

## **Toronto Fire Services 2023 Annual Report**

**Date:** June 19 2024

**To:** Economic and Community Development Committee

**From:** Fire Chief, Toronto Fire Services

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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The Toronto Fire Services (TFS) 2023 Annual Report provides an overview of the fire protection services provided to Toronto's residents and visitors, along with a clear and transparent reporting of outcomes and service level performance. TFS provides Toronto residents, visitors, and businesses with world-class fire protection services, through public education, fire prevention and all-hazards emergency response services.

Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 79, Fire Services, requires the Fire Chief to prepare and present an annual report to Council. This report fulfills that requirement and provides Council with an update on fire protection service levels, service level performance, and an overview of the numerous achievements and accomplishments in 2023.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Fire Chief, Toronto Fire Services recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There is no identified financial impact associated with the recommendation in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## DECISION HISTORY

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Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 79, Fire Services, requires the Fire Chief to prepare an annual report on the Service and present it to City Council.

[https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184\\_079.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_079.pdf)

## COMMENTS

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Fire protection services in Ontario are governed by the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA). The FPPA enables the City of Toronto to establish a fire department, to appoint a Fire Chief, and to both establish, and set, fire protection service levels in accordance with the unique needs and circumstances in the City of Toronto. Only City Council is authorized to set fire protection service levels. In accordance with the FPPA, the Fire Chief is accountable to City Council for the delivery of fire protection services.

Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 79, Fire Services, sets out the framework for the delivery of fire protection services in the City of Toronto, establishes Toronto Fire Services, and requires the Fire Chief to prepare and present the annual report of the fire service to the Economic and Community Development Committee and City Council (79-8.10). This staff report, and the 2023 Annual Report, found in Attachment 1, respond to the requirement of the by-law.

TFS provides Toronto residents, visitors, and businesses with world-class fire protection services, through public education, fire prevention, Ontario Fire Code enforcement and, provides 24/7, all-hazards emergency response services.

In 2023, TFS responded to 184,076 emergency incidents resulting in 321,795 emergency responses by TFS crews, conducted inspections of 9,413 addresses, and delivered 2,935 fire safety presentations.

### Our Staff

TFS is a team of 3,258 dedicated team members, who deliver fire protection services to Toronto residents every day. In 2023, TFS successfully recruited 175 new team members, replacing personnel who retired from various roles including Operations Firefighters, Fire Inspectors, Emergency Vehicle Technicians, and Call-takers/Dispatchers. TFS also promoted 159 staff to leadership positions, including two Platoon Chiefs, two Division Chiefs, 27 District Chiefs, and 115 Captains.

### Operations, Training and Technical Operations

The TFS Operations, Training and Technical Operations portfolio is under the command Deputy Fire Chief Jim Jessop.

Operations crews respond to emergencies that include fires, rescues, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, structural collapse incidents, road and industrial accidents, and other disasters and emergencies.

In 2023, TFS experienced a 9.1% increase in the number of emergency calls, with call volume increases experienced in all but the non-emergency and "other" emergency incidents response categories. The largest increases were experienced in the emergency medical call category, with TFS being dispatched to additional medical call types in support of Toronto Paramedic Services. A detailed breakdown of TFS service volumes is found on pages 34-35 of the Annual Report.

Emergency response time performance is constantly being assessed and monitored by the TFS Command Team and is reported publicly in the Annual Report. Data from the report is presented in Table 1.

*Table 1: Emergency Response Time Performance, TFS 2023 Annual Report*

			2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
All Emergency Incidents	Call Processing Time 1:04min	90th Percentile	00:47	00:48	00:52	00:53	00:54
		% of Standard Achieved	96%	95%	94%	94%	94%
Response Times	Turnout Time 1:20min	90th Percentile	02:17	02:17	01:56	01:55	1:42
		% of Standard Achieved	51%	50%	68%	70%	79%
	Travel Time 4:00min	90th Percentile	05:18	05:25	05:51	06:00	5:57
		% of Standard Achieved	72%	70%	62%	60%	59%
	Total Response Time 6:24min	90th Percentile	07:17	07:26	07:38	7:48	7:36
		% of Standard Achieved	81%	79%	76%	75%	77%
Effective Firefighting Force Response	Total Response Time 10:24min	90th Percentile	10:50	10:44	10:40	10:28	9:41
		% of Standard Achieved	87%	88%	89%	90%	93%

A more detailed breakdown of city-wide emergency response time performance, as well as response time performance on a ward-by-ward level, can be found on pages 37-45 of Attachment 1.

