



Bainbridge Island Fire Department

Strategic Plan 2010-2019



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Letter From the Chief



The Bainbridge Island Fire Department is pleased to present the 2010-2019 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is designed to clearly identify the Mission, Vision and Values of the Department and identify necessary steps to improve services to our community and increase safety for our members.

The Strategic Plan establishes the framework for the Department's future and represents the highest level of planning that has been implemented within the Department. This document will guide the Department, allowing the organization to better meet the needs of the community it serves, as the demand for emergency response, prevention and education services increases on Bainbridge Island.

The Strategic Plan identifies specific Areas of Focus on the Department's core services and programs. Included in the Strategic Plan are recommendations

on staffing, service enhancements and improvement to facilities.

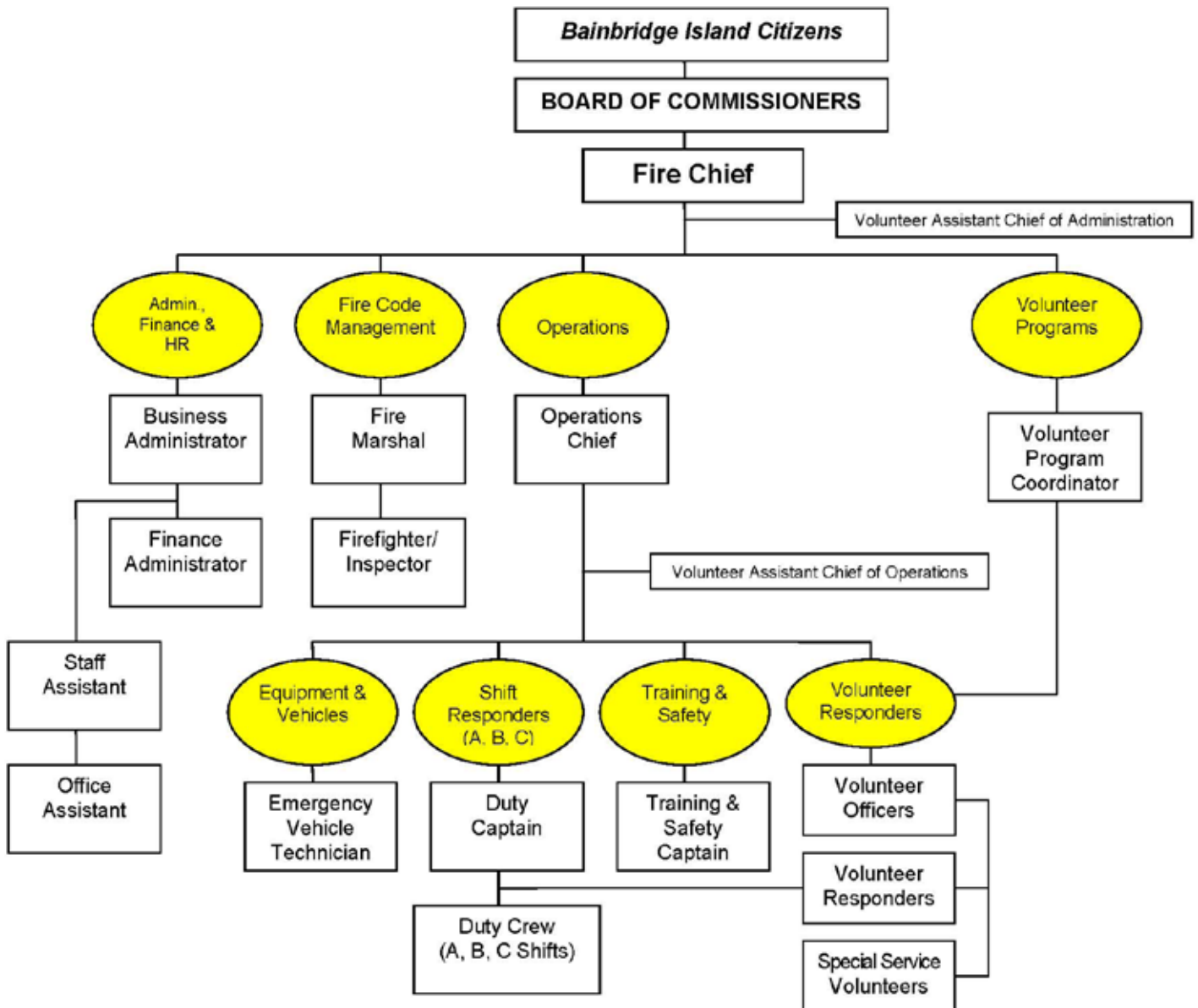
The Board of Commissioners reviewed the Areas of Focus in detail on July 8, 2009. Upon analysis, it was established that some of the Strategic Plan may be more applicable in the short-term due to the immediate need to adequately address levels of service and the needs of the Bainbridge Island community. However, this document still provides a framework for the future.

I would like to acknowledge and thank everyone who contributed their time, views, opinions, and ideas as part of the planning process. This includes both members from within the Department and the community.

The success of the Bainbridge Island Fire Department has always been, and will continue to be, a result of the services provided by the dedicated men and women who serve this Department. This Strategic Plan will provide guidance and assist in strengthening the essential services that the Department provides to the community.

*Hank Teran
Fire Chief*

Organization Structure – January 2008



Department History



The Bainbridge Island Fire Department has been serving the Bainbridge Island community for over 67 years. In the summer of 1942, Louis W. Sinnett formed Kitsap County Fire Protection District Number 2. At that time, the Department had one truck and 16 volunteers who were called by telephone at home to respond to fires. By 1955 there was a fire station in Winslow, manned by volunteers, who dispatched all fire calls.



In 1958 Chief Sinnett retired and was replaced by Chief "Squirrel" Callaham. The 1960s were a decade of growth for the Department. In 1960, two Ford Attack Pumpers were purchased. In 1961 another Pumper and a Pumper/Tanker were purchased. In 1969 two Ford Tankers were acquired, and the Department hired three full-time dispatchers. In 1970, a Seagraves Pumper was purchased, providing the Department with its first diesel powered truck that could pump 1750 gallons per minute – over three times the flow of the Attack Pumpers. At this point, the Department had obtained 8 pieces of apparatus through donations and community support.

In 1971 Don Beach became the Fire Chief. By 1972, airlifts began to speed up transports through the use of Army MAST helicopters. In 1976, the answering and dispatching of all emergency calls was taken over by the 911 center in Bremerton, "CenCom" as it is known today.

By the mid-1970s, medical and first-aid calls were quickly becoming a mainstay of the Department's operations. With these changes in response needs, the Rotary Club purchased a defibrillator for Department use. Two fully-equipped Aid cars, purchased in 1975 and 1976 through donations and Rotary Club support, provided the Department with the most up-to-date aid equipment available to respond to the growing number of medical calls.

The Department, under the direction of Chief Beach, began offering CPR classes to the public in 1974, and introduced Public Education classes in the local schools, services the Department still provides today.

The Islands first shift paid Firefighters began work in 1978: Gary Clough, Mark Hannon and L. "Butch" Lundin, each of whom had been a volunteer or a dispatcher for the Department.

The next 20 years marked rapid growth and expansion for the Department. In the mid 70s, the residents of Bainbridge Island approved the construction of a new station to be located at the corner of New Brooklyn and Madison Avenue.

With a continuously increasing call volume, the Department was in need of funding to purchase more apparatus, build a new station and hire additional paid staff (three firefighters are required in order to staff a station with one person 24 hours per day due

to 24-hour schedules and 56-hour workweeks). In 1993, the voters approved a levy increase that would allow the Department to meet some of these needs.

In 1994 the Department officially became the "Bainbridge Island Fire Department." As the commercial development of Bainbridge Island increased, the viability of a ladder truck was being heavily researched to provide aerial firefighting capabilities. In 1996 plans were being made to construct a new station on the north end of Bainbridge Island which would include a training facility for career and volunteer members.

Increasing demands for emergency services guided the leadership of the Department to commit to creating a larger career staff to guarantee that responders would be available every hour of every day, including a team of Paramedics.

In 2005 the community approved a temporary levy lid lift to replace emergency response apparatus. Since the enactment of Initiative 747 in 2001, the Department has not requested a levy increase to support personnel costs.

In 2006 the voters approved a measure to expand the Board of Commissioners from three to five members. The goal of this expansion was increased diversity of representation and greater flexibility for meeting quorum requirements.

In recent years the Department has acquired over \$1 million in grant funds to purchase safety equipment for its members, and to recruit and retain volunteers, including \$650,000 awarded in 2008. The focus on exploring cost-saving options has made the Department one of the leaders in resource sharing and has guided the district in exploring staffing programs to meet the increasing demand for services.



Department Information and Service Area Demographics



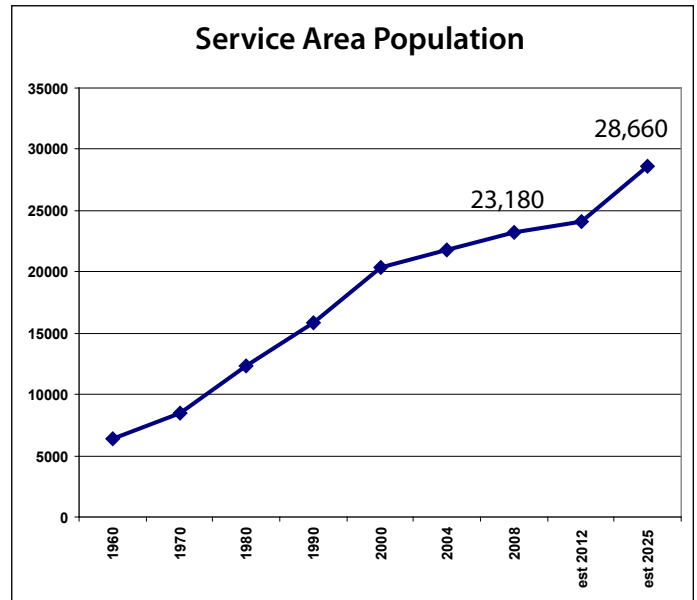
Population

The Department operates as an independent Kitsap County fire district serving all of Bainbridge Island, an area of 28 square miles with a population of approximately 23,500 (see graph to right).

Per the City of Bainbridge Island's projections, the estimated population growth will occur as follows:

- 50% in the Town Center area within mixed use occupancies
- 45% throughout the Island's residential zoned areas
- 5% in the Neighborhood Service Centers: Lynnwood Center, Rolling Bay, and Island Center

These growth projections show a significant amount of growth potential on the south and south-east end of Bainbridge Island, and moderate growth potential throughout the district (see map on next page).

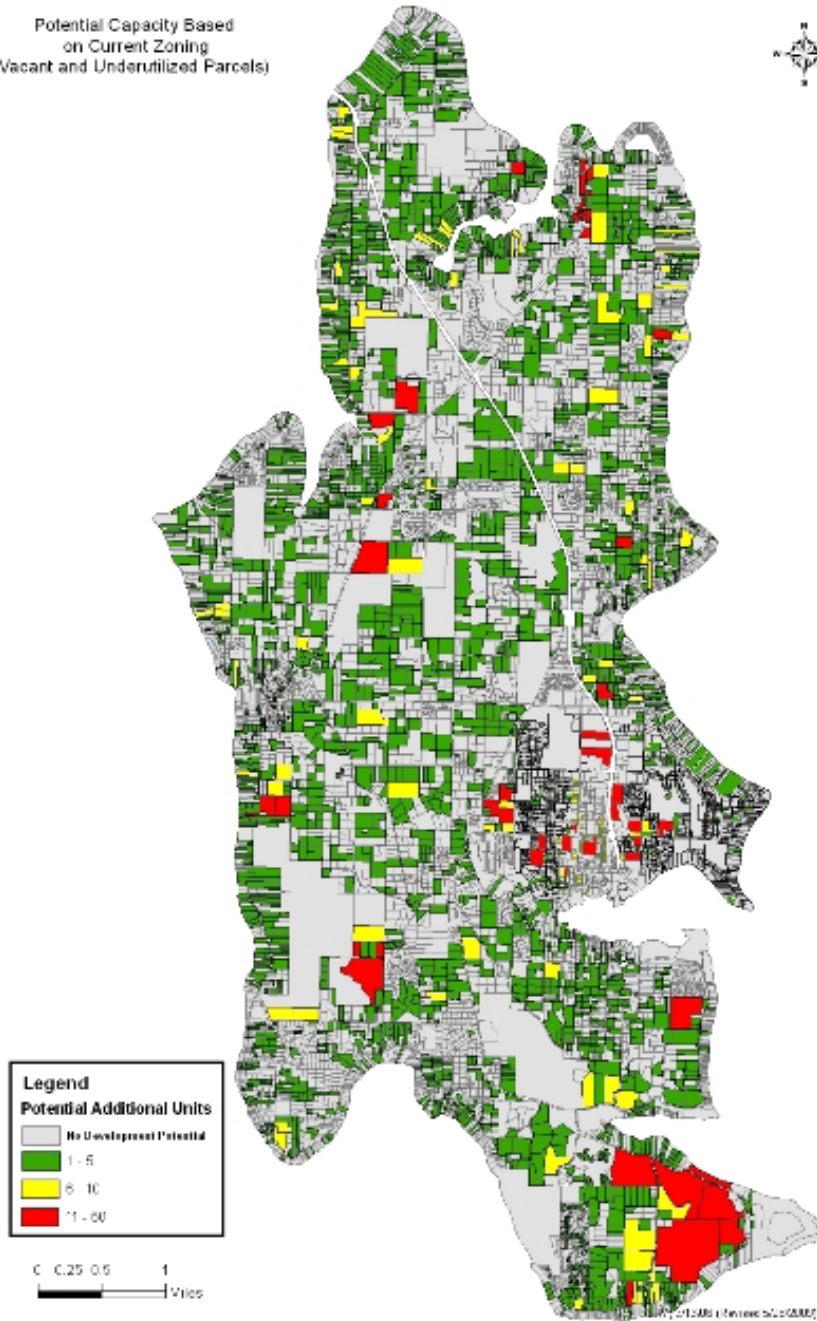


Actual population data is derived from US Census data, and projected estimates are per the City of Bainbridge Island 2025 Plan document¹.

