



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

Fire Department



ANNUAL REPORT FY2023



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MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

Dear Community Members,

I am thrilled to present the Virginia Beach Fire Department's Annual Report for the fiscal year 2023, which highlights the incredible achievements and milestones we have accomplished together. As the new Fire Chief, I am honored to lead a team of dedicated professionals who have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of our community.

Leadership and Promotions:

The year began with a leadership change as we welcomed a new Fire Chief, and several deserving members of our Senior Staff were promoted to positions of increased responsibility. Their experience and dedication have proven to be instrumental in guiding our department towards greater heights.

What's New:

- a) New Fire Station 22: We are proud to announce the addition of Burton Station Fire & EMS Station 22, strategically located to enhance our response times and coverage area, ensuring we can better serve our community.
- b) Battalion Aid and Safety Technician: This year, we introduced the Battalion Aid and Safety Technician program, further bolstering our emergency services capabilities. Improving incident management and increasing responder safety.
- c) Training Center Expansion: The newly expanded Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center has allowed us to provide comprehensive and state-of-the-art physical training to our personnel. Enabling them to be more prepared for the demands of the job and prevent injuries. The facility is also a major step in our cancer prevention efforts with separation from clean and contaminated spaces. Providing increased capacity for us to decontaminate gear and keep our responders healthy.
- d) Upgraded MDCs / UAS Programs: Our commitment to cutting-edge technology is evident in the upgrades to our Mobile Data Computers and Unmanned Aircraft Systems, enhancing our operational efficiency and effectiveness. With a focus on technology, we are exploring more efficient and safer ways to plan, respond, and help the community be more prepared and resilient.
- e) Improved Marine Responses: We are delighted to report the successful implementation of improved marine response strategies, including the use of jet skis, which have already shown real-world results in water-based emergencies. Multiple lives have been saved with this new equipment.



- f) Reorganization: A thoughtful reorganization has optimized our resources and streamlined our administration and operations, ensuring that we can meet operational needs and prepare for the future.

Life Safety Success:

Our dedication to life safety and public education has been recognized nationally with Jessica Xenakis receiving the prestigious National Fire Prevention Association Life Safety Educator of the Year award. This recognition is a testament to our department's commitment to educating the community about fire and life safety.

Unwavering Commitment:

Throughout the year, our firefighters responded to more than 44,000 calls, with over 70,000 total responses. Their swift actions and bravery have undoubtedly saved lives and protected property.

Unfortunately, a number of our members were diagnosed with cancer this year and we said goodbye to dear friends.

Investing in the Future:

Our commitment to preparing the next generation of firefighters remains unwavering. We proudly graduated four recruit classes, totaling 47 dedicated individuals, who are now ready to serve our community with distinction.

Employee Recognition:

We are incredibly proud of the outstanding achievements and recognition received by our personnel. From Firefighter of the Year awards to the Governor's Fire Service Awards, our team members have shone brightly at every level. Their dedication to excellence and continuous improvement is the driving force behind our department's success.

As we move forward, our commitment to the community and the pursuit of excellence remains steadfast. We will continue to innovate, train, and adapt to the ever-changing landscape of emergency services, ensuring that we provide the best possible service to you, our valued community.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in the Virginia Beach Fire Department.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Pravetz

Fire Chief, Virginia Beach Fire Department

IN MEMORIAM

Virginia Beach Fire Department Captain Matthew “Chevy” Robert Chiaverotti, 44, passed away at home on Monday, April 17, 2023, surrounded by loved ones, following a courageous battle with Anaplastic Thyroid Cancer.

Matt was born October 3, 1978, in Houston, Texas to his parents, Gary Robert Chiaverotti of Norfolk, Virginia, and the late Lynn Ann (Wachowiak) Chiaverotti; he was also the stepson of Debbie Miller of Norfolk, Virginia.

Matt was a 2001 graduate of The University of Maine where his love of fire fighting began. “Chevy,” as Matt was often referred to, began his career as a Virginia Beach Firefighter in July 2002. Matt was a 20-year decorated and beloved veteran of the Virginia Beach Fire Department. At the time of his diagnosis, Chevy served as A-Shift Captain of Engine 7, the “Busiest Engine” in the VBFD. Over the past twenty years, Chevy “charged hard” with the support of the finest VBFD firefighters by his side. “Chevy” considered the men and women he worked alongside his brothers and sisters. Chevy was also a FEMA Search Team Manager with

Virginia Task Force 2 and was with the team for over sixteen

years. During his career, Chevy selflessly attended thousands of calls to help the citizens of Virginia Beach. These calls included structure fires, hazardous materials incidents, medical calls, and technical rescue incidents. Matt was respected and admired by so many for his “Live Life at a 10” attitude. Matt’s igniting smile, sense of humor, and integrity to always be the best human being possible will forever be remembered.