154 recruit firefighters were trained in two recruit classes during 2023. The TFS Recruit Training Program is a rigorous 18-week training program, with each Recruit Firefighter graduating with formal National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) professional

qualifications as Firefighters (NFPA 1001), Fire Inspectors (NFPA 1031), and Fire and Life Safety Educators (NFPA 1035).

TFS continues to operate the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) team and Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) team, both of which also operate under agreement with the Province of Ontario, whereby these specialized teams are available for Provincial deployment, on a full cost-recovery basis, as authorized by the Ontario Fire Marshal.

TFS also operates a marine firefighting / rescue unit, operating two specialized boats - the William Lyon Mackenzie and the William Thornton. The TFS marine unit responds to emergencies across Toronto's waterfront, including the Toronto islands, and has high-volume water pumping capabilities to assist with on-land operations. The TFS William Lyon Mackenzie fire boat also breaks ice and maintains the ferry route between Toronto and Toronto Island, during the winter months.

### **Community Risk Reduction**

The Community Risk Reduction portfolio is under the command of Deputy Fire Chief Larry Cocco.

The TFS Community Risk Reduction portfolio includes the enforcement of the Ontario Fire Code, providing public fire safety education to residents of Toronto, investigating the cause and origin of fires, delivering expert fire protection engineering services, and working in collaboration with legal services on all matters pertaining to prosecutions under the FPPA and the Ontario Fire Code.

In 2023, TFS fire inspectors conducted 9,413 fire inspections, inspecting 100% of all vulnerable occupancies within Toronto, and 97% of all residential high-rise buildings in Toronto. A ward-level breakdown of fire prevention inspection activity is on page 29-30 of the 2023 Annual Report.

TFS Public Educators delivered 699 high-rise fire safety presentations and attended 1,947 elementary level school classrooms to deliver presentations on fire safety.

The TFS Fire Investigations team completed 166 comprehensive investigations into the origin, cause, and circumstances of fires in Toronto. This team works in direct collaboration with Toronto Police Service and the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal.

### **Administrative Services and Mechanical Maintenance**

The Administrative Services and Mechanical Maintenance portfolio is under the command of Interim Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Hamilton.

The TFS Finance and Administration division includes the TFS budget administration, payroll and complement management units. This team works in direct collaboration with Corporate Finance and Treasury Services to manage and administer the TFS operating and capital budgets, and all aspects of complement management.

The TFS Staff Services division includes the TFS Labour Relations unit, oversight of the TFS Medical Office, direct liaison with the TFS Chief Medical Officer, and all aspects of disability, return to work and attendance management. This team functions as a small in-house professional standards unit, leading numerous internal investigations and working in direct collaboration with the Corporate Labour Relations, Legal Services and Disability Management teams.

The TFS Quartermaster division operates the TFS warehouse, distributes and manages personal protective equipment for all staff including bunker gear, protective clothing, uniforms, and medical supplies. This team works in collaboration with Corporate Purchasing and Materials Management.

The TFS Mechanical Maintenance and Asset / Equipment Management division operates the TFS mechanical maintenance shop and mobile service trucks, which provide both preventative maintenance and on-demand repairs for the 193 heavy vehicles and 230 small vehicles that comprise the TFS fleet.

In 2023, 3,614 mechanical maintenance orders were completed. Additionally, 1,893 self-contained breathing apparatus facepieces were tested and / or issued in 2023.

### **Communications, Technology and Organizational Performance**

The Communications, Technology and Organizational Performance portfolio is under the command of Deputy Fire Chief Paul Fitzgerald.

The TFS communications centre answered and processed 469,056 incoming emergency and non-emergency telephone calls in 2023, achieving best in class emergency call processing time performance, of 1 minute and 4 seconds, 94% of the time. Our 90th percentile performance, in 2023, was 54 seconds.

