, the City's electronic learning management system.

AUDIT OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Auditor General's 2012 Work Plan

The Auditor General's 2012 Audit Work Plan included an operational review of Toronto Fire Services. Specifically, the audit focused on firefighter training and recruitment programs. The audit covered the period from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2012.

Audit objective

The objective of this audit was to review training activities at Toronto Fire Services in order to identify opportunities for improving the management, administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment programs.

The audit included a review of the following areas:

- training and recruitment of new firefighters
- ongoing professional development and training
- business procedures for identifying training needs, monitoring attendance, evaluating training and ensuring trainers are qualified
- compliance with internal policies, standards and/or legislation
- adequacy of training records information management.

This review did not include an evaluation of the content of firefighter training courses delivered by the Division.

Audit methodology

Our audit methodology included the following:

- review of the then-current Collective Agreement (January 1, 2007 –December 31, 2009)
- review of TFS 2011 Annual Report and TFS 2007 Fire Master Plan
- review of Pomax Ltd., “A Service and Organizational Study of Toronto’s Emergency Medical Services” final report dated June 2013
- review of relevant TFS standard operating guidelines and Fire Chief Communiqués
- review of relevant legislation and policies, including National Fire Protection Agency codes and standards
- review and analysis of financial and operational data of the Professional Development and Training Division
- examination of selected training and recruitment records
- analyses of records and reports from the electronic learning management system, CourseMill

- interviews with TFS staff and other City staff
- site visits to training facilities and attendance at selected training courses
- evaluation of management controls and practices
- surveys of other municipal fire departments in Ontario, Canada and the United States.

Issues identified in previous Auditor General reports

The Auditor General previously issued two other reports related to training services delivered by the Toronto Police Service in 2006 and by the Information and Technology Division in 2009. Certain issues in those reports such as the use of performance standards, measuring the effectiveness of training programs, and ensuring divisional training needs are met also appear in this report. This current audit has identified some of the same issues with respect to administration and effectiveness of training and recruitment programs at TFS.

Compliance with generally accepted government auditing standards

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

AUDIT RESULTS

A. DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TRAINING

A.1. A Strategic Plan Helps Ensure Efficiency and Effectiveness

Training is essential for effective and responsive firefighting. Strategic planning helps to ensure training is relevant, effective, and properly delivered in a consistent and cost-effective manner.

***Fire Master Plan
expired in 2011***

The Toronto Fire Services' (TFS) Fire Master Plan was last updated in 2007. The Fire Master Plan serves as a comprehensive strategic planning framework to guide policy, organizational, capital and operational decisions. The plan was a five-year plan and expired at the end of 2011.

***Issues identified
highlight the need
for multi-year
planning***

Many of the issues identified in the balance of this report highlight the need to update the provisions of the Fire Master Plan that relate to the professional development and training of firefighters.

Given the complexity of scheduling firefighter training around service priorities, the multitude of training topics, and ongoing training needs arising from emerging issues, TFS needs a multi-year strategic plan to maximize the use of available resources and develop efficiencies in the delivery of firefighter training and recruitment programs.

Recommendations:

- 1. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to update and finalize the multi-year Fire Master Plan in a timely manner, ensuring the plan addresses firefighter training and recruitment issues. The plan be flexible to accommodate Toronto Fire Services' service priorities and changing workforce.**
- 2. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that all of the issues identified in this report are incorporated into the updated Fire Master Plan where applicable.**

B. DEMONSTRATE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT

B.1. Training-Specific Key Performance Indicators Should Be Developed and Monitored

Training-specific metrics are not used

Key performance indicators measure the implementation and effectiveness of the strategic plan. TFS does not currently use such metrics to measure how well it is achieving training-related goals and activities. Recording and tracking of training activities is of minimal value if the information is not used by management as a tool to monitor and evaluate the amount of time and costs spent on different facets of the training program.

Metrics help demonstrate accountability for an efficient and effective program

By developing and monitoring relevant key performance indicators related to training, TFS could measure the efficiency and effectiveness of training and recruitment programs and demonstrate its commitment to firefighter training. Examples of relevant key metrics include the average annual training hours per firefighter, the total number of courses delivered, and overall course completion rates.

Additionally, the National Fire Protection Agency's Codes and Standards on Recommended Practices for Fire Service Training Reports and Records (NFPA 1401) recommends an annual report of all activities of the training division be prepared, describing accomplishments during the year, restating the goals and objectives of the division, and describing training plans for the upcoming year.

Current annual reporting of training activities and accomplishments is minimal

Although Professional Development and Training Division activities are reported in the TFS Annual Report, it is done only at a high level. Detailed operational results including response times and call response classifications are reported, however no detailed statistical training-related information is currently provided. If training-specific key performance indicators are developed and used, TFS could then report training activities and accomplishments in measurable terms.

Recommendation:

- 3. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to take the necessary steps to evaluate the goals and activities of the Professional Development and Training Division. Such steps should include but not be limited to:**
 - a. Developing and using relevant and consistent key performance indicators that are aligned with the strategic goals of the Fire Master Plan;**
 - b. Determining the reporting requirements of training goals and activities, such as content, frequency, and recipients; and**
 - c. Ensuring necessary tools and information for measuring, monitoring and reporting activities consistently are available.**

B.2. TFS Diversity Initiatives Should Be Evaluated

Commitment to diversity should be reflected in the strategic plan

According to management TFS has been engaged in a number of initiatives over the years aimed at promoting and increasing workforce diversity. The 2007 Fire Master Plan did not identify specific diversity goals and activities. In order to demonstrate alignment of TFS diversity efforts and service priorities, specific goals and action plans should be incorporated in the strategic plan. Furthermore, diversity initiatives should be evaluated to determine if goals are being met.

Partnership with Centennial College aims to increase the number of diverse recruits at TFS

For example, TFS received City Council approval in 2010 to enter into a partnership agreement with the Centennial College of Applied Arts & Technology ("Centennial College") to provide training services and resources to Centennial College for its Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training curriculum. The program is designed to promote diversity in student enrolment and in future firefighting positions within TFS. The agreement requires that each class has at least 65 per cent diversity enrolment, which includes visible minorities, females, and Aboriginal persons.

