

## **Toronto Fire Services 2024 Annual Report**

**Date:** August 28 2025

**To:** Economic and Community Development Committee

**From:** Fire Chief and General Manager, Toronto Fire Services

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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The Toronto Fire Services (TFS) 2024 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 2024.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Fire Chief and General Manager, Toronto Fire Services recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from 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, 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 2024 Annual Report, found in Attachment 1, respond to the requirement of the by-law.

Toronto Fire Services 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 2024, TFS responded to 172,537 emergency incidents resulting in 282,988 emergency responses by TFS crews, conducted inspections of 9,268 addresses, and delivered 2,418 fire safety presentations.

### **TFS Celebrates 150 Years**

2024 was a year of celebration, with Toronto Fire Services proudly recognizing 150 years of fire protection services in Toronto. On August 19, 1874, the Toronto City Council of the day approved the creation of the first full time fire department, with just 36 members. This celebration was marked with a special decal for all TFS vehicles and a presentation at City Council in October 2024. Staff also worked with the Toronto Fire Historical Society on a special exhibit at City Hall showcasing important incidents and periods of TFS history and incorporating historical elements into the Annual Fire Prevention Week Open House. The participation and support of the Toronto Pipes and Drums, Toronto Fire Service Honour Guard and the Toronto Firefighters War Veterans Association made the celebration and Open House even more memorable and meaningful.

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

Toronto is the largest city in North America with a CFAI Accredited Fire Service. CFAI accreditation is an independent, third-party assessment of all aspects of TFS operations against 256 performance indicators. TFS first received accreditation in 2019, affirming our robust processes for performance and outcome measurement and for continuous quality improvement. Through the first accreditation, TFS implemented several process changes that have resulted in improved service level performance. In 2024, TFS received its second accreditation after going through a rigorous review by CFAI. Through this new accreditation, TFS received 17 new recommendations in areas to further improve processes and service delivery for Toronto residents. This accreditation is valid until 2029 with annual compliance reports to ensure continued work towards the recommendations.

## **Our Staff**

TFS is a team of 3,327 dedicated team members, who deliver fire protection services to Toronto residents every day. In 2024, TFS successfully recruited and onboarded 279 new team members, including replacements for personnel who retired or left through attrition across various roles such as Operations Firefighters, Fire Inspectors, Emergency Vehicle Technicians, and Call-takers/ Dispatchers, as well as additional new hires to meet the continued rise in operational demands. TFS also promoted 146 staff to leadership positions, including three Platoon Chiefs, 19 District Chiefs, and 117 Captains.

## **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 2024, TFS fire inspectors conducted 9,268 fire inspections, inspecting 99% 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 30-31 of Attachment 1.

TFS Public Educators delivered 525 high-rise fire safety presentations and attended 1,741 elementary level school classrooms to deliver presentations on fire safety.

The TFS Fire Investigations team completed 143 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.

### *Lithium-Ion Batteries*

Toronto Fire Services continues to lead the way in developing timely and critical fire safety campaigns to alert and educate the public. TFS has been tracking an alarming trend of fires related to lithium-ion batteries for the last number of years, identifying a 90% increase in these fires from 2022 to 2023. To combat this alarming trend, staff developed and launched a campaign in 2024 in partnership with the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal, and the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs called "This is your Warning".

The campaign highlights the fire risks associated with overcharging, improper disposal, modified and uncertified lithium-ion batteries and their chargers. The campaign went across the city on social media, transit shelters and with paid advertising on top of the ongoing educational presentations from our Public Educators. Campaign details are available on page 29 of Attachment 1.

### **Operations, Training and Technical Operations**

The TFS Operations, Training and Technical Operations portfolio is under the command Acting Deputy Fire Chief Steve Darling.

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 2024, TFS experienced a 6.2% decrease in the number of emergency calls, this is due to changes to tiered response protocols to remove the low acuity medical responses that had been previously added at end of 2021 in support of Toronto Paramedic Services. A detailed breakdown of TFS service volumes is found on pages 36-37 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 2024 Annual Report*

			2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All Emergency Incidents	Call Processing Time 1:04min	90th Percentile	00:48	00:52	00:53	00:54	00:56
		% of Standard Achieved	95%	94%	94%	94%	93%
Response Times	Turnout Time 1:20min	90th Percentile	02:17	01:56	01:55	1:42	1:26
		% of Standard Achieved	50%	68%	70%	79%	87%

			2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Travel Time 4:00min	90th Percentile	05:25	05:51	06:00	5:57	6:06
		% of Standard Achieved	70%	62%	60%	59%	56%
	Total Response Time 6:24min	90th Percentile	07:26	07:38	7:48	7:36	7:38
		% of Standard Achieved	79%	76%	75%	77%	77%
Effective Firefighting Force Response	Total Response Time 10:24min	90th Percentile	10:44	10:40	10:28	9:41	8:59
		% of Standard Achieved	88%	89%	90%	93%	95%

The more detailed breakdown of city-wide emergency response time performance and ward-by-ward response time performance is found on pages 39-47 of Attachment 1.