¹Population Allocation Study, City of Bainbridge Island. http://www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us/2025_population_allocation.aspx



Potential Capacity Based
on Current Zoning
(Vacant and Underutilized Parcels)



Island-wide, Parcel Specific Potential Capacity

Service Area

The Department has three Emergency Service Zones (ESZs) to divide the Island into service areas for each of the three stations (see map). ESZs delineate the primary response area for a particular station. Apparatus and personnel assigned to a station will respond outside of their ESZ when there are multiple calls, or when the significance of a call requires additional personnel or equipment. ESZs are not restrictive, and are intended to allow for ease of dispatching and resource management.

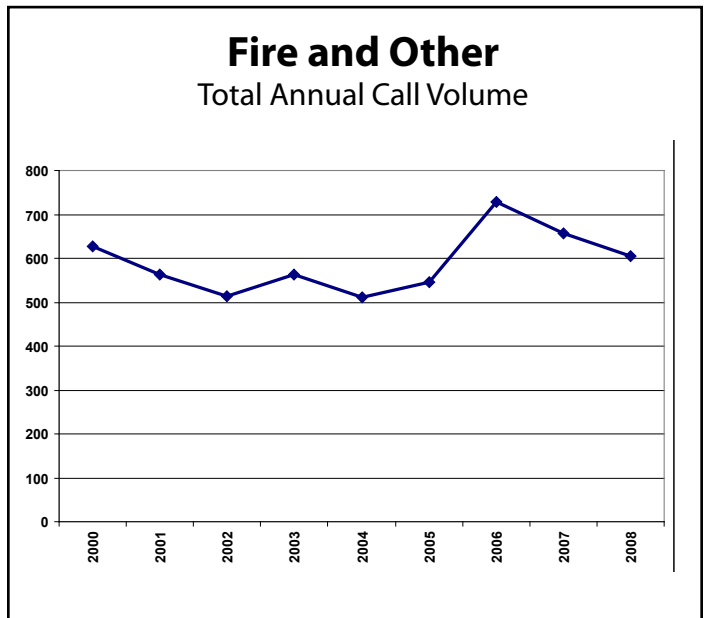
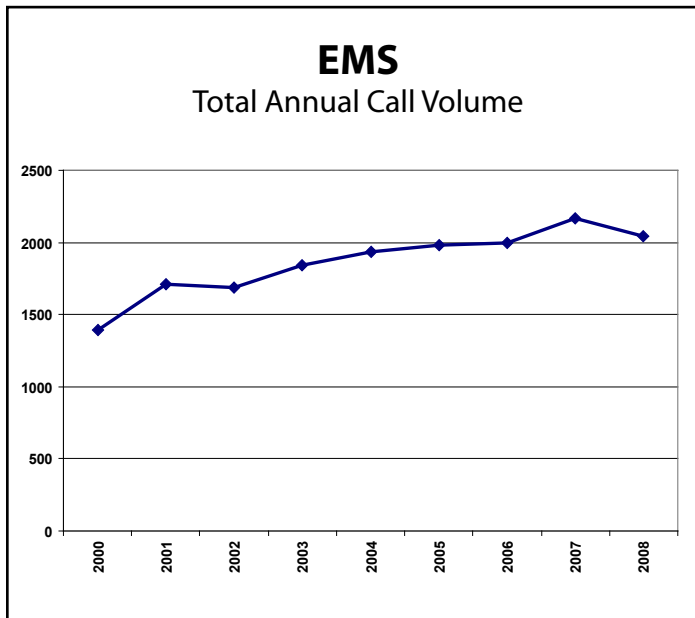


	Engine	Rescue	Ladder	Tender	Aid Car	Medic Unit	Minimum Number of On-Duty Response Personnel
Station 21	2	1	1	2	1	1	4
Station 22	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Station 23	1	0	0	1	1	0	0

Each of the Department's stations is equipped with apparatus to respond to both emergency medical and fire-related responses. This table highlights the primary apparatus at each location and the number of members on-shift at the station to respond at any given time.

Call Volume

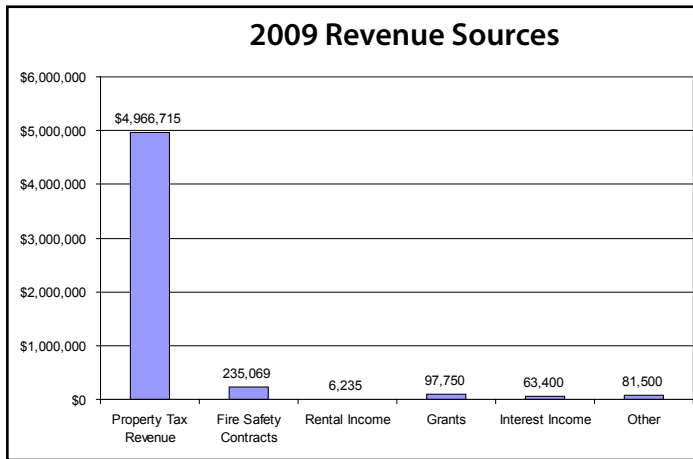
The Department responds to approximately 2,800 dispatched emergency medical and fire suppression calls each year, and delivers a variety of programs aimed at emergency response, public education, prevention, and recovery. Utilizing population as the primary driver for call volume projections, the tables below depict the historical call volume per population experience and provides projections for future expected call volumes.



Year	Population	Call Volume (actual)	Call Volume per Person	Projected Call Volume (based on 2008 CV/PP ratio of .114)
1990	15846	1330	0.084	
2000	20308	2025	0.100	
2004	21760	2443	0.112	
2008	23180	2646	0.114	
2012 (est.)	24144		0.114	2752
2025 (est.)	28660		0.114	3267

Funding

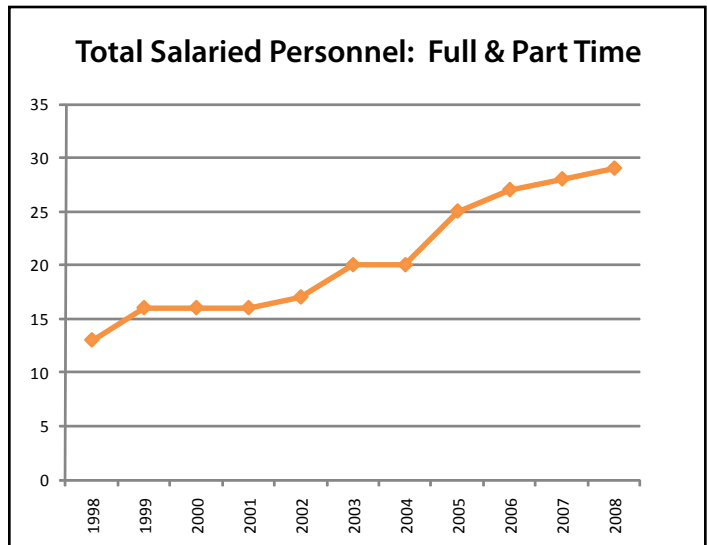
The Department relies almost entirely on property taxes for funding which account for 91% of the Department's revenues. Remaining revenues are primarily generated from contract service agreements with the City of Bainbridge Island, the Washington State Ferries, and the Bainbridge Island School District, in addition to grant funds.



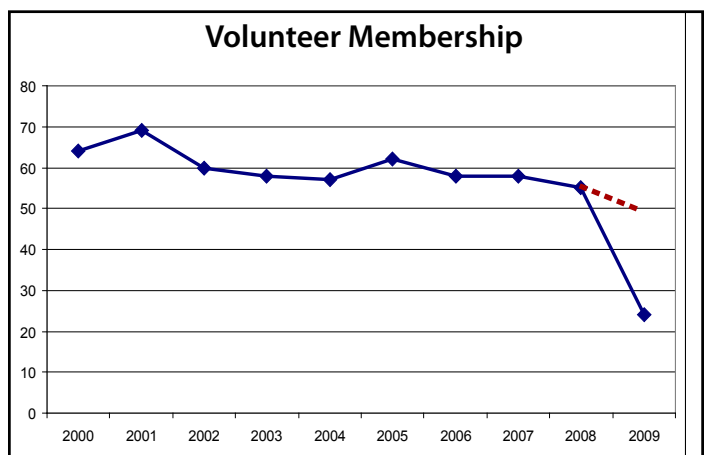
Personnel

An elected board of five Commissioners governs the Department. Fire Chief Hank Teran manages the Department, which in 2009 includes 21 uniformed firefighter and command staff positions, 6.5 non-uniformed positions (mechanic, finance, support, volunteer recruitment and retention), approximately 15 active volunteer responders and 9 special service volunteers.

The Department is a combination fire department with both career and volunteer members. As call volumes increase, so does the demand for responding personnel; however, increased training regulations and demands upon volunteers' time have led to a net decrease in volunteer participation and response.



Growth of all salaried personnel over 10 year period of time.



2009 membership statistic in the Volunteer Membership graph depicts special service volunteers and volunteer firefighters who respond, on average, to one or more emergency calls per week. Prior to 2009, the number depicts total volunteer membership, regardless of performance levels, which is continued with a dashed red line for 2009.

Strategic Plan Overview & Background



Managing community emergency response and prevention needs with available funding is a difficult task. Designing a service delivery model that will maximize available resources to ensure the Department is prepared, and operationally ready, to respond to any emergency at any time is one of the biggest challenges facing the Department.

Emergencies include: providing residential or commercial fire suppression services, basic and advanced life support services, technical rescues, and disaster response. Response readiness includes: having available trained staff with appropriate tools, equipment, and apparatus to support the demands of the emergency response team, and providing appropriately located facilities from which personnel can respond to minimize the time it takes to reach an emergency scene.

Additionally, service delivery models must focus on minimizing risk and controlling the costs associated with providing services. With the current economic



climate of our community, the need to strategically plan staffing models, personnel needs, capital purchases, and future funding streams becomes even more imperative.

In early 2007 Bainbridge Island Fire Department began the process of creating a long-range Strategic Plan. Historically, the Department had maintained a ten-year financial plan supported by annual strategic goals and objectives, but had neither created nor embraced a thorough document that tied long-range operational, capital, staffing, and education goals to a long-range financial plan to support necessary revenues. At that time, due to limited staffing and the efforts to hire a new Fire Chief and expand the Board of Commissioners, the process was placed on hold.

In late 2007 the planning process was reinstated with Fire Chief Hank Teran leading the planning efforts, and a committee was formed within the Department that included representation from all levels of the organization.

The Board of Commissioners met with staff to review current assumptions in the Department's financial and staffing plans, and adopted strategic areas of focus for the planning committee.

The major assumptions identified in the 2007 ten-year financial plan were:

- No major capital projects planned outside of the planned apparatus acquisitions
- Projected staffing is flat due to limited revenues
- Temporary levy lid lift funding ends in 2011
- An accounting deficit is projected to occur in 2010 without additional revenues

- No new revenue streams projected
- Bainbridge Island Ambulance Association (BIAA) will continue to provide greater than 95% of Basic Life Support (BLS) transports

The Board of Commissioners also identified 8 major areas of focus for the Strategic Planning committee, each with specific goals for the planning committee to address. These Areas of Focus include:

- Training and Safety
- WSRB
- Facilities and Equipment
- Community Relations
- Consolidation
- Service Levels
- Personnel
- Funding Streams



In order to solicit ideas and opinions, the planning group reached out to the Department membership through an online survey, and advertised for community volunteers to participate in an External Users Group.

The purpose of the internal survey was to receive input on issues relating to morale, possible volunteer incentive programs, interpersonal interaction and

comfort levels, leadership, and culture. Additionally, as updates on the Strategic Planning process were provided to the membership, the members were reminded of the importance of communicating with their representatives on the planning group to ensure that diversity was part of the planning process.