In accordance with the agreement, Centennial College must establish a bursary fund that will reduce tuition costs to help overcome financial barriers that some diverse candidates may face.

This five-year agreement is based on full cost recovery, and therefore has no net impact on the Division's budget. Centennial College pays TFS for its staffing, facilities usage and materials costs associated with delivering the program in accordance with the amounts set out in the agreement.

TFS recognized internationally for this partnership

In recognition of this partnership, TFS received the 2011 International Tony Pini Award for Diversity and Inclusion in the Fire Service for identifying and addressing diversity barriers in the Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training Program.

Success of the program should now be evaluated

The partnership with Centennial College is now in its third year. TFS should perform an in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in order to determine whether the partnership has moved TFS closer to achieving its diversity goals, whether it is cost-effective, and whether modifications are required.

Non-compliance with insurance policy requirement

Additionally, the agreement requires Centennial College to provide and maintain liability insurance coverage, and to include TFS as an additional insured on the policy. Our review of the insurance policy found that TFS was not listed as an additional insured on the current insurance policy. In order to protect the City from potential liability claims, TFS should ensure that Centennial College's insurance coverage meets the requirements of the partnership agreement.

Recommendations:

- 4. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that diversity efforts are aligned with service priorities, and specific goals and action plans be incorporated into the Fire Master Plan.**

5. **City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to evaluate Toronto Fire Services' diversity initiatives to determine whether these programs are successful in meeting Toronto Fire Services' diversity goals and are cost-effective. Additionally, the Centennial College partnership agreement be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with all terms and conditions of the agreement, including insurance policy requirements.**

C. ENHANCE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES FOR POTENTIAL COST SAVINGS

Training is fundamental to the development of staff, but the time spent on training must be balanced against financial and opportunity costs. The opportunity costs for any fire service is the impact of firefighter training on the availability of firefighters for day-to-day operational duties. Improving operational efficiency of training programs could yield opportunity cost savings.

C.1. Improving Cost-Effectiveness of Recruit Training Programs While Achieving Diversity Goals

Two-stream recruitment process used to promote diversity

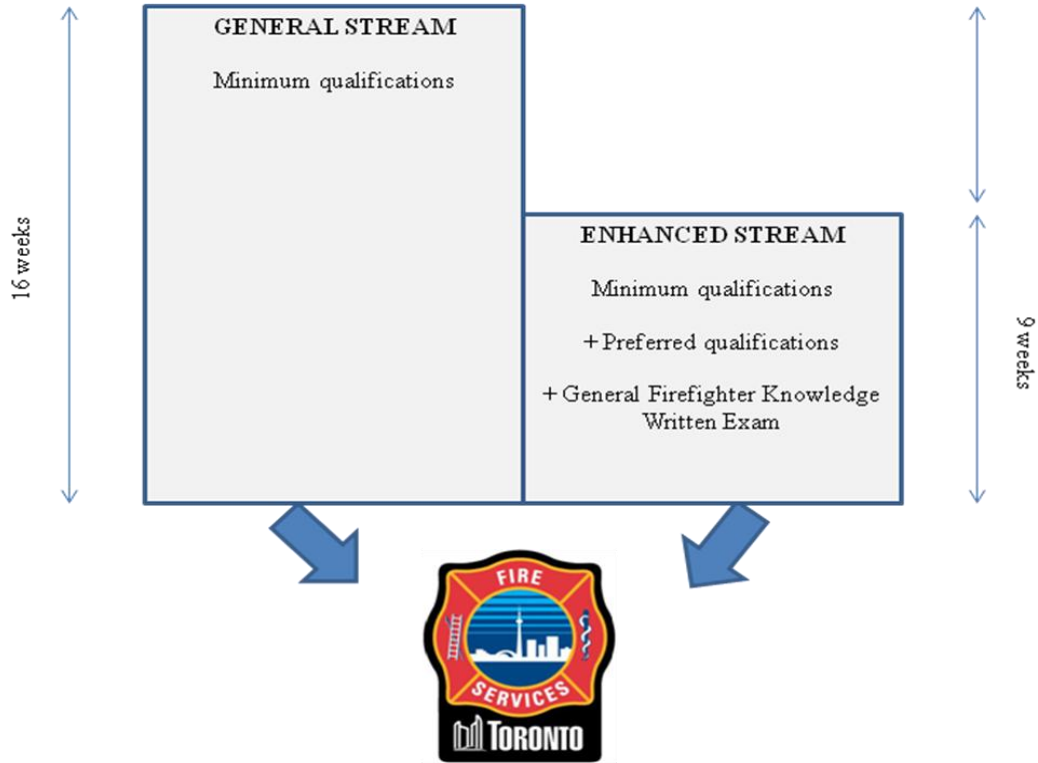
TFS has a two-stream recruitment process that reflects its commitment to achieving greater diversity in its workforce. This process aims to increase the opportunity for candidates who meet the minimum requirements to be eligible for consideration through a general stream hiring pool. Candidates having additional preferred qualifications at the time of application, such as the Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training Program Certificate, and who are successful on the internal General Firefighter Knowledge Written Examination, are placed in an enhanced stream hiring pool.

Enhanced stream training is shorter than general stream training

Once hired, new firefighters attend a TFS recruit training program. The duration of the training program is dependent on the stream. The general stream training program is approximately 16 weeks long, compared to a nine-week training program for the enhanced stream.

Upon graduation from the training program, recruits become firefighters and are placed in fire stations across the City. The eligibility requirements and duration of the two-stream recruit training program are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Eligibility requirements and duration of the TFS two-stream recruit training program



Many general stream recruits had the preferred qualifications

Recruits are not always placed in the training program that best reflects their qualifications. The results of our review indicate that many of the 2011 and 2012 general stream recruits possessed preferred qualifications and should have been placed in the enhanced stream.