Captain Chiaverotti is survived by his loving and devoted wife, Sara Perugini Chiaverotti,

and adoring son, August “Gus” Robert Chiaverotti II, who was the light of Matt’s life. Matt was a dedicated daddy who loved to fish, surf, snuggle, watch endless hours of Star Wars movies and the Mandalorian, go on bike rides to 7-11 for Slurpees, and have Sunday run day with his Gus Man.



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

City Leadership



Mayor
Robert M. "Bobby" Dyer



District #1
N.D. "Rocky" Holcomb



District #2
Barbara M. Henley



District #3
Michael Berlucchi



District #4
Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond



Vice Mayor District #5
Rosemary Wilson



District #6
Robert W. "Worth" Remick



District #7
Sabrina D. Wooten



District #8
Chris Taylor



District #9
Joshua F. "Joash" Schulman



District #10
Jennifer V. Rouse



City Manager
Patrick A. Duhaney

City Overview



249 Square Land Miles
61 Square Water Miles
38 Miles of Shoreline



455,000 Population
\$77,000 Median Income
36 Median Age



10 Council Districts

VIRGINIA BEACH FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mission

A professional department dedicated to protecting life and property through an all-hazards approach.

Vision

Internationally recognized as a leader in fire service excellence with the ability to predict emerging and challenging environments, develop our members, and cultivate the community sense of feeling safe any place any time.

Core Values

- **Service** – Professional and trained workforce providing for others before self.
- **Caring** – Using empathy and sympathy for addressing all situations.
- **Honesty** – Just behavior principled in intention and actions.
- **Trust** – Reliance on the department and individuals following our core values.
- **Integrity** – Moral and ethical conduct at all times.



Senior Staff



Fire Chief

Kenneth A. Pravetz

Deputy Chief Operations Branch

Richard V. Cooper III

Deputy Chief Services Branch

Amy J. Valdez

Assistant Chief Administrative Services

Lorna B. Trent

Assistant Chief Community Risk Reduction

Joshua S. Goyet

Assistant Chief A-Shift

Paul R. Pureza

Assistant Chief B-Shift

John H. Crandell II

Assistant Chief C-Shift

Eric C. Wilkerson

Assistant Chief Training & Special Operations

Claiborne F. Cofer

Budget & Finance Manager

Jennifer L. Whitley



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

Fire Department

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) is a metropolitan-sized organization that provides a wide range of fire and rescue services to the citizens of Virginia Beach. The VBFD provides an all-hazard response that includes Fire Suppression; Emergency Management; Hazardous Materials; Marine; Technical Rescue; Fire Inspections; Fire Investigations; Life Safety Education; Fire Training; Safety, Health, and Wellness; Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS); an FBI SWAT Medic Program; and disaster response from Virginia Task Force 2, FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Team, and the Hampton Roads Incident Management Team. The Department has been an Accredited Agency with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) since 2001 and has established itself as a local, regional, state, and national leader in numerous areas and continues to strive for excellence in delivering services to the City.