In addition to the membership, the planning process included reaching out to the community to create a group of citizens that could assist. The External Users Group, named for being the end user of emergency, education, and prevention services provided by the Department, met five times over a period of months to identify service and response time expectations for the Strategic Planning committee.

The External Users Group was provided a brief history of the Department, and was then questioned on their knowledge of the Department membership and resources, the services provided, and the funding mechanism. The answers to these questions provided information to the planning group and the management of the Department and provided insight into the misinformation and/or lack of information received by a diverse cross-section of the Bainbridge Island community. The Department provided the External Users Group with accurate information on the various emergency and non-emergency services provided by the Department, as well as the composition of the membership, call volume, response demands, and funding streams. The External Users Group supported general concepts included in this Strategic Plan, including the possible use of an EMS levy as a revenue source to support increased staffing levels.

This Strategic Plan was developed in order to define the organizational service delivery expectations, and further refine methods to reach short and long range goals within the areas of focus defined by the Board of Commissioners. This Strategic Plan is separated into eight sections, the Areas of Focus adopted by the Board of Commissioners, with the goals given by the Board and new goals recommended by the planning group as Strategic Priorities.

Area of Focus: Training and Safety



Strategic Priority 1: *Evaluate training SOGs (Standard Operating Guidelines) against current industry standards, and revise SOGs as necessary to ensure compliance. Create a periodic review cycle.*

Background: After reviewing the Strategic Plan, it was determined there was no Area of Focus dedicated to the evaluation of the Department's divisions and programs as a whole. This evaluation is necessary to determine effectiveness, required resources, and overall design of the Department's divisions and programs. This Area of Focus provides a summary and template for that evaluation and, as an example, offers concepts for addressing the Training Division in its entirety as it relates to a 10-Year Strategic Plan. This Summary is not intended to be an all-inclusive assessment but rather points out that further evaluation within each area is required. For regulatory and standards compliance, staff reviewed the 500 section of the SOG manual that addresses ongoing fire training and entry level EMS training only. It does not address initial Paramedic training nor continuing education.

The following industry standards serve as the basis for evaluating a fire department's training programs: Washington Administrative Code (WAC), Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, as well as the Department's own Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs). Each of these standards is commonly viewed as an industry standard for the fire service. As such, these standards become the Standard of Care criteria that will be used to measure a fire department's performance.

The legal system will use this standard of care criteria to establish what the system terms the Reasonably Prudent Person Standard. This standard is frequently used to determine the standard of care that a community can reasonably expect and demand. If, in the view of a reasonably prudent person, it is determined that industry standards are not met, a breach of the standard of care may be found. In other words, when an action is filed against a fire department, a failure to meet industry standards, (whether compliance is legally mandated or not), provides a basis for arguing negligence against the agency and/or persons named in the suit.

It is important to understand how each of these standards apply to fire department operations. The RCW and WAC standards serve as legal mandates established through the State's legislative process. NFPA standards are developed through a consensus process, and are voluntary standards; however, if they are formally adopted by way of a legislative process, they become legally binding. It is also important to note that because they are viewed as industry standards and are developed through stakeholder consensus, they are frequently presented as the fire service standard of care. Therefore, even though their compliance may not be legally mandated, the Reasonably Prudent Person Standard will be argued as the basis for negligence².

Based on how the RCW, WAC, and NFPA standards serve to establish the fire service standard of care, it is essential that each of the applicable standards be thoughtfully incorporated into the Department's policies and SOGs. Furthermore, it is not enough to simply incorporate these standards into the Department's SOGs; it is equally important that they

² *Legal Considerations for Fire & Emergency Services, (2007), by J. Curtis Varone. (p. 224)*

become institutionalized into the organization's daily operations and adhered to with the appropriate degree of accountability. Failing to enforce the Department's own policy may easily be viewed as a breach of the standard of care and can also serve as a basis for negligence.



Another important set of industry standards are those set by the Washington Surveying & Rating Bureau. The WSRB operates as a non-profit, public service institution whose services are available to all insurance companies licensed to sell property insurance within the State. The WSRB evaluates fire departments to assign a rating that classifies a community's level of fire protection. The evaluation process audits several aspects of the fire department's operations, which includes training. The WSRB establishes a rating by assessing deficiency points in areas where the fire department falls short of meeting industry standards. The outcome of this rating can directly affect property insurance rating, and therefore, insurance premiums.

The WSRB makes the following recommendations for training hours:

Company Training at Fire Stations by Company Officer – Minimum of 20 hours per member per month. This amount can be reduced by 25% if firefighters are IFSAC Firefighter I certified and by 50% if firefighters are Firefighter II certified.

Training by the Training Officer (or equivalent) at Training Center – Minimum of eight half-day sessions per year (32 hours) at training facilities, including two drills at night for all company members.

Officer Classes – Minimum of two days per year (16 hours) for all officers.

Classes for Drivers and Operators – Minimum of one day per year (8 hours) for current personnel. Current EVAP certification can serve in lieu of annual training.

Recruits – New members should receive a minimum of 240 hours or equivalent of recruit training during their first year of membership leading to the Firefighter I designation.

Statistics & Research: The majority of the Department's mandated training requirements originate from WAC 296-305, Safety Standard for Fire Fighters. As applicable, compliant policy language is incorporated into the Department's SOGs. The SOGs were updated following the June 1997 update of WAC 296-305. The WAC was reissued in March of 2006. The WAC 296-305 standards are currently in the process of being revised, with adoption expected to occur during 2009. When the updated WAC 296-305 is promulgated, it will be important to audit the Department's SOGs, revising them as needed, to assure compliance with the applicable training requirements as established by the WAC.

The following list provides a generalized summary that interprets the training requirements stipulated by the version of WAC 296-305 currently in effect:

Safety Program Orientation - All personnel shall complete an orientation of the Department's Accident Prevention Program.

Hazard Communication Program - All response personnel shall receive a minimum level of training with the Department's Hazard Communication Program as specified in WAC 296-62, Part C.

Hearing Conservation - All personnel included in the Department's hearing conservation program shall complete training in the use and care of all provided hearing protectors. This training shall be repeated annually.

Personal Protective Equipment - All personnel shall be trained in the function, donning, doffing, care, use, inspection, maintenance, and limitations of the personal protective equipment (PPE), including turnout clothing, assigned to them or available for their use.

Incident Management System - All response personnel shall receive minimum introductory level training with the Incident Management System prior to assignment as a responder. Personnel shall be trained and qualified in the Incident Management System prior to taking a supervisory role at an emergency scene. This training shall be compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements as well as the National Response Framework and other overriding documents.

First Aid Certification - All personnel, unless designated by the Fire Chief, shall have as a minimum, first-aid training as evidenced by a current, valid First-aid, First Responder, EMT, or Paramedic certification. New members shall have completed such training within 90 days, or enroll for training in the next available class for which they are eligible to attend. First-aid training shall meet or exceed the requirements of Chapter 296-62 WAC, Part A-1.

Infectious Disease Control Program - All health care providers shall be trained in the proper use of PPE, exposure protection, post exposure protocols, and disease modes of transmission as it relates to infectious diseases. Personnel shall review annually the Department's infectious disease control program, updates, protocols, and equipment used in the program.

Emergency Medical - All EMS responders shall satisfactorily complete the minimum training requirements established by the Training Division prior to being assigned as a responder.

Respiratory Equipment - All Firefighters shall be trained for each type of respiratory equipment available for their use. All self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) training and certification shall be in accordance with, and meet the performance criteria established by the Department's Training Manual. Training shall meet the following minimum requirements of WAC 296-305.

- Firefighters shall train with SCBA at least quarterly.
- All firefighters shall be tested annually on their minimum competency skills associated with SCBA.
- Firefighters shall be thoroughly trained with SCBA emergency procedures.

Confined Space Rescue - All potential first responders to confined space rescue incidents shall receive a minimum level of confined space training as specified in WAC 296-62, Part M.



Hazardous Materials Awareness - All potential first responders to hazardous materials incidents shall be trained to the First Responder Awareness level in accordance with WAC 296-62, Part P.

Hazardous Materials Operations - First responders who respond in a strictly defensive fashion shall be trained to the Operations Level in accordance with WAC 296-62, Part P.

Firefighter Recruit Training - All firefighters shall satisfactorily complete the minimum training requirements established by the Department's Training Division prior to being assigned as a responder.

Asbestos - Training shall be provided to firefighters so that they will be knowledgeable in the identification and handling of asbestos containing materials likely to be encountered during a fire response.

Wildland Firefighting - Personnel expected to respond to fires involving natural vegetation shall be trained to the minimum level specified by the Department's Training Division. Personnel assigned to natural vegetation fires categorized as Wildland Fires shall be trained to a National Wildfire Coordinating Group Firefighter Level II, or equivalent. Wildland Fire is defined as natural vegetation fires where firefighters must expend more than 1 hour of labor to confine, control, and extinguish the fire.

All suppression personnel expected to respond to fires involving natural vegetation shall annually review the Standard Operating Safety Procedures stipulated in WAC 296-305, Appendix D.

Driver/Operator - All emergency vehicle driver/operators shall satisfactorily complete the minimum training requirements established by the Department's Training Division prior to being assigned as a responder.

EVAP Certification - Drivers of emergency vehicles shall obtain and maintain EVAP certification, or an approved equivalent, in accordance with Senate Bill 5441 and the Department's Driver Training program.

Officer Training - All fire officers shall satisfactorily complete the minimum training requirements established by the Department's Training Division prior to being assigned to fulfill fire officer level responsibilities.

Conclusions/Findings: A review of the current and applicable industry standards indicates that the majority of the Department's SOGs regarding training comply with the current WAC 296-305 standards. When the updated WAC 296-305 standards are promulgated, it will be important to audit the Department's training SOGs against the new standards, revising them as applicable.



Because the Department has recently expanded its technical rescue capability, the SOGs specific to technical rescue do not reflect the Department's current practices. Technical rescue is a new discipline that requires additional training and operational guidelines that need to be added to the Department's SOGs.

In addition, NFPA 1001 Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, recommends that all interior firefighters be competent in the skills set forth in NFPA 1001 Chapter 5. Though not a current mandate, the fire service industry is clearly moving toward this becoming the minimum standard for firefighters who engage in interior offensive

fire fighting. Currently only a segment of the Department's firefighters have completed this level of training. The training is usually validated through Firefighter I testing and certification.

Although not a requirement, the WSRB guidelines establish an important set of industry standards for training. As previously summarized, the WSRB recommends, for firefighters who are not trained to the Firefighter I level, a minimum of 264 hours of training each year. These hours do not include hours for maintaining EMS and/or driving qualifications. Currently the Department offers approximately 100 hours per year of Fire, EMS, and volunteer night drills. The 100 hours does not include special drills, which would add another 32 hours. This indicates that the Department's current frequency of training accomplishes only 50% of the recommendation of the WSRB.

Recommendations: The Department should ensure that all training policies and SOGs comply with the industry standards applicable to fire department training. This includes the following recommended program goals:

1. Ensure that training policies and SOGs comply with WAC 296-305 standards.
2. Establish minimum training standards for structural firefighters based on the NFPA 1001 job performance requirements for Firefighter I.
3. Consider providing additional training opportunities to enable members to meet the minimum training hour requirements established by the WSRB.

Action Items: Based on the recommended goals, the following objectives offer a framework for ensuring that the Department's training policies and SOGs comply with industry standards.

Short-Term Objectives (2010-2011)

1. Audit and revise as needed, each of the relevant technical rescue policies and SOGs.
2. Update SOGs known to be non-compliant with the current edition of WAC 296-305.
 - a. SOG 501 – Update and include all required training
 - b. SOG 502 – Update and include all EMS levels
 - c. SOG 503 – Remove and place in an Emergency Operations Plan
 - d. SOG 504 – Update to current driving program and incorporate NFPA 1002 as applicable
 - e. SOG 506 - Update
3. Upon promulgation, audit and revise as needed each of the Department's training policies and SOGs with the updated WAC 296-305 safety standards.
4. Adopt IFSAC Firefighter I as the minimum level of training required for all members qualified as interior structural firefighters and incorporate into applicable SOGs.
5. Develop and adopt a plan for training all incumbent interior structural firefighters to the NFPA Firefighter I level.

Medium-Term Objectives (2012-2015)

6. Train all new interior structural firefighters to the IFSAC Firefighter I certification level.
7. Evaluate the cost/benefit value of meeting the minimum training hour requirements established by the WSRB.

Long-Term Objectives (2015-2020)

8. Establish a periodic review process that systematically audits training policies and SOGs against the applicable industry standards.

Strategic Priority 2: Meet Washington Administrative Code (WAC) training requirements for all personnel.

Background: Meeting the WAC requirements for training is the bare minimum requirement for any fire department. The WAC is intended to ensure that fire fighters have the minimum abilities to perform the task of fire fighting. However, when these minimum requirements are met, it does not necessarily ensure that members are trained commensurate with their duties.