Potential opportunity cost savings and efficiencies

Opportunity costs of recruits with preferred qualifications taking the longer general stream training program was approximately \$70,000 in 2011 and \$182,000 in 2012. If recruits are placed in the appropriate training program, potential cost savings and efficiencies may be possible, as an earlier graduation results in an earlier job start.

Balancing cost-efficiency and diversity is a challenge

Given the time and costs associated with recruit training, TFS is faced with the challenge of developing a coordinated and cost-effective recruitment and training program that is reflective of all recruit qualifications while meeting its commitment to workforce diversity.

Recommendation:

- 6. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review the recruit training program for operational efficiencies that can yield opportunity cost savings, while, at the same time, meet Divisional diversity goals. The review should include, but not be limited to:**
 - a. Ensuring recruits are placed in the training program reflecting their qualifications; and**
 - b. Evaluating the feasibility of eliminating the general stream by adding the Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training Program Certificate as a minimum recruitment requirement.**

C.2. Potential Lost Productivity During Mandatory Training

Lost productivity when courses are delivered for fewer hours than required

According to the Collective Agreement, firefighters may be required to move from their regular 24-hour shift schedule to attend “mandatory training” courses. Mandatory training is conducted over either two consecutive 12-hour day shifts, or three consecutive eight-hour day shifts, which are equivalent to one 24-hour shift otherwise worked. This arrangement allows firefighters to be fully committed to training during that time. Any courses delivered for fewer hours than the required 24 hours results in lost productivity.

Mandatory training courses appeared shorter than required

We were unable to verify whether the 2011 and 2012 mandatory training courses were conducted for the full amount of time required. Based on our review of lesson plans and daily agendas, two-day mandatory training courses appeared to consist of training-related activities conducted over an average of 17 hours, which is seven fewer hours than the 24 hours required.

4,700 hours of training not accounted for

We estimate that the potential amount of lost productivity due to shortened training hours was approximately 4,700 hours, at a cost of approximately \$170,000 per year.

Recommendations:

- 7. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure mandatory training courses are conducted for the full amount of time as prescribed in the Collective Agreement. Such time requirements and expectations be communicated to all staff, including all training staff and firefighters.**
- 8. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review all mandatory training course lesson plans and daily agendas to ensure training-related activities and time requirements are accurately reflected and updated accordingly.**

C.3. Cancellations of In-Service Training Should Be Minimized

Operational needs come first

In-service training is attended by a crew of on-duty firefighters. Being on-duty means that the crew's first priority is to attend to operational needs when called, such as a fire alarm.

In-service training may be cancelled for a variety of reasons

As a result, cancellations of in-service training can occur from time to time. Cancellations may also occur for reasons beyond TFS' control, such as weather conditions or vehicle mechanical issues. In other cases, in-service training may be cancelled due to lack of available instructors.

In early 2011, TFS recognized that in-service training was being cancelled too frequently and took steps to identify training, scheduling, and resource issues, by tracking the reported reasons for each cancellation occurrence.

High frequency of cancellations due to lack of instructor availability

As expected, in-service training was most often cancelled due to operational needs. However, there was also a high frequency of cancellations due to the unavailability of instructors. In order to ensure the efficient and effective use of time and resources, in-service training cancellations should be minimized where possible.

Recommendations:

- 9. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, together with Professional Development and Training and Operations Division Chiefs, to conduct a review into the underlying reasons for the lack of instructor availability, and evaluate ways to address those reasons.**
- 10. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that corrective action be taken, and documented, for cancelled in-service training when determined to be required. Additionally, the commitment to minimizing in-service training cancellations be communicated to all staff.**

D. IMPROVE COMPLIANCE WITH TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

D.1. Quality of Trainers Should Be Verifiable

Recruit Trainers-Facilitators Were Not Certified

Recruit trainers-facilitators must be certified and actively involved in the recruit training program

TFS follows the Ontario Fire Marshal (OFM) training curriculum which requires recruit trainer-facilitators to be certified by the Ontario Fire College (OFC). Additionally, the OFM requires fire departments to submit documentation to the OFC every two years as evidence that trainer-facilitators are actively involved in the program.

TFS did not comply with OFM requirements

Our review found that 10 of the 13 trainer-facilitators delivering training in 2012 were not certified by OFC. In addition, we were not able to confirm whether the certified trainer-facilitators were actively involved in the program. The last confirmation letter to the OFC was provided in 2008.

We have been advised that the OFM is taking steps to revise the training curriculum, which will move towards National Fire Protection Agency standards and may result in changes to certain training-related requirements, including the certification of trainer-facilitators. Depending on the nature and timing of any changes, consideration should be given to addressing this compliance issue.

Recommendation:

11. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that trainer-facilitators are certified by the Ontario Fire College, proper records are maintained, and documentation is submitted to the Ontario Fire College when required.

Completion of Shift Training Instructor Qualification Could Not be Confirmed

Shift training instructors assist with training while on duty

One of the challenges facing the Professional Development and Training Division is having the instructional capacity to train 2,700 firefighters. On-duty shift training instructors (STIs) are used to assist the Division in delivering firefighter instruction and training when required.

Train the trainer courses are mandatory

In order to become a qualified STI, mandatory train-the-trainer courses must be completed, including “Occupational Health and Safety Competent Supervisor”, “Techniques of Instruction (Instructional Strategies)”, and any specialty training as required.

Not all required training could be confirmed

While our review confirmed that the “Occupational Health and Safety Competent Supervisor” and “Instructional Strategies” courses were completed, we were not able to confirm whether mandatory specialty training was completed. Training completion records were not found in the electronic learning management system and paper records could not be located.

Recommendation:

12. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that all shift training instructors are qualified and trained for the delivery of programs in accordance with internal standard operating guidelines and the Collective Agreement. Further, management take further steps to identify and formalize specialty training requirements. In addition, all qualification records be standardized and adequately maintained.