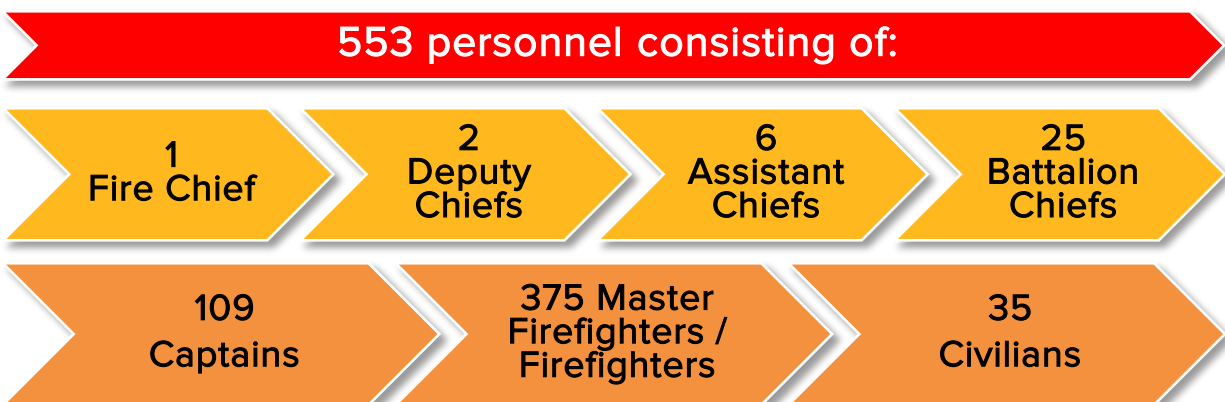
The VBFD operates from 25 work locations: 20 City owned fire stations, 1 shared federal fire station, the Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center, the Community Risk Reduction Bureau, Resource Management, and the Virginia Task Force 2 office/warehouse. The Department serves over 460,000 permanent residents spread out over 307 square miles with its 22 engine companies, 8 ladder companies, 2 heavy rescue companies, 5 battalions, 1 safety officer, and a fleet of cross staffed apparatus including 3 fire boats, brush trucks, a technical rescue truck, a hazardous materials truck, and a command vehicle.

The Department provides first response Emergency Medical Services to the citizens and visitors of the City of Virginia Beach in partnership with Virginia Beach Emergency Medical Services (VBEMS). The VBFD has over 500 certified Emergency Medical Technicians capable of providing both basic and advanced life support (BLS, ALS) care. The VBFD responds to all priority 1 (serious medical or trauma patients) calls for service and assists VBEMS with providing ALS transport of sick and injured patients with more than 120 ALS providers.

Strategic Goals

1. Serve the community by providing exceptional public safety through preparedness and emergency service.
2. Promote a healthy and safe work environment.
3. Recruit, hire, train, and maintain a fit, highly diverse, and skilled workforce.
4. Predict and forecast emerging trends and challenges.
5. Enhance Business Intelligence (BI) and Information Technology (IT) capabilities.

Personnel



Budget

Budget Category	FY 2022	FY2023
Salaries	\$ 45,511,811.00	\$ 48,360,849.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 13,816,377.00	\$ 16,516,622.00
Professional Services	\$ 722,415.00	\$ 750,158.00
Internal Services	\$ 3,199,004.00	\$ 4,181,225.00
Other Charges	\$ 275,504.36	\$ 382,750.87
Supplies	\$ 1,093,224.37	\$ 1,029,628.90
Leases	\$ 231,610.00	\$ 243,356.00
Capital	\$ 8,174.81	\$ 75,621.66
Grand Total	\$ 64,858,120.54	\$ 71,540,211.43

What's New

Fire Station 22 Burton Station

The Virginia Beach Fire Department was fortunate enough to have opened a brand-new fire station in March 2023. Station 22 Burton Station houses 30 personnel spread across 3 shifts. This station has an Engine Company, a Ladder Company, and is crossed staffed by our partners in VBEMS with an ambulance crew. The station is located on Tolliver Road in the Burton Station area of City Council District 4 and is overseen by Battalion 2.



Battalion Aid and Safety Technician

The Department was able to add a Battalion Aid and Safety Technician (BAST) who was paired with Battalion 5. The role of the Technician is to support the Battalion Chief with day-to-day management functions and to support the Incident Commander when responding to emergencies. Battalion 5 was the first chosen to be paired with a BAST because Battalion 5 is the busiest of the five operational Battalions. Battalion 3 will receive a BAST in the new fiscal year.



Harry E. Diezel Training Center Expansion

Land clearing began in 2021, at the Harry E. Diezel Virginia Beach Fire Training Center for its building expansion project. The building was completed and opened this fiscal year. The 16,766 square foot addition includes locker rooms for staff and recruits, gear lockers, a decontamination room, and a gym. The rooms are configured in a way to allow for proper decontamination of gear and personnel after training. Additionally, the new gym allows for the old gym area to be converted into another classroom and removing the gear lockers from the high bay creates room for future indoor training props.



IT Upgrades and the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program



The Virginia Beach Fire Department continues to upgrade, replace, and expand technology. This past year, the Communications & Technology Bureau led a project to replace all the mobile data computers (MDCs) in FD vehicles. This project replaced the outdated platform with a new Windows-based rugged laptop computer. The new computer allowed for the deployment of the latest Windows version and is compatible with the Motorola P1 mobile CAD software for numerous future versions.