When reviewing how to meet the WAC training requirements, the Department membership was analyzed by two groups: career and volunteer firefighters. Grouping the membership was necessary for analysis, as the ability to train and ensure compliance with career members is completed as part of their employment. Compliance of a volunteer cadre is far more difficult. One of the most difficult problems that combination fire departments face is how to keep volunteers trained to current standards. This becomes a challenge due the time and effort it takes to keep volunteers fully trained commensurate with their duties. As regulations and standards are developed, it becomes more difficult for members with full-time jobs and families to complete the additional requirements needed to stay proficient as a volunteer firefighter.

The Department has always recognized this as a problem but has failed to overcome it. In 1999 the Department updated its SOGs to reflect the current WAC in an attempt to have good policy to hold people accountable. Although the policy had been put in place, obtaining compliance with the volunteer firefighting force is difficult to achieve. As a result of this historical difficulty, the Department began to review the possibility of creating sections within the Operations Division, allowing volunteer members to serve the community within the capacity for which they could meet training requirements.

Statistics & Research: Until recently the only opportunity afforded the members for official Department training was Tuesday night drill. Tuesday night drills are conducted from 7:00-9:00 PM. Although drill starts at 7:00 PM, it is not uncommon to have fifteen or more minutes of announcements. Using this time at the beginning of drill was an issue identified in the membership-wide survey.

In 2006 the Department shifted to a monthly drill schedule that included scheduled drills during the day. These allow volunteers an additional opportunity to train with the duty crew. The drill schedule, posted and distributed as a monthly calendar, is comprised of drills that allow for basic WAC compliance. This has enabled almost 100 percent compliance by the duty staff with required classes. The biggest hindrance to compliance with the duty crews occurs when members are not on shift the day the training occurs, or the drills are not conducted because of other commitments. In order for volunteers to complete all required drills, an unrealistic expectation of almost 100 percent of Tuesday night drill attendance is required. The largest areas of non compliance are those members that have not donned their quarterly SCBA, and those that have not completed at least one fire training session per quarter. Insuring all members complete an evaluated drive on all apparatus they are signed off to operate is also very difficult.

Training Opportunities

When the volunteer members were asked in the survey conducted as part of the long range planning process, *"What would you do to change the level of training to better the members of the department?"* The number one answer was more availability of training times. Getting members to participate in these increased training times has been difficult, as can be read in Training Addendum 2.

As requested by the volunteer membership, numerous attempts to provide additional training

opportunities have been made, along with alternative times and delivery methods. All have had very little or no success in terms of increasing volunteer participation.



Conclusions/Findings: The current philosophy of allowing personnel to self-govern their own training is not working. This has been shown by a lack of WAC compliance and also in a lack of competency with basic skills. The Department needs to consider how it evaluates training compliance, as well as who is responsible for compliance follow-up. Currently the volunteer members report to the Operations Chief who is ultimately responsible for ensuring members are compliant with all facets of their training. Although this may have worked in the

past, the current responsibilities of this position are focused on other areas of organizational priority. Currently the Duty Captains oversee four personnel, and the Assistant Chief of Operations oversees thirty-plus volunteers, which greatly exceeds span of control recommendations. The Training Division has typically been responsible for class delivery. With the increased responsibilities of this division, the program delivery needs to be evaluated to determine if it is still an efficient expectation for the Training Division. By creating separate personnel groups within the Operations Division (Suppression, EMS, and Support Services), the Department will be able to address multiple issues relating to regulatory compliance, volunteer retention and participation, and increased volunteer opportunities. Furthermore, these sections would allow for members who are currently self-limiting their activities to be recognized within their respective areas of contribution. By defining these roles within the organization, the Department will be able to more clearly define the training requirements for each section. Implementation of this methodology would ensure the largest number of resources available to the Department. The logistics of implementation are currently under review within the Department.

In order to accomplish WAC compliance and to ensure the competency of its responders, the Department should consider adopting a competency-based training (CBT) delivery model. This methodology would allow firefighters to complete didactic portions of their training either via traditional classroom or alternative methods. It would then allow members to be evaluated by qualified individuals to demonstrate proficiency in specific tasks. This does not eliminate the need for drill attendance, but does allow for flexibility when members are not able to attend drill. This also insures all members are capable of completing specific tasks whether they attended drill or not. The biggest challenge of this will be to create a cultural shift whereas those members that do not participate and complete their CBT training are not allowed to respond to emergency incidents.

Recommendations:

1. Adopt a date of 12/31/2009 for all members to improve compliance with training requirements detailed in guidelines set forth by the Fire Chief.
2. Implement a Competency-Based Training delivery model to provide flexibility and to ensure competent performance.
3. Develop alternative computer-based learning systems to facilitate the flexibility of online course completion. To support CBT delivery, there will be a need for a good records management system. The Department is currently using Emergency Reporting Systems (ERS) for this purpose.
4. Implement performance drills to insure members are trained commensurate with their duties.
5. Develop structured oversight for volunteers and residents.
6. Develop an annual training calendar to allow all members to see all scheduled training for the year.
7. Increase reporting efficiency so that members have better ability to see missed drills.
8. Review the Training Division's role within the organization specifically regarding program delivery and compliance oversight.

Action Items:

1. Finalize an implementation plan for creating the Operations Division groups.
2. Perform training compliance audit by 1/15/2010.
3. Implement Competency Based Training delivery model by 12/31/2009.
4. Provide administrative support to assist with implementation of the computer-based delivery system.
5. Perform first performance drill by end of first quarter 2010 for all members.
6. Evaluate reporting structure of volunteers

and the Training Division's role regarding compliance and delivery by 10/1/2009.

7. Implement changes of the Training Division evaluation by 12/31/2009.

Strategic Priority 3: *Meet WAC safety requirements for all personnel. Maintain thereafter and incorporate standards/guidelines in NFPA 1500 as applicable. Continue to foster a culture of safety.*

Background: The majority of the Department's workplace safety program and procedural requirements for emergency scene operations originate from WAC 296-305, Safety Standard for Fire Fighters. These firefighter safety and health standards are adopted by the Department of Labor and Industries in accordance with the provisions of the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) of 1973. The purpose of the WAC is to assist employers and employees in the reduction of work related injuries and illnesses. To provide an enforceable set of safety and health standards for the fire service, it is the intent that the standards be used to assist both employers and employees in achieving the safest workplace reasonably attainable under the conditions to which employees are or will be exposed³.

The WAC 296-305 safety standards serve as legal mandates, established through the State's legislative process. The WAC 296-305 standards are enforced by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I). Fire departments found to be out of compliance can be levied fines by L&I and are subject to litigation in cases of negligence. As applicable, compliant policy language is incorporated into the Department's SOGs.

In general terms, WAC 296-305⁴ requires fire departments to establish, supervise, maintain, and enforce, in a manner that is effective in practice:

1. A safe and healthful work place environment
2. An accident prevention program in

³ WAC 296-305, Safety Standards for Fire Fighters, (03/2006 Issue). Section 296-305-01001.

⁴ WAC 296-305, Safety Standards for Fire Fighters, (03/2006 Issue). Section 296-305-01509.

- accordance with WAC 296-305
3. Programs for training personnel in the fundamentals of accident prevention
 4. Procedures to be used by the Health & Safety Officer and Incident Commanders to ensure that emergency medical care is provided to response personnel
 5. An accident investigation program in accordance with WAC 296-305
 6. Any additional wellness and safety programs in accordance with WAC 296-305



NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program is an important industry standard that all fire departments must carefully consider. Though NFPA 1500 is only a consensus standard, not applicable to fire departments by way of a legislative mandate, it is well recognized as an industry standard. As detailed in Strategic Priority #1, NFPA standards often become the Standard of Care criteria used to measure a fire department's performance. As such, NFPA standards are used to provide a basis for arguing negligence against the agency and/or persons named in the suit. This is especially true with NFPA 1500. The standard was originally adopted in 1987 and has been revised every five years since. Over the years, many

mandated safety standards, such as WAC 296-305, have become aligned with NFPA 1500 standards. The pending update of WAC 296-305 is expected to incorporate a considerable amount of language that replicates NFPA 1500, as well as referring to other NFPA standards for equipment specifications, training standards, and emergency management procedures.

Statistics & Research: The majority of the Department's mandated workplace safety requirements originate from WAC 296-305, Safety Standard for Fire Fighters. As applicable, compliant policy language has been incorporated into the Department's SOGs. When the updated WAC 296-305 is promulgated, it will be important to audit the Department's SOGs, revising them as needed, to ensure compliance with the applicable workplace safety requirements.

The Department has an established practice of monitoring the NFPA standards and incorporating them where applicable, as demonstrated by many of the Department's safety programs based upon both WAC 296-305 and NFPA standards. By doing this, many workplace safety practices are incorporated into the Department's operating procedures and training programs. For example, the Department has actively participated in the county-wide development and implementation of the Kitsap County Incident Management Procedures (ITAC), as well as the Firefighter Self-Survival & Rapid Intervention documents. Both documents are intended to establish standardized emergency operating procedures and are designed to specifically incorporate the provisions needed to comply with both WAC 296-305 and relevant NFPA standards.

Conclusions/Findings: As indicated in Strategic Priority #1, a majority of the Department's SOGs regarding workplace safety have not been updated for several years but are in general compliance with the current WAC 296-305 standards. When the updated WAC 296-305 is promulgated, it will be important to thoroughly

⁵ WAC 296-305, Safety Standards for Fire Fighters, (03/2006 Issue). Section 296-305-05503 (9).

audit the Department's SOGs against the new standard, revising them as applicable.

In addition, it will be important to continue to actively support the development and implementation of standardized emergency operating procedures such as the Kitsap County Incident Management Procedures (ITAC), as well as the Firefighter Self-Survival & Rapid Intervention documents.



The most important safety issue for the Department to take action on is the accountability for and enforcement of existing workplace safety policies, SOGs, and emergency operating procedures. There are many workplace safety programs that need to be more effectively institutionalized within the organization's culture and day-to-day operations. This requires more accurate and efficient records management, program enforcement, and supervisory accountability.

Recommendation: The Department should ensure that all policies and SOGs comply with the industry standards applicable to workplace safety. This includes the following recommended program goals:

1. Ensure effective enforcement and supervisory accountability of the Department's current workplace safety policies and SOGs.

2. Ensure that the workplace safety programs are adequately supported with accurate and efficient records management systems.
3. Ensure that workplace safety policies and SOGs comply with WAC 296-305 standards.
4. Incorporate emergency operating procedures that promote value-based risk management principles and establish effective provisions for responder safety.
5. Implement workplace safety programs designed to embrace workplace safety as an intentional culture.
6. Document and follow-up on workplace safety violations.

Action Items: Based on the recommended goals, the following objectives offer a framework for ensuring that the Department's workplace safety policies and SOGs comply with industry standards.

Short-Term Objectives (2010 - 2011)

1. Audit and revise as needed, each of the relevant safety programs to ensure they are effectively implemented and adhered to.
2. Evaluate the Department's degree of supervisory accountability to ensure it effectively meets expectations.
3. Update any SOGs known to be non-compliant with the current edition of WAC 296-305.
4. Upon adoption and distribution, audit and revise as needed, each of the Department's workplace safety program policies and SOGs against the updated WAC 296-305 safety standards.
5. Upon promulgation, audit and revise as needed, each of the Department's operational policies and SOGs against the updated WAC 296-305 safety standards.
6. Develop and adopt an implementation plan for complying with any WAC 296-305 requirements the Department is unable to immediately comply with.

Medium-Term Objectives (2012 - 2015)

- 7. Establish a periodic review process that systematically audits workplace safety policies and SOGs against the applicable industry standards.

Strategic Priority 4: Develop and implement an Officer Development program.

Background: The Department currently operates with three career chief officers, the Fire Chief and two Assistant Chiefs, who serve as the Department’s administrative chiefs as well as filling the on-call duty chief role on a rotational basis. Two volunteer assistant chief officers support the Department’s volunteer program. A day-shift Captain serves as the Department’s Training and Safety Officer. Three shift Captains serve as the on-duty shift commanders, one assigned to each of the three duty shifts. When the shift Captains are off duty, a cadre of career firefighters have been selected to serve as acting Captains, responsible for backfilling in the absence of a shift Captain. Four volunteer company officers are assigned to support the Department’s volunteer program.

The Washington State Department of Labor and Industries WAC 296-305, Safety Standards for Fire Fighters establishes a series of safety standards to which fire departments are held accountable. As this relates to a fire department’s responsibility for officer development, these requirements⁵ stipulate that:

(9) The employer shall provide training and education for all members commensurate with those duties and functions that members are expected to perform. Such training and education shall be provided to members before they perform emergency activities. Fire service leaders and training instructors shall be provided with training and education which is more comprehensive than that provided to the general membership of the fire department.