201 operation firefighter recruits were trained in two recruit classes. The TFS Recruit Training Program is a rigorous training program, with each Recruit Firefighter graduating with formal National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) professional qualifications as Firefighters (NFPA 1001), 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 (which is being replaced in 2025). 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.

## **Administrative Services and Mechanical Maintenance**

The Administrative Services and Mechanical Maintenance portfolio is under the command of Acting Deputy Fire Chief Therese Chen.

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. In 2024, this team managed the logistics for 7,761 bunker gear cleanings and 7,035 bunker gear repair orders to keep our firefighters safe and ready for duty.

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, two Fire Boats, and 230 small vehicles that comprise the TFS fleet.

In 2024, 1,586 self-contained breathing apparatus facepieces were tested and / or issued and staff tested 750 ground ladders.

## **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 598,715 incoming emergency and non-emergency telephone calls in 2024, achieving best in class emergency call processing time performance, of 1 minute and 4 seconds, 93% of the time. Our 90th percentile performance in 2024 was 56 seconds.

The TFS Data Analytics and Decision Support team is responsible for providing data and analytics support to TFS and the TFS Command Team, conducting 202 data requests and analysis reports in 2024, 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.

The TFS Technology Team continues to support TFS in their implementation of the new Next Generation 911 system, which was transitioned in late 2023. As one of the early adopters, TFS has been able to support testing for other carriers for the continued national roll out the system. In 2024, a second environment was built to enable TFS to work on continued development and security patching cycles.

### **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 Emergency 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 1,619 formal media requests in 2024. The TFS Public Information team collaborates daily with the City's Strategic Public and Employee Communications team.

The Toronto Fire Service Recruitment and Outreach Unit attends events across the city to share information on TFS careers and opportunities. In 2024, this team attended 256 events including 98 presentations at high schools, and 23 events specifically for TCHC residents. Across all the events, the Recruitment and Outreach Unit connected 63,833 attendees with information on TFS careers.

One highlight of the 2024 outreach efforts events was a special "Day in the Life" event, hosted by TFS for 90 TCHC youth participating in the YouthWorx program. Participants had the opportunity to explore the different careers available at TFS by engaging directly with staff in these roles. They also participated in hands-on activities to experience aspects of the job firsthand, while gaining valuable fire safety information.

### **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 201 Operations recruits hired in 2024, 34% self identified as a member of an equity deserving group.

In 2024, the TFS Black Staff Network, in partnership with TFS, hosted a roadshow that travelled to various shopping malls across the city, offering engaging fire safety

education, career information and showcase of firefighter equipment. This provided the public with an interactive and informative opportunity to learn about the Fire Service. The month-long celebration culminated in an Open House at the Toronto Fire Academy, featuring rope rescue demonstrations, fire trucks and key elements from the roadshow.

In June 2024, as part of National Indigenous Peoples Day, TFS launched a specially made decal to honour National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which was displayed on all apparatus for the month of September. This decal was created by a TFS Firefighter and incorporates important elements that brought together the Fire Service and Indigenous Community, and to honour and respect the importance of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. On Orange Shirt Day, TFS staff wore a special "Every Child Matters" orange t-shirt to show support.

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.

TFS was also excited to once again participate in the 2024 Caribbean Carnival festivities, including Junior Carnival, Junior Kings and Queens, and walking in the Grand Parade.

## **Looking Forward**

TFS continues to advance several new and ongoing initiatives.

TFS received City Council Budget approval for the final 52 net new Firefighters from the TFS staffing plan, brought through the recruit training program, as well as a second Staff Psychologist position, as the service continues to lead the way in supporting the psychological health and wellness of staff.

2025 has seen the introduction of four new apparatus' into service, including a new fireboat to replace the William Thornton, a new rescue vessel, as well as the first two electric pumpers in TFS' fleet.

As the lithium-ion battery technology continues to evolve and fire incidents involving these batteries rise, TFS has re-launched a public education campaign on lithium-ion batteries.

The Service continues to work towards the Ontario Regulation 343/22 Firefighter Certification deadlines in 2026 and 2028. This regulation requires all Ontario Fire Departments to ensure staff are trained to a specific standard to deliver key services including firefighting operations, fire inspections, emergency call taking and dispatching, rescue operations, and pump operations. TFS is well on its way to meet the specified deadlines set out by the province.

Finally, Toronto Fire Services continues to support the City's work towards the 2026 FIFA Games, with planning underway to help ensure a safe and success event for all attendees.



## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Jim Jessop  
Fire Chief and General Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Toronto Fire Services 2024 Annual Report