The Department is also working on expanding the unmanned aerial system, or drone, program. We have demonstrated the capabilities of drones over the past several years, utilizing them on search and rescue missions, marine incidents, brush fires, structure fires, special events, and severe weather events. Over the past year, several firefighters from Engine 17 have completed training and passed the FAA Part 107 remote pilot certification exam. We are now training these members to operate small drones safely on emergency incident scenes. Once these members complete practical training,

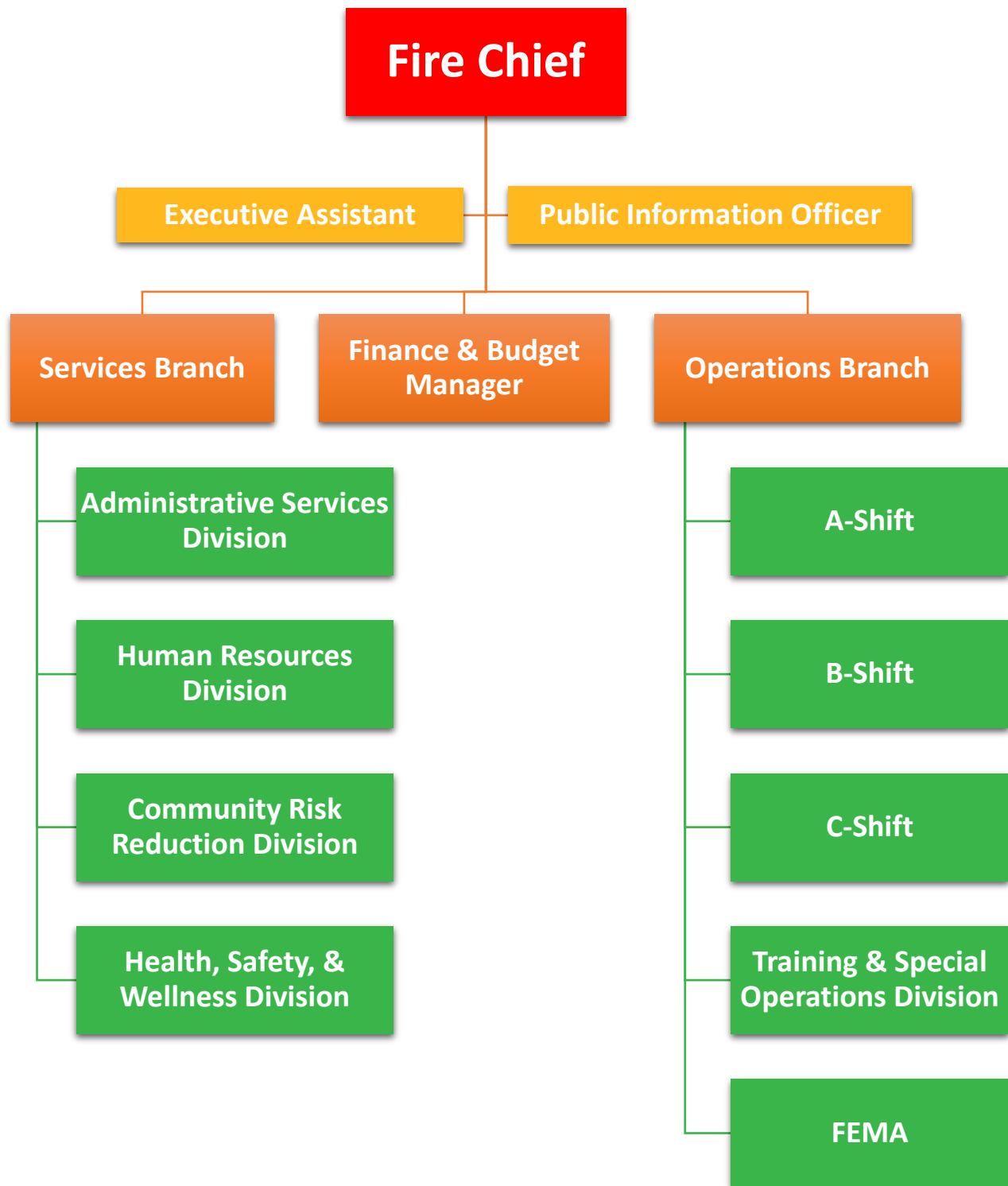
Engine 17 will carry a small drone with spotlights, a speaker, and a thermal imaging camera.