The safety standard only defines the employer’s responsibility and establishes a mandate that fire officers receive training and education that specifically qualifies them to assume the duties of a leadership position. The standard stops short of actually stipulating what those duties entail and what constitutes commensurate training and education. The Department’s job descriptions and operational policies establish and define a fire officer’s duties and responsibilities. Once duties are defined, there are many well-established industry standards such as *NFPA 1021*, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification that can be used to establish the performance standards applicable to various fire officer positions. The purpose of the NFPA professional qualification standards is to specify the minimum job performance requirements that a fire department can use to define member qualifications.

Given the litigious nature of American society, the



significance of this training requirement warrants serious attention. It is essential that fire officers be qualified to perform their duties safely and effectively. WAC 296-305 and *NFPA 1021* are the industry standards that a fire officer’s training, education, qualifications, and performance will be measured against. Failing to do so, sets the stage for the Department to face the consequence of unintentional liability. In addition, fire officers are

⁵ WAC 296-305, Safety Standards for Fire Fighters, (03/2006 Issue). Section 296-305-05503 (9).

individually at risk of personal liability if their actions are found to be negligent.

Statistics & Research: For many of the Department's current fire officers, little documentation exists to substantiate training and educational qualifications. This does not imply they are not qualified or incapable of performing their duties; it simply indicates the absence of them having completed a structured training and education program to substantiate their credentials as fire officers.

Article 12 of the Department's collective bargaining agreement, states: "The Operations Chief shall determine if a member is qualified to work outside their assigned classification." This language, in concert with an Acting Qualifications Checklist, is what serves as the basis for qualifying firefighters to act as shift captains. The contract language is expanded upon with a series of subjective performance criteria that calls for the candidate to "Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Operations Chief . . ." The language as it is applied, places discretionary authority upon the Operations Chief, which makes him the sole authority for obtaining their qualifications to serve as fire officers, as opposed to utilizing industry standards as a basis for objective measurement and testing criteria. This discretionary authority and subjective criteria could place the Operations Chief in a position of having to assume personal liability.

The modern day fire service has become more than just another trade. The fire service is quickly evolving as a profession where the expectations of higher education have come to play an integral role in officer development. Two-year degrees are quickly becoming common place for company officers and four-year degrees are all but essential for assuming chief officer positions. The Department currently has a number of career members who have attained college degrees.

Conclusions/Findings: The Department currently has no structured training program to provide the

training and education needed to support fire officer qualification. Consequently, the Department's fire officers lack the professional credentials needed to demonstrate, with credibility, that they have been trained to a level that is commensurate with assigned duties. Given the vulnerability this creates, implementing an officer development program is necessary for fulfilling the Department's current and future leadership needs.



Recommendations: The Department should develop and implement an officer development program so that fire officers and acting fire officers are adequately trained to assume the duties and functions they are expected to assume. This includes the following recommended program goals:

1. Evaluate fire officer job descriptions to assure their prescribed duties and responsibilities accurately reflect the Department's expectations.
2. Adopt the Officer Development Handbook developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs as a model for officer development.
3. Develop an officer development training program with curriculum and performance standards based on NFPA professional qualification standards.

4. Establish eligibility requirements to ensure and substantiate that members are qualified to assume positions of fire officer responsibility.

Action Items: The following objectives offer a framework for implementing a fire officer development program based on the recommended goals.

Short-Term Objectives (2010-2011)

1. Continue to conduct quarterly officer meeting/development sessions with mandatory attendance to provide on-going training related to fire department operations.
2. Audit and revise as needed, each of the existing fire officer job descriptions to ensure their prescribed duties, responsibilities, and eligibility requirements accurately reflect the Department's expectations and relevant standards.
3. Where absent, create job descriptions for existing positions as well as for future positions forecasted in the Department's long range Strategic Plan.
4. Audit and revise as needed, the eligibility requirements for qualification as an acting Captain.
5. Develop, adopt, and implement an acting Captain task book so that firefighters are provided with a roadmap for attaining qualification as an acting Captain.
6. Develop, adopt, and implement a process to objectively validate the attainment of acting Captain eligibility requirements.
7. Audit existing members to determine and document what IFSAC certifications they have obtained.
8. For those members who seek fire officer advancement, develop individualized plans for obtaining prerequisite IFSAC certifications such as Firefighter I and Firefighter II.

Medium-Term Objectives (2013-2015)

1. Develop and adopt the eligibility requirements for qualification as a company officer.
2. Develop, adopt, and implement a company officer task book so that firefighters are provided with a roadmap for attaining company officer qualifications.
3. Develop, adopt, and implement a process to objectively validate the attainment of company officer eligibility requirements.
4. Develop and adopt the eligibility requirements for qualification as a chief officer.
5. Develop, adopt, and implement a chief officer task book so that company officers are provided with a roadmap for attaining chief officer qualifications.
6. Develop, adopt, and implement a process to objectively validate the attainment of chief officer eligibility requirements.

Long-Term Objectives (2015-2019)

1. Develop, adopt, and implement a program to support fire officer succession planning.

Area of Focus: WSRB



Strategic Priority 5: Prepare for a re-rate in 2009 and improve rating from a 7 to a 5. Maintain or improve rating beyond 2009.

Background: The Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB) rating affects the fire protection portions of both residential homeowners and commercial insurance rates. A change in rate class can affect the fire protection portion of insurance rates by up to 20%. Since the Department's re-rate in 1999, the entire Island has been rated a Class 7 by the WSRB. At that time, the Department was approximately 20 points from the next worst level.

Periodically, the WSRB conducts affirmation visits whereby a determination is made as to whether the jurisdiction's current rating still applies or has gotten worse. In October 2007, an affirmation visit was conducted by the WSRB and the Department's Class 7 was affirmed.

During the affirmation visit, a request was made for an additional visit in order for the WSRB to evaluate improvements made since 1999. This was completed and resulted in a re-classification of the Island to a Class 6, effective November 2007.

Statistics and Research: Gaining any amount of credit to move to a better public protection class rating will require a significant investment in fire department staffing and/or water supply infrastructure. The Department has not received a detailed rating visit in 10 years, making it difficult to estimate improvement or degradation with any accuracy. Calculating specific return on investment for potential changes included in this Strategic Plan will require a re-rating visit to establish a new baseline before being able to ascertain any impacts.

Conclusions and Findings: A review of WSRB rating criteria showed that the following programs support efforts to maintain and improve the risk classification of Bainbridge Island:

- Public education
- Fire inspections
- Fire hydrant inspections
- Hose testing
- Training (including Officer and driver training programs)
- Supporting Firefighter I certification



For staffing credit, three active volunteer members are considered equivalent to one paid response member, so any fluctuation in resident volunteers,

rostered volunteers, and/or volunteer responses will have an impact on attaining this strategic priority.

Increased staffing, as recommended within this Strategic Plan, will enhance a number of programs that may improve the Department's rating upon further review. These programs include:

- Prefire Planning: Staffing at all three stations will potentially triple the number of prefire plans currently being completed.
- Company Level Inspection Program: Staffing may provide the Department with the ability to increase inspection frequency to semi-annual for some occupancies, potentially providing additional points during a re-rate.
- Additional full-time career firefighters may have a significant impact on rating within the Fire Department portion of a re-rate. During the most recent grading, 45% of the deficiency points in the Fire Department portion came from sections in Company

Officers, Department Manning, and Engine and Ladder Company Unit Staffing. Though it is difficult to determine, several categories within the staffing portion of the grading could be impacted, including on-duty strength and off-shift response. An additional staffed engine (with 2 full-time personnel) at each of the outlying stations is the equivalent of 12 volunteers responding. Company-level officers (i.e., Lieutenants) would also likely provide additional credit.

Recommendations: Continue to support the above mentioned programs. Support the staffing recommendations included in this document.

Delay re-rate plan until 2011 when some of the recommendations and programs in this Strategic Plan have been implemented and will have a positive effect on the WSRB rating, potentially providing a reduction in insurance premiums for Bainbridge Island citizens and businesses.

Area of Focus: Facilities and Equipment



Strategic Priority 6: *Execute the apparatus replacement plan and identify emerging technologies to help the Department meet determined service levels.*

Background: The Department Facilities and Equipment Committee has produced, updated, and worked to execute the apparatus replacement plan as approved by the Board of Commissioners. With the approval of the temporary levy lid lift in 2005, the Department has been able to maintain, improve, and replace apparatus and equipment as identified by the Committee.

The only apparatus identified within the replacement plan that have not been replaced, and will require replacement during the term of this Strategic Plan, are the Aid Units, a Utility Truck, and staff vehicles.

The Department does not currently budget and allocate funds on an annual basis to an apparatus replacement fund. In recent years, apparatus replacement funding has come from the general fund, or from a temporary levy lid lift.

Conclusions and Findings: Three of the four Aid/Medic Units have been retrofitted through the temporary lid lift funding. One still needs retrofitting. Apparatus replacement projections show that in 2014, one of the Aid Units will need replacement.

Recommendations: Aid/Medic Unit replacements can be funded through an EMS levy. Funding should be allocated on an annual basis from this type of levy to ensure a funding source is available for projected replacements.

Funding for non-EMS specific apparatus should be included in short and long-range financial planning. The Planning group recommends that the Board of Commissioners begin discussions to create a plan for allocating funds to an apparatus replacement fund.

Strategic Priority 7:

- **Station 21:** Extend the service life for 10 years within the existing shell
- **Station 22:** Perform a study to determine whether to rebuild, remodel, and/or relocate.
- **Station 23:** Create a plan to maintain the facility so there is no decrease in the projected lifespan



Background: The Department currently has three fire stations. The Department also owns and maintains an old facility on Day Road, historically used as a fire station apparatus bay, which is currently used for storage and leased space. Each of these stations varies in age, current use, and state of repair.

Statistics & Research

Fire Station Descriptions

Station 21 (8895 Madison Avenue NE) serves as the Department's Headquarters and houses the Administrative and Operations Divisions and the Fire Marshal's Office. The station was built in 1979 and was added onto in 2000 to increase apparatus bay space. Currently the station houses seven full-time administrative personnel, up to six full-time emergency response personnel per shift, and 10 apparatus. A separate building also provides living quarters for four resident volunteer firefighters. A fleet fueling facility is located at Station 21 as well as several response trailers that are kept in the staff parking lot. The Bainbridge Island Ambulance Association rents apparatus bay space for two of its ambulances as well.

Station 22 (7934 NE Bucklin Hill Road) is the Department's oldest active station, built in 1959. This station currently houses four apparatus and has living quarters for three resident volunteer firefighters. The Department's Fleet Maintenance program is stationed here as well as the office for the Emergency Vehicle Technician. Station 22 has several ongoing maintenance-related issues including a sinking apparatus bay floor. The property was surveyed in 2008.



Station 23 (12985 Phelps Road NE) is the Department's newest station and was constructed in 1996. It houses offices and classrooms for the Department's Training program. It also includes a drill tower and drill ground for hands-on training. Fitness equipment is kept here to support the Department's health and wellness programs. A separate building provides living space for three resident volunteer firefighters. Station 23 is also designated as the back-up Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the Island. The Bainbridge Island Ambulance Association also leases space for its administrative offices here.



The former fire station apparatus garage, located at 9421 NE Day Road, was built in 1963. It formerly served as Station 23 until the new facility was built on Phelps Road. It is currently being leased to the Bainbridge Island Police Department as storage space.

Facility Assessments

A variety of assessments for each facility was conducted to address the strategic priorities set forth by the Board of Commissioners. Prior to these assessments taking place, two major preparatory tasks were completed in 2008.

The first was a Department member's attendance at a Fire Station Needs Assessment and Design Conference. This prepared members of the

Strategic Planning Group to conduct facility use and needs assessments as well as prepare rough estimates of future construction costs for proposed improvements.

The second was participation in the acquisition of and training in the DECCAN software program for Kitsap County by CENCOM. DECCAN is a suite of software applications that allows users to analyze dispatch data to review past response time performance, and to predict future performance of stations and units. This software suite was used to analyze response time performance for the current and candidate sites for Fire Station 22.

Of the variety of facility assessments that took place, one of the first was a survey of current uses of each station. Members were surveyed to gather information about current and future needs of each facility. The Strategic Planning Group then reviewed the information and compared it with the projected needs and proposed changes found elsewhere in this document (e.g., staffing).

Fire Station 22 required a location assessment. This assessment included an analysis of alternate locations. The areas of Lynwood Center and 3T Road were modeled. A number of factors were reviewed including, but not limited to, call volume, response time performance, call distribution, and site suitability.

Conclusions/Findings

Several short and long-term needs for the Department's fire stations were identified to facilitate the strategic priorities.

The direction from the Board of Commissioners was to have Fire Station 21's service life extended for 8 more years (10 years at the time of initiation of the Strategic Planning process) within the existing shell of the building. The needs assessment identified that office space and sleeping quarters will be needed within that time frame. Several options exist, including gradual conversion of the multi-purpose

room to additional office space or relocating some administrative offices to a location other than Station 21. Minor remodel work within Station 21 may be required to facilitate operations over the next 8 years. For example, carpet replacement was completed in 2008. Maintaining the existing apparatus bay space and reconstructing the administrative offices may be an option when considering the improvements that may be required at the end of the 8-year period. Planning for Station 21 improvements should be considered during the planning for projects at Station 22 and 23.