D.2. Ensuring Training Requirements Are Met

Syllabus and Lesson Plans Should Be Reviewed

The TFS recruit training program is based on the Ontario Fire Marshall curriculum, and consists of practical and theoretical components of firefighter training.

Program syllabus and lesson plans ensure adequacy of TFS recruit training

To ensure recruits receive all required training consistently and efficiently, TFS developed a syllabus and corresponding lesson plans for each recruit class. The syllabus is an outline of courses covering firefighter roles and responsibilities. Lesson plans are detailed road maps for each course, with learning objectives that align with the content of the syllabus.

Documents were incomplete, inaccurate and outdated

Our review of the 2012 syllabus and corresponding lesson plans found that these documents were incomplete, inaccurate and outdated. For example:

- Lesson plans were missing in some cases
- Training hours documented in the syllabus compared to the lesson plans were not consistent
- Some training topics were grouped together in the syllabus, making it difficult to compare time requirements identified in lesson plans
- Lesson plans have not been updated since 2008

Recommendation:

- 13. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that:**
- a. Lesson plans align with the course syllabus;**
 - b. Lesson plans exist for every course in the program; and**
 - c. Lesson plans are updated on a regular basis.**

Necessity of the OFM Exam Should be Reassessed

Certification recognizes the completion of all requirements and exams

In Ontario, the Ontario Fire Marshall (OFM) is the provincial certifying body for firefighters. OFM certification formally acknowledges that a firefighter meets recognized job performance standards, training, and experience requirements as approved by OFM. In order to obtain OFM certification, candidates must successfully complete training program requirements and the OFM exams.

TFS does not require OFM certification

Obtaining the OFM certification is not a mandatory condition for employment. As a result, TFS does not follow up on exam results.

Exams appear unnecessary if results are not followed up

Given that TFS firefighters are not required to pass OFM exams, recruit exams appears unnecessary if results are not followed up. Knowing exam results could be valuable to both individual recruits and TFS. For example, results may be analyzed to assist TFS in identifying training gaps on an individual basis, or evaluating the recruit training program.

In order to be eligible to write the OFM exams, recruits must complete the recruit training program and final performance tests must be signed off by a certified trainer-facilitator.

Exam eligibility requirements were not met

Final 2011 and 2012 recruit performance tests reviewed were either not completed or not signed off. Proper documentation is required in order to demonstrate compliance with OFM requirements.

Recommendation:

- 14. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to reassess the overall necessity of Ontario Fire Marshall exams. If exams are determined to be required, to take the necessary steps to ensure exam eligibility requirements are met. Such steps should include, but not be limited to:**
- a. Ensuring each recruit is evaluated on final performance tests by a certified trainer-facilitator;**
 - b. Ensuring required supporting documentation is completed, signed off, and maintained on file; and**
 - c. Giving consideration to obtaining and reviewing exam results to identify opportunities for training program improvement.**

Online Training Was Not Completed on a Timely Basis

TFS uses online training

The standard operating guideline for online training requires all firefighters to meet mandatory online training requirements, which include completion of both monthly and quarterly online training courses by assigned due dates. These requirements are communicated monthly.

Online training was incomplete

Online training courses we reviewed were not completed on a timely basis. On average, records showed that only 54 per cent of firefighters completed online training by assigned due dates.

Frequency and content of progress reports should be clearly defined

Additionally, regular progress reports are required for monitoring the completion of online training requirements. However, the frequency and content of progress reporting is not clearly defined in the standard operating guideline for online training. We found that reporting did not necessarily coincide with online training due dates.

System reports can be used more effectively for progress monitoring

A system-generated daily course status report is available that could be an effective tool for monitoring and analyzing course completion progress over time. This report is seldom used. Furthermore, the system currently does not automatically archive this report or allow this report to be reproduced at a later date.

Recommendations:

- 15. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure mandatory online training is completed on a timely basis. When firefighters fail to complete mandatory online training requirements, appropriate corrective action be taken. Any such corrective actions be incorporated into the standard operating guideline, and reiterated in staff communications.**
- 16. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, in consultation with appropriate Professional Development and Training Division and Operations Division staff, to review the progress reporting process, and determine the appropriate types, frequency and content of reports needed to ensure mandatory online training requirements are met. Further, the standard operating guideline be updated accordingly.**
- 17. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure regular progress reports coincide with training due dates and be provided to appropriate staff on a timely basis. Progress reports be stored and accessible to appropriate staff.**

The TFS Annual SCBA Certification Process Has Not Been Complied With

All firefighters must complete annual SCBA certification

All firefighters are required to meet the criteria of the TFS Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Certification Program. The program consists of an online theory course and an in-station practical session, which must be completed by March 1 of each calendar year. As well, a secondary training course to review and practice certain other SCBA-related survival skills must be completed by the end of the year. All such records should be kept by the Professional Development and Training Division.

SCBA training was either not completed on a timely basis, or not substantially completed by all firefighters

Although online theory and in-station training was substantially completed in each year reviewed, the training was not completed on a timely basis. Records showed that 65 per cent and 48 per cent of firefighters had yet to complete the training as of March 1 2011 and 2012, respectively, as required by standard operating guidelines.

Additionally, the secondary training course was not substantially completed in either year. Records showed that 66 per cent and 55 per cent of firefighters had not completed the secondary training course in 2011 and 2012, respectively.

Certification forms were not used

Our review for compliance with annual SCBA certification program requirements was limited to online course completion records and physical attendance records. No formal firefighter evaluation or skills assessment was documented. Individual “Record of Annual SCBA Certification” forms have not been used for several years. As a result, we were not able to verify whether specific SCBA-related knowledge and skills were met.

Recommendations:

- 18. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure requirements for the Toronto Fire Services’ Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Certification Program are complied with on a timely basis, and corrective action be taken where instances of non-compliance are identified.**
- 19. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to formalize and retain all individual firefighter annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus certification records to ensure that successful completion of the annual certification program is verifiable.**
- 20. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review the Toronto Fire Services’ Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Certification Program to ensure all standards and requirements are incorporated. Any changes to the program be communicated to and understood by all staff. The program as outlined in the standard operating guideline be updated accordingly.**

D.3. Evaluations Not Always Used or Completed

Training courses, instructors and students should be evaluated

Training courses, instructors, and course participants should be evaluated in order to ensure quality and effectiveness. The evaluation process allows management to identify ways in which training can be improved, ensure improvements are built into future training and, where appropriate, eliminate unnecessary training.