Jet Skis and Improved Marine Response

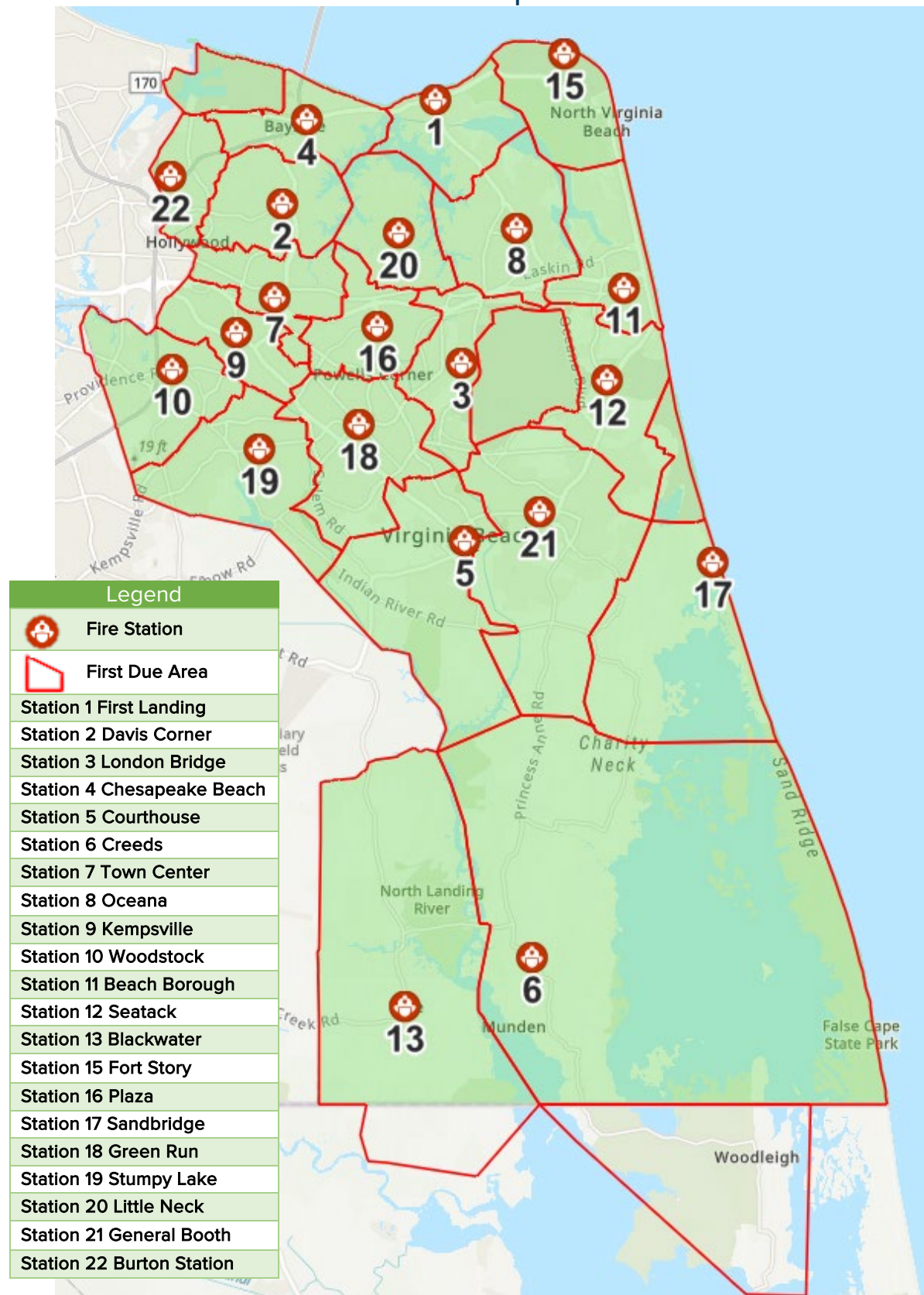
Over the last year, the Marine Bureau of the Virginia Beach Fire Department has expanded its capabilities, allowing for a better response to all types of water rescue incidents. The Fire Rescue Swimmer program continues to expand with paddle boards now on all marine and fire rescue swimmer designated stations. Several jet skis have also been added to the fleet with training ongoing. These pieces of equipment have already been used in several real-world incidents with great success.