Fire Station 22 was determined to be inadequate given the Department's needs for that facility. This was a guiding premise of the strategic priority for this station. A location study was performed and included sites at Lynwood Center and 3T Road in addition to the existing site on Bucklin Hill Road. The results of the analysis showed no significant improvement in overall service from Station 22's emergency service zone (ESZ) if the station were moved to an alternate location. Several other important factors were considered including property availability and size, future development capacity, and other site design restrictions. Cost of property acquisition was also considered. The current Bucklin Hill site was determined to be well-suited for south-end deployments because of its proximity to a virtual crossroads of all major roadways heading south. The low call volume to the furthest areas in the ESZ did not generate a significant benefit from relocating the station farther south. Being able to provide some overlap of coverage in Station 21's ESZ was deemed beneficial since over 60% of the Department's call volume occurs in that ESZ. Additionally, internal discussion and review suggests that the Station 22 property, at 3.11 acres, is suitable for a structure that will meet projected apparatus, staffing, business, and maintenance facility needs. Several major condition factors of the existing building including age, layout, and a sinking apparatus bay floor suggest rebuilding the facility to be the most sensible option as compared to remodeling.

Fire Station 23 is expected to meet its intended

lifespan. This station has a second phase in the original plan that has yet to be completed. This phase entails construction of additional apparatus bay space. This could better position existing apparatus for deployment, as well as provide space to shelter some of the Department's trailers that are currently kept outside. Interior sleeping quarters are currently limited to three individual rooms; however, this will only meet the minimum staffing goal of career and volunteer members projected for 2013. Additional sleeping quarters may be required if the resident quarters are not utilized to provide the 4th member per shift. In addition, other improvements to various training props could be undertaken; however, a detailed study has yet to be performed. Such a study may be included in a future addendum.

Old Fire Station 23 on Day Road is being used by the Department in a very limited capacity. Several recent issues have arisen including damage to a neighboring residence from falling trees. Concerns about juvenile activity on the property should also be considered. No additional use of the building by the Department is proposed at this time.

Recommendations:

Station 21:

- Monitor workspace usage and make adjustments, as necessary and outlined above in the conclusions/findings section, within the existing building footprint until permanent station improvements can be made.
- Begin planning for station improvements in 2014 to ensure completion of recommended improvements to meet the 10-year deadline proposed by the Board.

Station 22:

- Rebuild station at the present location on Bucklin Hill Road.

Station 23:

- Complete the apparatus bay expansion.
- Develop a training facility master plan.

Other:

- Surplus and sell the Old Station 23 property on Day Road.
- Coordinate funding, planning, and execution of all fixed facility improvements.

Action Items:

- Authorize surplus and sale of Old Station 23 on Day Road. Proceeds of the sale should be reserved for planning and execution of proposed improvements for Station 22 and 23.
- Authorize planning efforts with an architectural firm to begin conceptual design and costing for rebuilding Station 22. Determine funding mechanism.
- Authorize planning efforts with an architectural firm to review existing Station 23 improvement plans and costing for the project. Determine funding mechanism based on cost estimates.
- Begin discussions to include facility maintenance needs in short and long-range financial planning. The Planning group recommends that the Board of Commissioners create a plan for allocating expense funds to the capital fund for facility maintenance needs.



Area of Focus: Community Relations



Strategic Priority 8: *Work to create an Island-wide Community Emergency Resource Teams (CERT) network. The plan should detail rate of CERTs to be created annually. Align the plan with COBI, and ensure plan is relevant to the level of projected effectiveness.*

Background: The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.



Statistics & Research: CERT is not a utilized disaster preparedness program at this time in Kitsap County. Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management began to focus on the Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) program and has continued support of the Kitsap Practicing Reasonable Emergency Preparedness (K-PREP) program. With this in mind, it would be more successful to support the county-wide approach to preparedness, which is designed to be aligned with the EOC and Area Command Center (ACC) approach used in Kitsap County.

Recommendation: Support the county-wide MYN and K-PREP programs. Enhance public education

efforts to include personal preparedness messages aimed at household and business preparedness. Once the role is identified, actively support the City of Bainbridge Island staff tasked with preparedness education, within the budgetary and staffing limitations set forth by Department management.

Strategic Priority 9: *Using Department members, specifically special service volunteers, promote an environment that is focused on community education and involvement by interested members.*

Background: The CERT program has historically had a cadre of volunteer members willing to assist with special projects and events. Recently, this need has expanded to include technology based projects not necessarily based in community education, such as GIS mapping. Members are encouraged to participate in ongoing annual programs such as Fun Fair, Pancake Breakfast, First Aid Frenzy, CPR courses, and CPR education in the schools.

The Department promotes opportunities for involvement through multiple methods of communication including email, drill announcements, and face to face communications. The Volunteer Program Coordinator is made aware of upcoming programs and needs so as to assist with recruitment for these projects.

Statistics & Research: Upon review, the following accomplishments in 2008 and 2009 met the intent of this objective:

- Implemented new record-keeping system to track public education contacts.
- Implemented 'soft contact' public education program that includes safety messages provided via banners on Winslow Way and

through slide advertising at the Pavilion Movie Theater. This program provides over 100,000 soft contacts annually.

- Developed relationship with BITV to provide information via cable television.
- Fun Fair, Fire Prevention Week education efforts, CPR, etc.

Recommendations:

- Increase community outreach and public relations efforts to include general Department information and services in an effort to increase public awareness about the Department.
- Further develop public education programs within the organization per WSRB criteria.
- Continue to apply for fire prevention grants.
- Enhance public education and community relations efforts to include distribution of emergency preparedness information. Incorporate preparedness information into general public education messages and Department events.

Strategic Priority 10: Establish a routine of print media communications

- Post minutes on website within 1 week of the meeting approving the minutes.
- Create a community relations group tasked with face-to-face interaction with the community on topics of funding and creating transparency to our business.

These goals represent functional issues and will be addressed within the annual work plan objectives of the Fire Prevention and Administration Divisions.

The Planning group tried to solicit interest from the membership in participating in a community relations group. This resulted in responses from members of the Planning group only. The Strategic Plan includes a Public Educator/Outreach position in the future, so interim community education and outreach will be assigned to staff and volunteers as available.

Strategic Priority 11: Rewrite and approve a Mission Statement for the Department

Background: The current Mission Statement for the Department was created and adopted in 2002. The Statement was adopted as part of the Mission, Vision, and Values statements for the Department, which were created through a committee process and edited by the Board of Commissioners. The current Statement is:

The mission of the Bainbridge Island Fire Department is to safeguard lives, property and the environment by responding to fires, medical emergencies and disasters. We recruit, train and equip our members to deliver programs aimed at emergency response, public education, prevention and recovery.

Conclusions & Findings: The current Mission Statement is too long and implies that the Department only safeguards lives, property, and the environment through response, when in fact, prevention and education play a key role in that endeavor.

Furthermore, a shorter, succinct Mission Statement would be better embraced by the membership and more easily shared with the community. In an attempt to include the Mission Statement on any new business cards ordered, an abridged version has been utilized.

Recommendations: Adopt the following as the approved Mission Statement for the Department, and review the Vision and Values statements for applicability.

The Mission of the Bainbridge Island Fire Department is to safeguard lives, property, and the environment through prevention, education, and emergency response.

Area of Focus: Consolidation



Strategic Priority 12: *Remain neutral and aware. Continue to pursue resource sharing and efficiency opportunities*

Background: There are current efforts in the south end of Kitsap County to create a Regional Fire Authority by merging three fire districts. At this time, the Department is not considering consolidation. However, in an effort to reduce unnecessary taxation, and improve efficiencies, the Department has been aggressively seeking avenues to share resources with other Bainbridge Island government entities and other Kitsap County Fire Districts.

Statistics & Research: In an effort to share



resources with adjacent fire districts and in the spirit of cooperation, North Kitsap Fire and Rescue, Poulsbo Fire Department, and Bainbridge Island Fire Department have formalized a cooperative working relationship.

The “Tri-District” cooperation includes joint Commissioners’ meetings, monthly fire chief meetings as well as monthly meetings of the Operations and Training officers.

The Tri-District cooperation allows for the sharing of resources while allowing individual fire districts to maintain their unique cultures and community identification.

Due to this new found cooperation, the need to investigate future consolidation efforts is not a priority at this time. The Bainbridge Island Fire Department’s key to success is the ability to identify with our community and provide services which meet expectations of Island residents.

Conclusions/Findings: There are a number of areas where the Department is currently exercising resource sharing. These include:

- The Kitsap County fire districts, and CENCOM, jointly purchased the DECCAN program to reduce costs and improve dispatch capabilities.
- The development of additional data sets in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format is a desire of many local agencies in and around Bainbridge Island. The Fire Department has partnered extensively with the City of Bainbridge Island, Kitsap County, and CENCOM to further develop GIS capabilities. These are used in our response to emergencies and fire protection planning on a daily basis. Additional partnerships have been formed with other Kitsap County fire agencies, the Suquamish Tribe, Kitsap Public

Utilities District, and others.

- The Department shares equipment with NKFR and Poulsbo necessitating purchase by only one district. This equipment includes FIT testing equipment, apparatus hoists, apparatus maintenance tools, and sign-making equipment.
- The Department is able to negotiate lower rates for fuel and EVT uniform cleaning services through bulk purchasing due to our collaboration with other jurisdictions.
- Members of the Bainbridge Island Fire Investigation Team include personnel from the Fire Department and the City of Bainbridge Island Police Department. This collaborative effort allows a balanced mix of fire and law enforcement expertise. In addition, the Fire Investigation Team is a part of the Region 1 Fire Investigation Task Force which is comprised of fire investigators from Kitsap, Mason, Jefferson, and Clallam Counties. Participating agencies in the Task

Force may be called upon to assist in large and/or complex investigations that cannot be handled by a single jurisdiction within this area.

- The Fire Department is a participating member of the Kitsap County Fire Chiefs' Fire and Life Safety Division. This group is comprised of all other fire prevention agencies in Kitsap County. Participation in this group has provided the opportunity to develop some common criteria for plan review between inspection agencies and to coordinate public education efforts.

Recommendations: Continue to remain neutral and aware. The Department is committed to continue to seek out opportunities to work with adjacent fire districts and other interested parties where a mutual benefit of sharing resources can provide improvement in customer service, as well as financial cost savings.

Area of Focus: Service Levels



Action Items: Continue to participate with other city agencies and county fire agencies to identify areas where shared resources will benefit the involved parties.

The Department provides services in the areas of:

- Emergency Medical Services – basic and advanced life support, transports, and assists
- Fire Suppression and Hazardous Materials Response – structural, wildland, marine, automobile firefighting; fuel leaks and other hazardous materials spills
- Fire Prevention – pre-fire planning, code inspections, plan review, and hydrant testing
- Technical Rescue – confined space, trench, rope, and collapse rescues
- Public Education and Outreach – CPR instruction, school education programs and community outreach
- Disaster Response - mass casualty incidents, natural or man-made disaster response

This abbreviated list provides a short summary of the many services provided by the Department. To provide these services, the Department must have the appropriate resources and goals. The planning group has created a revised Standard Operating Guideline (SOG), detailing service level goals and expectations, based on the following Strategic Priorities. Adoption of the revised SOG is recommended, to be titled Fire Department Services as part of the adoption of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Priority 13: *Determine the current baseline service level with relation to the relative aspects of NFPA 1710 and 1720 and create a plan to incrementally improve/increase the Department's level of compliance (10% every 3 years).*

Background: EMS response time standards are included in NFPA 1710. The revised SOG details response time expectations and standards, as derived from NFPA 1710 and the applicable State standards.

NFPA 1710 EMS Compliance Report

Criteria: BLS Response Time – 5 minutes or less
90% of the time
(includes BLS Turnout time of 1 minute or less)
ALS Response Time – 9 minutes or less
90% of the time
(includes ALS Turnout time of 1 minute or less)

Incident Types: Emergency Medical Responses

Compliance:

Year	BLS Turnout	BLS Travel	ALS Turnout	ALS Travel
2006	37%	65%	41%	93%
2007	34%	62%	35%	89%
2008	39%	63%	46%	91%

Due to a lack of accurate historical data and changes in the way responses are tracked, identifying compliance with NFPA 1720 for fire response is difficult, at best. Volunteer responses directly to a fire scene have not been recorded historically for time or total personnel on-scene purposes. For discussion purposes, the following compliance report was compiled to display the potential range of compliance with the 10 personnel on-scene in 10 minutes or less criteria of NFPA 1720:

NFPA 1720 Fire Compliance Report

Criteria: 10 personnel on scene in 10 minutes
80% of the time

Incident Types: Structure Fires

Compliance:

Year	# of Events	Minimum*	Average*	Maximum*
2002	8	22%	27%	33%
2003	10	20%	35%	50%
2004	9	11%	38%	66%
2005	9	22%	33%	44%
2006	8	0%	33%	66%
2007	16	12%	44%	75%
2008	8	25%	25%	25%

= number of working structure fires

* = Absolute compliance of some incidents could not be determined due to the lack of response times for personnel responding in POVs. This resulted in a minimum and maximum range being presented. Minimum assumes no POVs contribute to the 10/10. Maximum assumes enough of the responding POVs contributed to the 10/10.