No specific process to ensure training is evaluated

TFS does not consistently use formal means for course and instructor evaluations, or for student evaluations. There is currently no specific process in place to ensure training effectiveness is evaluated. Rather, the evaluation process relies on obtaining informal feedback from students and informal assessments of student competency.

Use of formal records for certification programs is recommended

Additionally, the National Fire Protection Agency's Codes and Standards on Recommended Practices for Fire Service Training Reports and Records (NFPA 1401) recommends that training records should include an evaluation of student competency, and related certification records. Records maintained for certification programs should require instructor and student signatures as a valid record of an individual's participation in the training.

Recommendations:

21. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a process to ensure opportunities for course feedback are made available to course participants, and the feedback reviewed by management. The Division Chief, Professional Development and Training, or designate, to review all feedback and to ensure suggestions are considered and where appropriate incorporated into future training courses.

- 22. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to undertake a detailed review of National Fire Protection Agency's standard on Recommended Practices for Fire Service Training Reports and Records to ensure Toronto Fire Services' standard operating guidelines are aligned with recommended practices, where appropriate, and standard operating guidelines are updated accordingly.**
- 23. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to consult the City's Human Resources Division, the Ontario Fire Marshal, and other municipal fire services and consider whether Toronto Fire Services can benefit from evaluation methodologies being used elsewhere.**

D.4. Standard Operating Guidelines Should Be Reviewed

Training-related guidelines should be accurate

TFS has many documented standard operating guidelines that exist to provide guidance on staff roles and responsibilities, enhance consistency in operations, and support effective decision-making. Standard operating guidelines are available to staff on the City's intranet.

Some guidelines relating to training were inaccurate or inconsistent with current training procedures and administration. Some staff advised that they were not consulted when revisions were made to training-related guidelines.

Recommendation:

- 24. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, in consultation with appropriate Professional Development and Training staff, to review and update all standard operating guidelines that relate to training processes and procedures, and ensure that current practices and requirements are accurately and appropriately documented. Any updated guidelines be communicated to all staff in a timely manner.**

E. STRENGTHEN ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

E.1. Records Management Needs Improvement

Records Management Policy is Required

Adequate documentation and records provide a reliable and verifiable source of evidence of decisions and actions, and should be properly maintained. Complete, accurate and timely records help reduce potential legal or financial risks in the event of investigations, disputes or performance issues.

Improvement is required

The Professional Development and Training Division is responsible for updating and maintaining firefighter training records. Improvement is required in order for TFS to demonstrate its legislative responsibility of having properly trained staff. During the course of our audit, we noted many instances where good record-keeping practices were not followed.

Examples are as follows:

Course attendance and test records incomplete

- In many instances, the documentation was incomplete, inaccurate, or inconsistent. For example, we were unable to verify attendance due to missing attendance sheets or incomplete sign-offs. Some exams were unmarked or had failing marks, other exams were not found.

Inadequate documentation retained to support hiring decisions

- Recruit candidates must meet TFS general hiring requirements and submit documentation throughout the recruitment and selection process. Most files reviewed did not contain proof of eligibility requirements, application requirements, preferred qualifications or conditional offer requirements. As a result, we were not able to confirm whether hiring requirements were met because adequate records were not on file.

Lack of required recruit training documents

- Recruit files did not contain required paperwork. Files did not include quizzes, tests, exams, instructor sign-off, and evaluation forms. Due to the lack of supporting documentation, we were unable to verify whether recruits met minimum requirements for graduation from the TFS recruit training program.

Some recruit records not secure

- Not all recruit records were adequately secured or organized. Some records were stored in boxes or unlocked cabinets located in several offices at the Toronto Fire Academy.

Recommendations:

25. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a records management policy. The policy should include, but not be limited to:

- a. Ensuring standard operating guidelines dealing with records management practices and procedures are consistent and align with City policies; and**
- b. Ensuring standard operating guidelines are complied with, such as obtaining and maintaining all required documentation on file.**

26. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a quality assurance process to verify the completeness, accuracy, and consistency of training records and ensure internal guidelines are followed.

Management of AED Certification Records Can Be Improved

Bi-annual AED certification is required

Under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA) and the Sunnybrook – Osler Centre for Prehospital Care, Firefighter Prehospital Care Program – 2011 Medical Directives, Toronto firefighters have been delegated the authority to perform certain medical acts, specifically, the use of automatic external defibrillators (AED). The TFS standard operating guideline on AED use specifies that only persons trained and holding current certification, within a two-year period, may operate defibrillators.

Inaccurate records increases risk of non-compliance

Inaccurate certification records increases the risk of non-compliance with legislative directives. While our review found that substantially all TFS firefighters had completed 2011 AED certification, the electronic records have not been updated for all certified firefighters and are not consistent with paper records.

Recommendation:

27. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure automatic external defibrillator certification documents are maintained appropriately, and filed in an orderly and timely manner, and the electronic record be updated at the same time.

E.2. Other Controls Need Strengthening

External Training Requests Were Not Approved in a Timely Manner

The City provides external tuition assistance reimbursement to support employees pursuing opportunities to enhance their competencies. Consistent with City policy, TFS' internal policy on external education and training requires that requests for tuition assistance reimbursement be approved by the Division head before enrolment.

External training requests approved after attendance

Nearly all of the 2011 and 2012 external training requests reviewed were approved after the employee attended the training.

Recommendation:

28. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that external training requests are approved before enrolment.

Policies for the Submission and Processing of STI Payments Were Not Followed

Policies for STI payment are clear

Shift training instructors (STI) are paid in accordance with the Collective Agreement when delivering training. In order to receive payment, STIs are required to submit the payment request documentation immediately following each course for processing. Payments are processed by TFS Finance. Payments made to shift training instructors amounted to approximately \$46,000 in 2011 and \$27,000 in 2012.