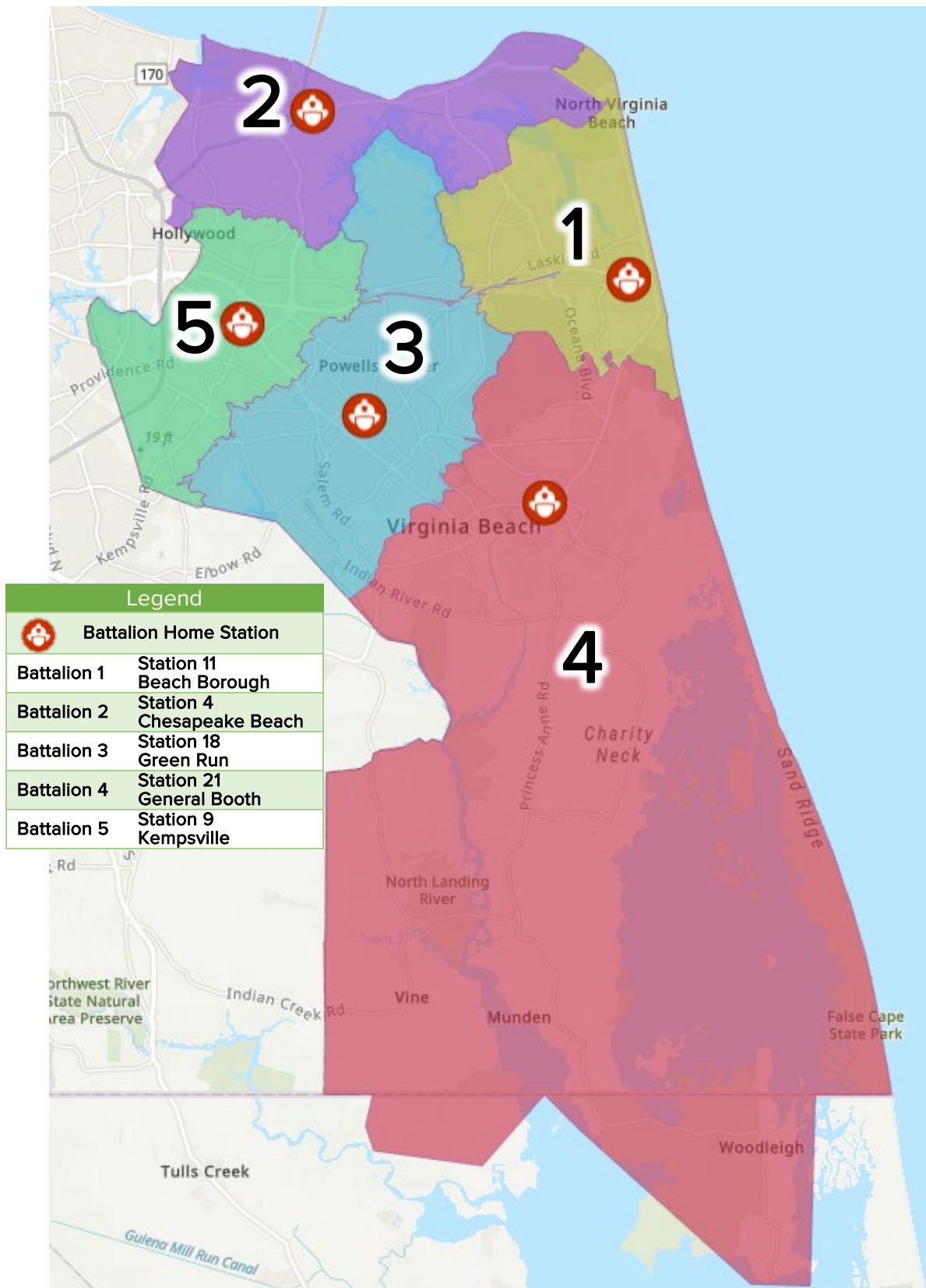
Organizational Chart



Fire Station First Due Areas Map



Battalion Areas Map



SERVICES BRANCH

Services Branch

Business Applications Specialist

Administrative
Services
Division

Human
Resources
Division

Community Risk
Reduction
Division

Health, Safety,
& Wellness
Division

Communications & Technology
Bureau

Research, Analysis, & Planning
Bureau

Resource Management Bureau

Fire Prevention Bureau

Special Events/Emergency
Management Bureau

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION

Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB)

The members of the Fire Prevention Bureau provide a secure and superior quality of life to all people throughout the City of Virginia Beach through education, code enforcement, and fire investigation. The FPB is committed to fostering strong relationships with businesses, citizens, and other public safety organizations to achieve common goals. The FPB is tasked with inspecting all businesses, investigating cause & origin, and providing community education through Inspections, Investigations, and Life Safety Education.