TFS technology staff successfully transitioned TFS over to the new digital based 9-1-1 call receiving ads part of the next generation 9-1-1 project on December 12, 2023. This transition is ahead of the March 2025 deadline and represents many years of work.

The TFS Data Analytics and Decision Support team is responsible for providing data and analytics support to TFS and the TFS Command Team, conducting 141 data requests and analysis reports in 2023, supporting evidence-based and data-informed decision making. The team works closely with all areas of TFS to identify data needs and reporting capabilities to support both day-to-day operations and specific requests. The team has developed a series of internal dashboards to provide the TFS Command Team with up-to-date information and also manage the publishing of TFS emergency response data to the City's Open Data portal.

### **Office of the Fire Chief**

The Office of the Fire Chief is comprised of five staff, who champion policy development, public information, strategic planning, compliance, and continuous quality improvement functions, as well as all day-to-day operations within the Office of the Fire Chief. Office of the Fire Chief staff are responsible for managing the coordination of TFS

reports to Council alongside the Deputy City Manager - Community and Social Services team and for conducting research to inform evidence-based decision making for senior decision makers.

TFS has one full-time Staff Psychologist, who offers short term counselling, advice, guidance and coaching to employees, and who develops and leads workshops and other training programs to promote employees' psychological well-being including the Road to Mental Readiness training curriculum. The TFS Staff Psychologist also provides oversight, support, and training for the TFS Peer Support Team and completes regular wellness checks for the members of this team.

The Public Information Section manages engagement with the public and media through various traditional and social media channels. This includes providing public information about emergencies, with TFS responding to 1,405 formal media requests in 2023. The TFS Public Information team works in daily collaboration with the City's Strategic Public and Employee Communications team.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at TFS**

TFS is committed to building an increasingly inclusive and positive workplace culture that reflects the diversity of the population we serve. Of the 154 Operations recruits hired in 2023, 37% self identified as a member of an equity deserving group.

In 2023, TFS launched a Black History Month campaign, celebrating and spotlighting some of our Black staff, and placed staff designed decals on all trucks. In the fall of 2023, TFS staff came together to launch the first ever TFS Black Staff Network, bringing together Black Staff from across the service.

TFS was also excited to participate in the 2023 Caribbean Carnival festivities, including Junior Carnival, Junior Kings and Queens, and walking in the Grand Parade.

TFS continues to be proud supporters of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, especially during Pride month, with special decals placed on all TFS trucks, as well as TFS participating in the Toronto Pride parade alongside staff, friends, and family.

### **Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI)**

Toronto is the largest city in North America with a CFAI Accredited Fire Service. TFS first received 5-year accreditation in 2019, affirming our robust processes for performance and outcome measurement and for continuous quality improvement. CFAI accreditation is an independent, third-party assessment of all aspects of TFS operations against 250 performance indicators. TFS has implemented several process changes that are already resulting in improved service level performance. These improvements are successfully enhancing both Total Response Time (TRT) and Effective Firefighting Force (EFF) performance.

During the Operations Deployment Review, staff conducted an analysis of response time performance across the city and identified opportunities to enhance response time performance through enhanced resource utilization. This included the relocation of

specific emergency response trucks and crews to locations where the demand was greatest and adjusting staffing to increase the availability of resources available for emergency response. Additional examples of how CFAI has helped our performance are found on page 49-50 in attachment 1.

### **Looking Forward**

TFS is excited to bring a number of new apparatus' online this year, including the new Fire boat to replace the William Thornton, as well as the first electric pumpers in the TFS fleet. TFS will also be launching a public education campaign on Lithium-Ion batteries, an emerging fire safety concern that TFS has been actively leading with all levels of government and city partners.

### **CONTACT**

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Laurel Sharp, Planning and Policy Advisor, 416 338 9337, [Laurel.Sharp@toronto.ca](mailto:Laurel.Sharp@toronto.ca)

### **SIGNATURE**

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Matthew Pegg  
Fire Chief

### **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Toronto Fire Services 2023 Annual Report