Instances of non-compliance

Our review identified the following instances of non-compliance with TFS internal procedures:

- STIs did not always submit the appropriate documentation immediately following course delivery, and some were delayed two to three months.
- TFS Finance did not always process approved payment requests.
- TFS Finance did not always maintain supporting documentation for payments processed.

Recommendation:

- 29. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that shift training instructors submit payment requests on a timely basis. Further steps be taken to ensure that payments are accurately processed and supporting documentation is properly maintained.**

F. IMPROVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT MONITORING AND REPORTING

Electronic learning management system has limitations

Firefighter training is required by law and it is important that firefighter training be documented in a reliable and verifiable manner. TFS uses CourseMill, the City's electronic learning management system, as the repository for firefighter training records. We found that the system, in its current state, has limitations.

F.1. System Functionality Needs Improvement

System functionality does not address all TFS training needs

As CourseMill is not a fire and emergency services specific training management system, it has limited functionality for the purposes of monitoring and reporting key firefighter training activities.

CourseMill is currently only used to track course completion and does not easily allow for customizable reports. Improved functionality of CourseMill is required in order to facilitate the information and reporting needs of the Professional Development and Training Division. At a minimum, a proper training records system should track firefighter training hours, and evaluation and exam scores.

Recommendation:

30. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to define the information and reporting needs of the Professional Development and Training Division and, in consultation with Information and Technology Division, assess the merits and feasibility of implementing system enhancements to improve functionality in order to meet those needs.

F.2. Data Quality Needs Improvement

Data quality is an issue

The reliability of a training records system depends on the quality of the data entered into the system. We found many instances where CourseMill data was incomplete and inaccurate. Examples include:

- Attendance records for some 2011 and 2012 mandatory training courses not entered
- Some participants entered, while others not
- Incorrect participant names entered
- Incorrect course codes used
- Multi-day course codes used inconsistently
- Legacy information not accurately transferred.

Recommendations:

- 31. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure controls are implemented that provide for timely, complete, and accurate data entry. Further, controls should include a data entry verification process.**
- 32. City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to consider the use of integrated technology devices, such as barcode scanners, to improve the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of training attendance records.**

CONCLUSION

This report presents the results of our review of the Toronto Fire Services. Many of the issues identified throughout this review highlight the need for a multi-year strategic plan that will help guide Toronto Fire Services in managing resources more effectively and efficiently, while meeting its financial, operational, and legal obligations.

This report contains 32 recommendations. Implementation of the recommendations in this report have the potential to improve the administration and effectiveness of firefighter training and recruitment processes at Toronto Fire Services.

**Management's Response to the Auditor General's Review of
Toronto Fire Services – Improving the Administration and Effectiveness of Firefighter Training and Recruitment**

Rec No.	Recommendations	Agree (X)	Disagree (X)	Management Comments: <i>(Comments are required only for recommendations where there is disagreement.)</i>	Action Plan/Time Frame
1.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to update and finalize the multi-year Fire Master Plan in a timely manner, ensuring the plan addresses firefighter training and recruitment issues. The plan be flexible to accommodate Toronto Fire Services' service priorities and changing workforce.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of required elements related to firefighter training and recruitment to be included in plan to commence Q4 2013 - Updated Master Fire Plan expected to be completed Q4 2013/Q1 2015
2.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that all of the issues identified in this report are incorporated into the updated Fire Master Plan where applicable.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated Master Fire Plan expected to be completed Q4 2013/Q1 2015

Rec No.	Recommendations	Agree (X)	Disagree (X)	Management Comments: (Comments are required only for recommendations where there is disagreement.)	Action Plan/Time Frame
3.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to take the necessary steps to evaluate the goals and activities of the Professional Development and Training Division. Such steps should include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>a. Developing and using relevant and consistent key performance indicators that are aligned with the strategic goals of the Fire Master Plan;</p> <p>b. Determining the reporting requirements of training goals and activities, such as content, frequency, and recipients; and</p> <p>c. Ensuring necessary tools and information for measuring, monitoring and reporting activities consistently are available.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work on Professional Development & Training Key Performance Indicators has commenced and should be finalized Q4 2013/Q1 2014 b. To be developed Q1 2014 c. Implement new database Q3 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)
4.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that diversity efforts are aligned with service priorities, and specific goals and action plans be incorporated into the Fire Master Plan.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term diversity goals and benchmarks are to be reported to City Council at the October 8, 2013 session - Updated Master Fire Plan expected to be completed Q4 2013/Q1 2015
5.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to evaluate Toronto Fire Services' diversity initiatives to determine whether these programs are successful in meeting Toronto Fire Services' diversity goals and are cost-effective. Additionally, the Centennial College partnership agreement be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with all terms and conditions of the agreement, including insurance policy requirements.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term diversity goals and benchmarks are to be reported to City Council at the October 8, 2013 session - Updated Master Fire Plan expected to be completed Q4 2013/Q1 2015 - Insurance policy requirements have been met; certificate of insurance supplied - Review of Partnership agreement placed on PAC agenda Q4 2013

Rec No.	Recommendations	Agree (X)	Disagree (X)	Management Comments: (Comments are required only for recommendations where there is disagreement.)	Action Plan/Time Frame
6.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review the recruit training program for operational efficiencies that can yield opportunity cost savings, while, at the same time, meet Divisional diversity goals. The review should include but not be limited to:</p> <p>a. Ensuring recruits are placed in the training program reflecting their qualifications; and</p> <p>b. Evaluating the feasibility of eliminating the general stream by adding the Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training Program Certificate as a minimum recruitment requirement.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to the extension of the 2011 hiring list remaining in effect for 2012, a legal opinion was obtained which provided that on a one time basis only, candidates were allowed to voluntarily upgrade their hiring qualifications - Diversity in community college programs is 9% (with the exception of Centennial) - TFS will develop an alternate career path for marginalised individuals, which will result in all hires having pre-service requirement Q4 2013
7.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure mandatory training courses are conducted for the full amount of time as prescribed in the Collective Agreement. Such time requirements and expectations be communicated to all staff, including all training staff and firefighters.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate and determine extent of the issue by Q4 2013 - Implement identified actions, as required by Q1 2014
8.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review all mandatory training course lesson plans and daily agendas to ensure training-related activities and time requirements are accurately reflected and updated accordingly.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review training materials by Q4 2013 - Complete all necessary training materials adjustment by Q1 2014