24 personnel consisting of:

1 Fire Marshal

3 Deputy Fire Marshals

5 Fire Investigators

11 Uniformed Inspectors

2 Full Time Civilian Inspectors

2 Part Time Civilian Inspectors

FY2023 Highlights

- 4169 businesses inspected
- 2912 re-inspections completed
- 179 complaints addressed
- 79 red tags removed
- 48 occupancy load calculations completed
- 157 food truck inspections
- 69 tent inspections
- 31 pyro/flame effects inspections
- 9 agricultural burn inspections
- 13 bon fire inspections
- 174 responses to fire investigations
- 21 arrests made



Life Safety Education



The VBFD's Life Safety Education Office delivers fire and life safety educational programs and presentations to students and citizens of all ages within the community to reduce the risk of preventable injury, death, and property loss. As part of the Community Risk Reduction Division, life safety educators strive to "get ahead of the 911 call" and create a safer community by focusing outreach efforts and utilizing data-driven strategies to reduce loss before an emergency incident.

Along with participation in a multitude of community events and preschool presentations, the Life Safety Office oversees the following programs: Car Seat Safety and Education, Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention Education, Operation Smoke Alarm, Older Adult Fire and Fall Prevention, and the "Safety Squad" program - a fire safety and injury prevention program which is delivered annually to all Virginia Beach elementary school students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade. The "Safety Squad" program has been presented at state conferences in Virginia, North Carolina, and Washington.

The Life Safety specialists are trained and dedicated to helping preserve the safety of the citizens and visitors Virginia Beach. The Life Safety team members, comprised of 4 members, meet and exceed the standard training required by NFPA 1035 for public fire and life safety educators, public information officers, youth firesetter intervention specialists and program managers. Each specialist maintains either Child Passenger Safety Technician or Instructor certification, assisting parents and caregivers with car seat checks and installation and regional CPST course instruction. All Life Safety Education team members are nationally trained as Youth Fire Intervention Specialists, affording them the expertise necessary to provide intervention and education to at-risk youth who misuse fire. In addition, the supervisor instructs the Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention course to fire departments across the nation at the National Fire Academy.



FY2023 Highlights

- 337 "Operation Smoke Alarm" program installed in homes with non-working or no smoke alarms.
- 87 Documented Preschool fire safety education visits reaching over 3,600 children under the age of 5.
- 390 Car seat installs. VBFD has 13 nationally certified CPSTs with an additional 2 CPST instructors on staff to train other agencies and community members.
- 519 volunteer hours to support Life Safety Education.
- 56 elementary annual school visits from the "Safety Squad" reaching over 31,500 students in grades K-5th, with a 96% post-test score average.
- 25 juvenile case referrals to the Youth Fire Education program with a zero percent rate of recidivism.

Safety Squad Program



The “Safety Squad” program was welcomed back into the Virginia Beach City Public Schools in February. The program is exclusively designed to provide scaffolding fire safety and injury prevention lessons to elementary students in grades K-5. The curriculum is applied as a hybrid approach that combines digital resources with interactive learning stations during each grade level’s regularly scheduled physical education class. When available, Sparky the fire dog and firefighters also attend, bringing their turn-out gear and providing tours of fire apparatus so students can learn how they dress and operate when responding to fires. With 100% positive

feedback from educators and administration from across the city, the program has already gained much recognition. Because the program is quite progressive and exceptionally unique, it has gained attention from other fire departments from across the state with representatives from Roanoke, Chesterfield, Chesapeake, and York, to visit VB schools to observe the program in action.

In August, Life Safety Education Supervisor Jessica Xenakis from the Virginia Beach Fire Department’s “Safety Squad” presented to more than 70 participants from across the Commonwealth, at the 2022 Sound the Alarm Summit, hosted by the Virginia Fire Chief’s Association. The annual summit provides opportunities for fire and life safety educators, public information officers and other fire prevention officials to network and share programs and initiatives to help educate communities about Community Risk Reduction. Jessica’s presentation highlighted the Safety Squad’s all-hazards prevention education program that is taught to more than 30,000 students attending 56 Virginia Beach elementary schools. It also included information about managing the Operation Smoke Alarm and Child Safety Seat programs and conducting other Community Risk Reduction presentations to the public that includes older adults, children, and individuals with disabilities.