The reported maximum of 25% in 2008 is unacceptable. Personnel projections address incrementally increasing guaranteed staffing numbers to improve compliance levels over the term of this Strategic Plan.

Statistics & Research: Due to the response information being recorded and the reporting software being utilized, historical statistics needed for analysis are only recorded in part. Most volunteer responses are not incorporated into historical response statistics due to the difficulty in recording times relating to personal responses, making baseline determinations difficult to ascertain.

Historically, as a predominately volunteer organization, the Department's operational

philosophy was to hire minimal career staff, who would then be assigned the priority of getting apparatus to emergency scenes. Volunteer members would subsequently arrive in their personal vehicles (POV) to assist with the emergency response needs, as available. Often POV responders arrived at a scene prior to emergency apparatus, rendering initial aid. However, 2009 statistics show that less than 11% of calls have a POV responder, either off-duty career or volunteer member, and that responder was at the emergency scene prior to apparatus only 6% of the time. Increased traffic, traffic calming measures, and reduced speed limits have impacted a Department member's ability to respond POV. Additionally, both training regulations and increasing call volumes have been reported by the membership as reasons that volunteer activity levels are decreasing, potentially affecting POV responses. The 2009 statistics may be an indication that the historical philosophy of career members supporting volunteers is no longer applicable, as it is career staff and volunteers standing by at a station that are the only responders 89% of the time.

Historically, NFPA 1720 was the applicable standard with the Department's heavy reliance on volunteers. However, statistics suggest that reliance has shifted to career members, making NFPA 1710 a standard that should be considered to derive response time objectives for the Department.

Conclusions: NFPA 1720 may not be the best sole indicator of appropriate service level response goals as the large majority of emergency responses are provided by career members. An audit of emergency responses would show that the Department is primarily a career-member response department, with NFPA 1710 being an appropriate fire service standard for consideration in determining general response time goals. Strategic objectives should be based on applicable standards so as to avoid potential legal issues.

Recommendations: The committee merged and edited SOGs 360 EMS Service Levels and 319 Fire

Suppression Service Levels to create a single SOG that, at a minimum, identifies service level considerations, initial incident response time goals, and initial incident personnel response goals compliant with NFPA 1720 and/or 1710 where applicable, RCW 52.33.040, WAC 296-305, and the National Incident Management System span of control recommendations. The committee recommends adoption of the drafted SOG, which identifies measurable goals and allows the Department to reach compliance incrementally as funding and resources are made available.

Additionally, staffing recommendations should identify any measurable effect toward attaining service level goals as identified in the edited SOG.

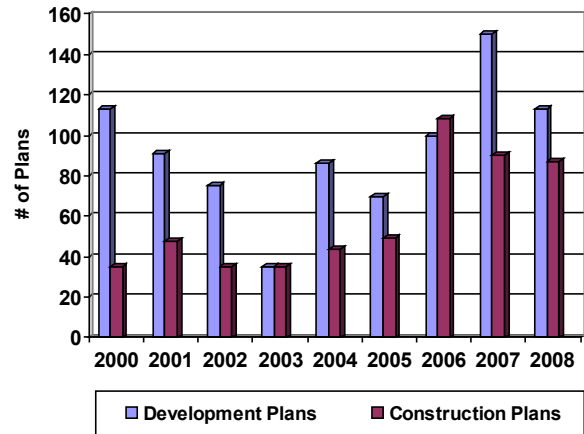
Action Items:

- Identify Service Level SOG baseline compliance levels with 2008 statistical information available.
- Approve the recommended Service Level SOG.
- Provide a 2009 Annual report based on the revised Service Level SOG. Review compliance levels and report increases and/or decreases to the Board of Commissioners.

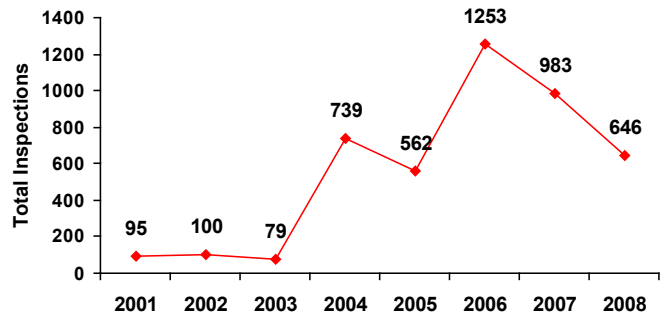
Strategic Priority 14: Advocate for improved fire & life safety guidelines by the City of Bainbridge Island.

Background: The International Fire Code provides the basis for the Department’s inspection and construction review programs (see charts). Plan reviews comprise one aspect of the construction review program. Plan review activities range greatly due to development and other economic indicators. The inspections completed as a part of the inspection program have varied from year to year based upon a variety of factors including scope and funding of the Fire Safety Services Agreement with the City of Bainbridge Island, staffing, organization of occupancy data, and education of persons whose premises we inspect. The Bainbridge Island Municipal Code has

Plan Review Detail 2000-2008

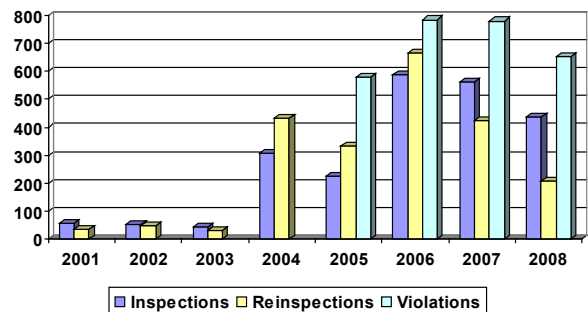


**Fire Inspection Program
Total Inspections 2001-2008**



**Fire Inspection Program
Detailed Breakdown 2001-2008**

*No Violation Data Available 2001-2004





not historically been consistent with the International Fire Code as adopted by Washington State, which has resulted in inconsistent fire protection planning and development standards. Moreover, representatives of the Department were unable to attend City Council meetings to advocate for change due to Fire Department Board of Commissioners meetings being held simultaneously. In 2008, the Department changed Board of Commissioner meeting dates to better allow staff to attend City Council meetings for advocating purposes.

Findings: In mid-2007 the Fire Marshal's Office began work to overhaul the way the City-adopted Fire Code is organized and correlated in the Bainbridge Island Municipal Code (BIMC). It also identified the need to update several local amendments that were being enforced at the time. In January 2008 the first of several meetings was held with City staff to explain the proposed changes and how they might be implemented. After being vetted by City staff, it was decided to implement the changes in two phases. The first phase involved the reorganization of existing provisions in the BIMC into a new Title called 'Fire Code'. This phase also included clear enforcement and appeal provisions. This phase involved several City Council, City Council Community Relations and Public Safety Committee meetings as well as a Public Meeting and was approved June 27, 2008. The second phase involved several substantive changes to local amendments to the Fire Code including updating hydrant spacing rules, fire flow requirements, and fire apparatus access provisions. This phase also went through a similar meeting and approval process and was ultimately approved September 11, 2008.

Recommendation: Support continued participation in State and National code change processes to prepare for changes at the local level. Continue to support evaluation of existing local amendments and the need for any additional local amendments.

Action Items: None.

Area of Focus: Personnel



Strategic Priority 15:

- Develop a staffing model that would allow for responding apparatus to have two or more persons as frequently as possible.
- Create a staffing plan that addresses the strategic objectives with minimum impact to the budget and which maximizes use of the volunteer core and Ambulance Association.
- Maintain the positive working relationship with BIAA, using the assumption that they will handle 95% of BLS transports.
- Improve the volunteer program: provide opportunities, recruit, and retain.



Background: The Planning group unanimously agrees that there is an immediate need for additional firefighting and EMS response personnel. The primary driver of this need is safety, both for the community and the responders. The past practice of apparatus responding with one member to emergency medical and fire calls has historically placed the Department at an increased risk of injuring its members and/or of providing inadequate patient care. In an attempt to minimize some of this risk, the Department began a six-month pilot program where shift hours

were altered to increase evening and weekend staffing. The result of that pilot program involved a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, which was subsequently approved, to increase the minimum staffing to four responders (current levels).

A Duty Captain supervises the on-duty personnel, both career and volunteer members. Due to minimal staffing, rarely does the number of members on duty exceed the maximum span of control recommendation of seven (7). However, if staffing is adequate at a given period of time to open both outlying stations, the NIMS/ICS recommended span of control is exceeded, and two stations are operating without direct supervision.

Currently the Department's response capabilities are predicated on leave usage and volunteer availability. The current minimum is four personnel on shift at any given time, staffing only Station 21 (Madison Avenue). When additional members are on shift or volunteering for extended standby, the outlying stations may be staffed in response teams of two or more. Due to leave schedules and minimal volunteer extended standby activity, the outlying stations are rarely staffed.

Current staffing levels restrict the number of available responders that can be allocated to any given incident. The planning group has proposed standards that require a minimum of two members for a BLS response, and four members for an ALS response. With the likelihood of only four members on shift at any given time, a single BLS call will substantially reduce the ability to respond to other citizens in need. A single ALS call will eliminate our initial station response capabilities altogether.

In order to produce a Strategic Plan that details

both current and future staffing needs, as well as a systematic process for accomplishing the short and long range goals contained within the Strategic Plan, the group discussed staffing priorities. The proposed staffing priorities, aimed at providing a clear matrix for making hiring and assignment decisions are as follows:

- 2 people responding in apparatus (member safety)
- 4 people minimum at station 21 (ALS and BLS units available)
- 2nd shift Paramedic
- Staff outlying stations with two, 7 days/week w/supervision
- Maximize hours of coverage
- Medical Services Officer
- Expand depth of command

The safety of the citizens we serve as well as the Department membership is the Department's top priority. Adequate personnel are needed at emergencies in order to minimize intervention time, provide quality patient care, ensure member safety, and provide logistical support.

Statistics and Research: In order to staff each station with two volunteer Firefighter/EMTs, it would require 4,320 hours of extended standby hours per month. Volunteer Firefighter/EMTs could assist in increasing staffing levels; however, to establish targeted staffing levels through the volunteer extended standby program will require 744 hours per month, per 24-hour shift position. This option is unlikely as over the past 12 months, the Department has averaged only

116 hours of extended standby per month.

The Department's neighboring jurisdictions: North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKFR) and Poulsbo Fire Department (PFD) are both similar jurisdictions in terms of population served and call volume. PFD has three and NKFR has four stations staffed with firefighters at all times, and NKFR also has a volunteer-only station. Both also have a volunteer membership, though the programs are vastly different from the Department's volunteer program. As displayed by the chart below, both neighboring districts have increased the number of personnel to provide guaranteed responses to emergency calls for service.

Conclusions and Findings: Volunteer recruitment, retention, and training opportunities are currently being addressed. In Strategic Priority #2, training opportunities are provided and not utilized by most of the volunteer membership. Efforts are currently underway to ensure volunteer compliance with training requirements and response expectations. The Volunteer Program Coordinator hired in 2008, has assisted greatly in ensuring that newly recruited volunteers understand training requirements and performance expectations. A cadre of volunteers is needed in the future to support emergency responses and programs.

The temporary pilot program the Department tested for efficiency and effectiveness was designed to support the goal of always having a minimum of two responders. However, the current staffing available

District	Population Served	Square Miles Served	Salaried Response Personnel	Response Personnel per 1000 of Population	2008 Emergency Responses	Annual Calls per Responder
NKFR	23000	45	31	1.35	2244	72
Poulsbo	32600	54	36	1.10	3412	95
CKFR	72000	115	72	1.00	6869	95
SKFR	83500	150	72	0.86	9079	126
BIFD	23000	28	18	0.78	2640	147

provides only the minimum number of personnel to staff Station 21, leaving outlying stations unstaffed most days. The adopted response time goals meet standards set both nationally and at the State level to provide timely emergency responses for both medical and fire-related emergencies. In order to meet these response time goals, the Department will need to staff all three stations.

The proposed staffing model, once implemented, will provide staffing for an initial BLS response from each station, reducing response times to both the north and south ends of Bainbridge Island and increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes of emergency medical interventions. Ideally, each station will be



staffed with a minimum of three: a career Lieutenant, a career Firefighter/EMT, and one volunteer Firefighter/EMT. Staffing at outlying stations will provide initial response for fire suppression calls, increasing the likelihood of meeting minimum on-scene personnel requirements to effect rescue or begin offensive fire suppression operations to reduce property loss.