Rec No.	Recommendations	Agree (X)	Disagree (X)	Management Comments: (Comments are required only for recommendations where there is disagreement.)	Action Plan/Time Frame
9.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, together with Professional Development and Training and Operations Division Chiefs, to conduct a review into the underlying reasons for the lack of instructor availability, and evaluate ways to address those reasons.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TFS will review and develop new delivery concept - Review to commence Q1/Q2 2014 - Time frame for implementation depends on collective bargaining process and potentially arbitration
10.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that corrective action be taken, and documented, for cancelled in-service training when determined to be required. Additionally, the commitment to minimizing in-service training cancellations be communicated to all staff.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rationale for re-scheduling in-service training is currently documented. - Personnel are aware of the reasons under which training is re-scheduled - communicate to the Platoon Chiefs the importance of NOT cancelling courses – Q4 2013 - provide critical cancelation stats to the Platoon Chiefs Q1 2014
11.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that trainer-facilitators are certified by the Ontario Fire College, proper records are maintained, and documentation is submitted to the Ontario Fire College when required.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of the Fire Marshal has indicated that by mid-2014 the OFM Recruit Training curriculum will be dropped and fire services will implement NFPA compliant curriculum - TFS is currently proactively transitioning away from the Office of the Fire Marshal program into an internationally recognized National Fire Protection Association based curriculum were trainer-facilitators are not required - Completion expected in Q1/2 2014

Rec No.	Recommendations	Agree (X)	Disagree (X)	Management Comments: (Comments are required only for recommendations where there is disagreement.)	Action Plan/Time Frame
12.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that all shift training instructors are qualified and trained for the delivery of programs in accordance with internal standard operating guidelines and the Collective Agreement. Further, management take further steps to identify and formalize specialty training requirements. In addition, all qualification records be standardized and adequately maintained.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 to Analyse and identify issues by Q1 2014 - Implement corrective actions by Q1 2014
13.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lesson plans align with the course syllabus; b. Lesson plans exist for every course in the program; and c. Lesson plans are updated on a regular basis. 	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 to analyse and identify issues by Q1 2014 - Implement corrective actions by Q1 2014 - Maintain the Professional Development & Training Working Group to ensure lesson plans are updated on a regular basis.

Rec No.	Recommendations	Agree (X)	Disagree (X)	Management Comments: (Comments are required only for recommendations where there is disagreement.)	Action Plan/Time Frame
14.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to reassess the overall necessity of Ontario Fire Marshall exams. If exams are determined to be required, to take the necessary steps to ensure exam eligibility requirements are met. Such steps should include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensuring each recruit is evaluated on final performance tests by a certified trainer-facilitator; b. Ensuring required supporting documentation is completed, signed off, and maintained on file; and c. Giving consideration to obtaining and reviewing exam results to identify opportunities for training program improvement. 	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of the Fire Marshal has indicated that by mid-2014 the OFM Recruit Training curriculum will be dropped and fire services will implement NFPA compliant curriculum - TFS is currently proactively transitioning away from the Office of the Fire Marshal program into an internationally recognized National Fire Protection Association based curriculum were trainer-facilitators are not required - Completion expected in Q1/2 2014
15.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure mandatory online training is completed on a timely basis. When firefighters fail to complete mandatory online training requirements, appropriate corrective action be taken. Any such corrective actions be incorporated into the standard operating guideline, and reiterated in staff communications.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Development & Training currently runs compliance reports quarterly for Commanders/Platoon Chiefs. - Reports are then passed on to Operations Chief Officers for investigation and corrective action. - Action - Re-enforce with the Platoon Chief's the requirement of the established and in-place practice of compliance Q4 2013 - Change the monthly 1 drill per month to 3 a quarter and report on a quarterly basis Q1 2014 - Develop SOG based on current practice by Q2 2014

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16.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, in consultation with appropriate Professional Development and Training Division and Operations Division staff, to review the progress reporting process, and determine the appropriate types, frequency and content of reports needed to ensure mandatory online training requirements are met. Further, the standard operating guideline be updated accordingly.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice is currently established and in-place with the exception of an Standard Operating Guideline - On a quarterly basis, Professional Development & Training runs compliance reports for Commanders/Platoon Chiefs - Reports are then passed on to Operations Chief Officers for investigation and corrective action. - Q1 2014 Clarify existing SOG T-Man 1.03 – more exact details of reporting - Automation and report storage is expected to be achieved in the new LMS due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)
17.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure regular progress reports coincide with training due dates and be provided to appropriate staff on a timely basis. Progress reports be stored and accessible to appropriate staff.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Automation and report storage is expected to be achieved in the new LMS due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)
18.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure requirements for the Toronto Fire Services' Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Certification Program are complied with on a timely basis, and corrective action be taken where instances of non-compliance are identified.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issue was recognized in 2012. - New procedure was developed and implemented in 2013. - Existing Training Note and Standard Operating Guideline has been revised and communicated to all staff via FCC.

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19.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to formalize and retain all individual firefighter annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus certification records to ensure that successful completion of the annual certification program is verifiable.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issue was recognized in 2012. - New procedure was developed and implemented in 2013. - Existing Training Note and Standard Operating Guideline has been revised and communicated to all staff via FCC.
20.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to review the Toronto Fire Services' Annual Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Certification Program to ensure all standards and requirements are incorporated. Any changes to the program be communicated to and understood by all staff. The program as outlined in the standard operating guideline be updated accordingly.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issue was recognized in 2012. - New procedure was developed and implemented in 2013. - Existing Training Note and Standard Operating Guideline has been revised and communicated to all staff via FCC.