Furthermore, expanding the depth of command and assigning Lieutenants to each station will ensure that span of control limits are not exceeded, and that station responsibilities are assigned to a single point of contact on each shift. Battalion Chiefs will be assigned supervision of three stations, each of which will have a minimum of one company supervised by the station Lieutenant.

Recommendations: Continue to encourage volunteer participation in Department programs and emergency responses. Continue to provide incentive programs designed to encourage responses and extended stand-bys to increase the number of personnel at an emergency response.

The Planning Group recommends maintaining the current working relationship with BIAA in which BLS transports are most often provided through the Ambulance Association. This provides a substantial savings to taxpayers, as the staffing necessary to provide this level of service would be excessive as compared to utilizing BIAA.

Staffing level recommendations are as follows:

Operations Division

If no funding limitations existed, hiring additional personnel immediately would allow the Department to staff all three stations and increase the depth of command necessary to provide supervision and scene management oversight for responding crews. However, we believe that funding limitations do exist, and a tiered implementation proposal, based on the hiring and assignment matrix, is as follows:

- 2010 Increase staffing to provide a minimum of 1 Firefighter/EMT and 1 Lieutenant at Station 22 daily; hire 1 Firefighter/Paramedic (hiring to take place as soon as EMS levy is approved).
- 2012 Hire 1 MSO at a Battalion Chief rank.
- 2013 Increase staffing to provide a minimum of 1 Firefighter/EMT and 1 Lieutenant at Station 23 daily, and 1 Lieutenant at Station 21 daily. Transition from Duty Captains to Battalion Chiefs.
- 2014+ Based on ALS call volume, hire an additional shift of Firefighter/Paramedics to allow for a minimum of 2 Firefighter/Paramedics on duty at all times.

2010 implementation steps would provide a 24-hour Lieutenant and 24-hour Firefighter/EMT at Station 22.

Furthermore, sending a Firefighter/Paramedic trainee to school, or hiring a lateral in 2010 would increase the Paramedic staffing to two per 24-hour shift, with a minimum staffing of one.

In 2012 a Battalion Chief-level MSO would be hired to manage the EMS division of the Department. The projected hiring in 2013 would provide a 24-hour Lieutenant at Stations 21 and 23, and would provide a 24-hour Firefighter/EMT at Station 23. With Lieutenants supervising the company at each station, the Captain position would be phased out in exchange for Battalion Chiefs.

Training Division

For the training division to support the increased personnel in Operations it will take additional personnel to create, implement and deliver that training. With increased personnel, the amount of time the training officer will have to devote to administer the training program will also increase, (see Training Addendum 1). To support the training division during this ten-year Strategic Plan the following staff requirements will be needed.

2010+ Assess the needs for administrative support and fill the position as needed. Currently the training division is supported by the Office Assistant for approximately four hours per week. The four hours only allows for records management and does not allow for any assistance in development or delivery.

2012+ Re-classify the Training Officer from a Captain to a Battalion Chief rank. This will allow the training division to support its role and functions within the Department. This will also align the Training Officer more with the responsibilities and duties assigned to the training division.

2013 Assign a Lieutenant to the training division. This would be a full time day position that would be solely responsible for development and delivery of training programs.

Fire Prevention Division

Staffing within the fire prevention division over the next ten years is dependent on the ability to provide service in a reasonable time period as well as on accommodating changes proposed within the Operations Division. Based on these underlying assumptions, the following additional staffing is proposed:

2010+ Assess needs for additional administrative support. This need is based upon required assistance within the fire prevention division as well as workload of existing administrative staff. Any future recommendations can be provided during routine Strategic Plan updates.



2010+ Assess the need for a Plan Review/Inspector. This need is largely dependent upon plan review and construction inspection needs. The need for this position is workload- and service delivery-based. Plan review turn-around time and fulfillment of inspection requests in a timely manner will be the foundation for determining when this position needs to be filled. These factors have yet to be developed; however, it is not anticipated that this position will be required in the next 5 years.

2010+ Implement a system whereby a member of the Fire Investigation Team is assigned to each shift. Currently, 2 full-time FF/EMTs serve on the Fire Investigation Team and each is assigned on a different shift. The Team is fully staffed with a mix of paid and volunteer staff. An additional paid member of the Fire Investigation Team will be considered only through attrition in the existing Team membership. Having an investigator on each shift will allow small and routine investigations to be handled immediately without the need to activate the entire Team. This will also allow an initial assessment of the scope of any investigation to occur prior to mobilizing resources.

2013 Hire 1 Public Education and Outreach / PIO Coordinator. The need for a dedicated person to manage outreach and education efforts is essential to our Mission. The need to provide information in a timely manner requires significant effort and coordination within a growing organization that only a full-time staff person can perform effectively and efficiently. Coordinating the Department's public education efforts is a natural fit given the aforementioned duties. 2013 was chosen because it is the proposed year to transition the Captain positions to Battalion Chiefs. Currently a Captain serves as the coordinator of all public education efforts. The transition to Battalion Chief will result in significant changes in duties and responsibilities and will require that public education duties be handled by a separate individual.

Administration

2010+ Review current administrative staffing structure for potential consolidation or additional cross-training to increase efficiencies, including the potential for outsourcing of personnel functions. Create a succession plan to address the management-level support staff leadership role.

2011 Consolidate Assistant Chief Job descriptions. Currently the job descriptions are specific instead of general in nature as per the industry standard. Creating a single Assistant Chief job classification that encompasses all responsibilities of the position, such as operations, fire prevention, and support services, would allow for better management and succession planning.

2012+ Analyze the need for additional administrative support staff following the first wave of implementation of the Operations Division staffing recommendation. With increased operations personnel, it is believed that some functions, currently performed by administrative personnel could be performed within the work programs of the expanded Operations Division positions.

Action Items: Adopt recommendations and cost out the necessary funding required for implementation. Identify a funding stream to support implementation of personnel recommendations.

Area of Focus: Funding Streams



Strategic Priority 16: Review funding options and make recommendations based on funding needs.

Background: As an independent taxing district, separate from the City of Bainbridge Island, the Department has one source of revenues from property taxes: a general levy, from which approximately 91% of the Department’s annual revenues are derived. Other sources of revenues include fire safety service contracts and variable sources such as grants, interest income, and the sale of surplus assets.

The Department’s last general levy permanent lid lift was in 1993. In 2001 Initiative 747 was enacted, limiting levy revenue increases to one percent annually without a public vote. The Department has operated under the constraints of Initiative 747 since that time, and has not requested an increase in property tax levy in the past 16 years for general operations, personnel costs, or bond repayments. In 2005 the community approved a temporary levy lid lift to help fund the construction of a training facility and to purchase needed apparatus.

Statistics & Research: There are three basic types of funding sources: Levies, Bonds, and Fees for Service.

Additional types of funding include contracts and grants, which the Department already utilizes as much as possible, and impact fees, which will not be discussed in detail in this document due to recent litigation as to their legality [reference: <http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/planning/impactpg.aspx>].

Levies

Property tax levies are taxes on the assessed valuation of property within the district levied to provide revenues for a government entity. The revenues approved by the voters through the enactment of a levy or a levy lid lift, divided by the assessed valuation (in \$1,000s) determines the levy rate. Consequently, as assessed valuation goes up, and revenues are not increased through a lid lift vote, the levy rate goes down. It is important to note that revenues do not decrease, only the levy rate decreases as a result of the same amount of revenues to be levied being spread among more assessed valuation. Revenue increases without a vote are currently limited to one percent (1%) annually, plus new construction revenues.

There are multiple options for levies allowed under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), including: a General levy increase, an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) levy, and the option of an Excess levy.

District	Population Served	Square Miles Served	Salaried Response Personnel	EMS Tax Rate per \$1000 of Assessed Valuation	General Levy Rate per \$1000 of Assessed Valuation	Total EMS and General Tax Rate
NKFR	23000	45	31	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.19	\$ 1.69
Poulsbo	32600	54	36	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.34	\$ 1.84
CKFR	72000	115	72	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.30	\$ 1.80
SKFR	83500	150	72	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.03	\$ 1.53
BIFD	23000	28	18	\$ -	\$ 0.73	\$ 0.73

Demographic and levy information for local fire districts.

General Levy - Currently (2009) the Department's general levy rate is approximately \$0.73 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The maximum general levy rate as allowed by State law is \$1.50. General levy rates can be increased permanently, or through



a temporary measure, by a majority vote of the taxpayers. Temporary measures can be between two and six years in length. The Department currently has a temporary, six-year levy included in the \$0.73 rate, which is due to expire at the end of 2011.

The general levy is subject to Initiative 747 limitations, limiting the annual increase of revenues to one percent (1%) plus new construction. Prior to the Initiative 747 enactment, revenue was limited to a six percent (6%) annual increase without voter approval.

EMS Levy - Currently the Department does not have, nor has it ever had, an EMS levy. As shown in the table on page 45, the Department is the only fire district in Kitsap County without an EMS levy.

The maximum EMS levy rate as allowed by State law is \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. EMS levy funds can be used for EMS services only, including apparatus, personnel, training, and equipment. This type of levy requires a super majority approval, which is roughly a 60% approval.

An EMS levy is subject to Initiative 747 limitations.

Excess Levy - Excess levies are allowed under RCW 84.52.130 for temporary periods, with limited allowances for use of funds. Two (2) to four (4) year levies are allowed for maintenance and operations purposes, and that length is extended to six (6) years to use the funds for capital purposes. Excess levies must be approved by a super majority vote of the taxpayers.

Bonds

Bonds are another funding option available to the Department, and are categorized by voted and non-voted issuance.

Voted Bonds - Voted bonds require the super majority approval of the taxpayers, and do not affect the levy rate. The maximum length of a voted bond issuance is 20 years. Issuance fees and interest are included in bond totals.

Non-Voted Bonds - Non-Voted bonds are approved by the Board of Commissioners, so no funds are levied directly for the repayment of the bonds. Issuance fees and interest are included in the bond totals, and repayment of bond debt is through general levy funds.

Fees for Service

Fees for Service are allowed under State law, and are primarily used by fire districts for the purpose of recovering costs associated with transporting patients. Also known as transport fees, Fees for Service are usually based on transport disposition (ALS or BLS) with additional costs for mileage, medical supplies, and interventions. Since the Department normally performs only ALS transports, funding projections of this nature are based on ALS transports only. Projected revenues, based on 2008 transports, would have been approximately \$200,000. Fees for service can be implemented through a Resolution of the Board of Commissioners.

Conclusions and Findings: The Department is currently taxing less than half of the available levy rate for a general levy. The Department does not have an EMS levy and does not currently charge fees for service. However, the Department does have non-voted bond debt, which is being repaid from general levy funds. These bonds could be refinanced at a lower interest rate, which would lower payments, but would not relieve the obligation from general levy funds. The outstanding bond debt could also be refinanced with another bond issuance if the Department chose to do so for capital purposes.

Recommendations: In order to provide funding for recommended staffing increases and capital construction, the planning group reviewed all the funding options presented. With projected budget deficiencies in 2011, even without recommended personnel changes, it is necessary that the Department create a short and long-range funding plan.

Following discussions with the external users group where levy, bond, and fee-related revenue options were discussed, it was made clear that an EMS levy is the most clearly understood and supported levy option. Since roughly 80 percent of the Department's responses are medical-related, an EMS levy could provide funding for 80 percent of personnel costs, all EMS-related equipment, and any needed aid or medic units. An EMS levy would be the easiest of all levy types to explain to voters, since it is a widely used and heavily publicized type of funding stream for fire districts. The planning group recommends that an EMS levy be placed on the ballot in early 2010.

For replacement of Station 22, the recommendation is to utilize voted bond debt through a ballot measure in early 2011 for construction in 2012. A voted issuance would provide the funds necessary to construct a building, and would also provide the funding mechanism to pay bond interest and principal over the term of the issuance, without reducing the revenues available for the use of maintenance and operations as the general levy is intended. Capital improvement funding for Station

23 could be combined with a voted bond issuance for Station 22.

Action Items:

1. Finalize the amount necessary, following Board approval of the Strategic Plan, to provide adequate general operations funding for a minimum of 4 years.
2. Begin meeting with community groups to communicate the necessity of an EMS levy.
3. Continue quarterly education mailings, and begin communicating upcoming funding measures.
4. Request the assistance of Local 4034 and the Bainbridge Island Volunteer Firefighters Association for community education efforts.
5. Finalize the Station 22 facility plan and begin the permitting process. Finalize the capital improvement costs projected for Stations 21 and 23 and begin any applicable permitting process(es). Once the design and construction costs are known, begin bond issuance and ballot measure efforts. Refinance existing bonds with new bond issuance if a positive return on investment is predicted.



We appreciate the opportunity to share this Strategic Plan with you. If you have any questions about this document or about Bainbridge Island Fire Department, please contact us at (206) 842-7686