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21.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a process to ensure opportunities for course feedback are made available to course participants, and the feedback reviewed by management. The Division Chief, Professional Development and Training, or designate, to review all feedback and to ensure suggestions are considered and where appropriate incorporated into future training courses.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Development & Training will continue utilizing formal course evaluations in Emergency Medical Services courses as a requirement of the medical overseeing Base Hospital - Professional Development & Training current practice is to seek input informally through focus groups, Shift Training Instructors, and other informal input directly back to the Professional Development & Training Program Coordinators who are responsible for program design and quality (Training Section District Chiefs oversee the process - Additional opportunities process will be implemented in Q1 2014, whereby a quarterly communication will be sent out to all staff requesting course input electronically to generic Professional Development & Training email. - Feedback emails will be reviewed and tracked by the Professional Development & Training, Division Chief, and further reviewed at the monthly District Chief Working Group meetings. - Constructive feedback will be passed on to the appropriate course coordinator, by the appropriate District Chief, for consideration.

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22.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to undertake a detailed review of National Fire Protection Agency's standard on Recommended Practices for Fire Service Training Reports and Records to ensure Toronto Fire Services' standard operating guidelines are aligned with recommended practices, where appropriate, and standard operating guidelines are updated accordingly.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 to analyze the National Fire Protection Agency's standard on Recommended Practices for Fire Service Training Reports and Records - Recommend actions with respect to gaps in current Division practices by Q3 2014
23.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to consult the City's Human Resources Division, the Ontario Fire Marshal, and other municipal fire services and consider whether Toronto Fire Services can benefit from evaluation methodologies being used elsewhere.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 to consult with the City's Human Resources Division, the Ontario Fire Marshal, and other municipal fire services and consider whether the TFS can benefit from evaluation methodologies being used elsewhere. - Analyze findings and recommend actions by Q3 2014 - Implement approved actions by Q1 2015 - Toronto Fire Services is also moving forward with accreditation through the Centre for Public Safety Excellence; target completion is Q4 2015 which may provide additional input.

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24.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, in consultation with appropriate Professional Development and Training staff, to review and update all standard operating guidelines that relate to training processes and procedures, and ensure that current practices and requirements are accurately and appropriately documented. Any updated guidelines be communicated to all staff in a timely manner.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 - Determine Standard Operating Guidelines requiring review, create review completion and staff communication timetable Q1 2014 - Review and edit all required Standard Operating Guidelines that relate to training processes and procedures Q4 2014
25.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a records management policy. The policy should include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>a. Ensuring standard operating guidelines dealing with records management practices and procedures are consistent and align with City policies; and</p> <p>b. Ensuring standard operating guidelines are complied with, such as obtaining and maintaining all required documentation on file.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 - Review current records management protocol used in the firefighter hiring process Q2 2014 - Provide recommend actions by Q2 2014 - Implement as part of the LMS pilot due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)
26.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to develop and implement a quality assurance process to verify the completeness, accuracy, and consistency of training records and ensure internal guidelines are followed.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 - Analyze and recommend actions by Q2 2014 - Implement as part of the LMS pilot due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)

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27.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure automatic external defibrillator certification documents are maintained appropriately, and filed in an orderly and timely manner, and the electronic record be updated at the same time.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This issue was identified in 2012 and actions were implemented in 2013 to ensure compliance - To ensure redundancy the Division's Learning Management System is the centralized database with hardcopy backup records remain manageable each Training Section is responsible to maintain their disciplines/subjects records - Ongoing actions were implemented in Q1 2013, whereby Section District Chiefs perform spot audits of inputted training record data. - Additionally, commencing in Q4 2013 Section District Chiefs will be required to report out on audit findings and actions at the monthly District Chief Working Group meetings - Q1 2014 – this issue will also be addressed globally within Professional Development & Training at the next Development Day scheduled for January 2014
28.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that external training requests are approved before enrolment.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issue was recognized in 2013. - New procedure was developed and implemented in 2013. - Procedure was communicated to all staff via FCC-13-86

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29.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure that shift training instructors submit payment requests on a timely basis. Further steps be taken to ensure that payments are accurately processed and supporting documentation is properly maintained.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issue was recognized in 2012. - In 2012 the Division implemented an electronic submission process for the Shift Training Instructors to improve the timeliness and accuracy of the paper process - Additionally, the Shift Training Instructors are continually informed that no payment will be processed without an attached Student Roster of those trained - Professional Development & Training Program Coordinators facilitate this process and the Section District Chief s oversee the process
30.	<p>City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to define the information and reporting needs of the Professional Development and Training Division and, in consultation with Information and Technology Division, assess the merits and feasibility of implementing system enhancements to improve functionality in order to meet those needs.</p>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Division has been in constant communication with the Corporate ELI group to address process issues and the need to replace TFS's current, poorly functioning Learning Management System - This Learning Management System was implemented in 2011/2012 with the assistance of HR/IT - Although expected to improve processes and accountability the Learning Management System has proven to be a constant obstacle to addressing the Division's record keeping, compliance, etc. issues - Implementation expected to be achieved in the new Learning Management System due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)

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31.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to ensure controls are implemented that provide for timely, complete, and accurate data entry. Further, controls should include a data entry verification process.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation expected to be achieved in the new Learning Management System due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the LMS pilot into TFS by Q2 2014) - It is expected that the implementation of the new Learning Management System will address this quality control issue.
32.	City Council request the Fire Chief and General Manager, Fire Services Division, to consider the use of integrated technology devices, such as barcode scanners, to improve the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of training attendance records.	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Professional Development & Training Working Group by Q4 2013 - Analyze and recommend actions by Q2 2014 - Implementation expected to be achieved in the new Learning Management System due Q2 2014 (pending Corporate HR/IT initiating the Learning Management System pilot into TFS by Q2 2014)