Special Events/Emergency Management Bureau

The City of Virginia Beach has opened up after the pandemic in full swing with special events. To keep up with the enormous number of events, ranging from small to large festivals, the Special Event Bureau has spent many hours in meetings, planning, and logistical needs to provide proper life and fire safety to both citizens and visitors. The Public Safety Special Events Task Force meets weekly to discuss upcoming events and holidays with additional meetings with promoters to view site maps, occupancies loads, emergency egresses, food vendor and tent inspections, fire protection, and overall safety concerns.



Joint efforts with police, sheriff, emergency communications center, public works, and resort management have been very successful for these events. An example is the “box” for the oceanfront during significant events. The emergency communications center and the fire

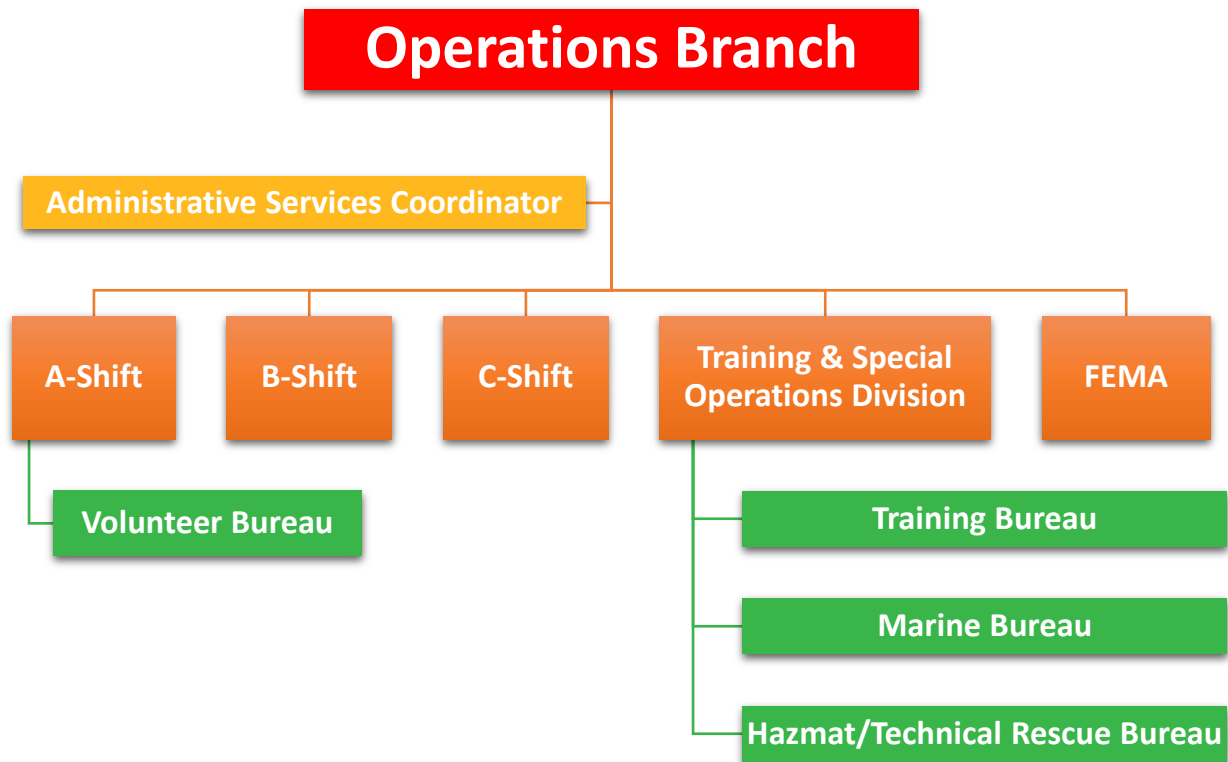


department worked together to use the computer aided dispatch (CAD) system to automatically dispatch calls within the footprint that is programmed prior to the event. Fire department units then utilize computers to receive the calls, give unit status updates, and allow command to see their exact locations. This provided a faster response time, less radio traffic, increased security measures for knowing the locations of crews, and better documentation.

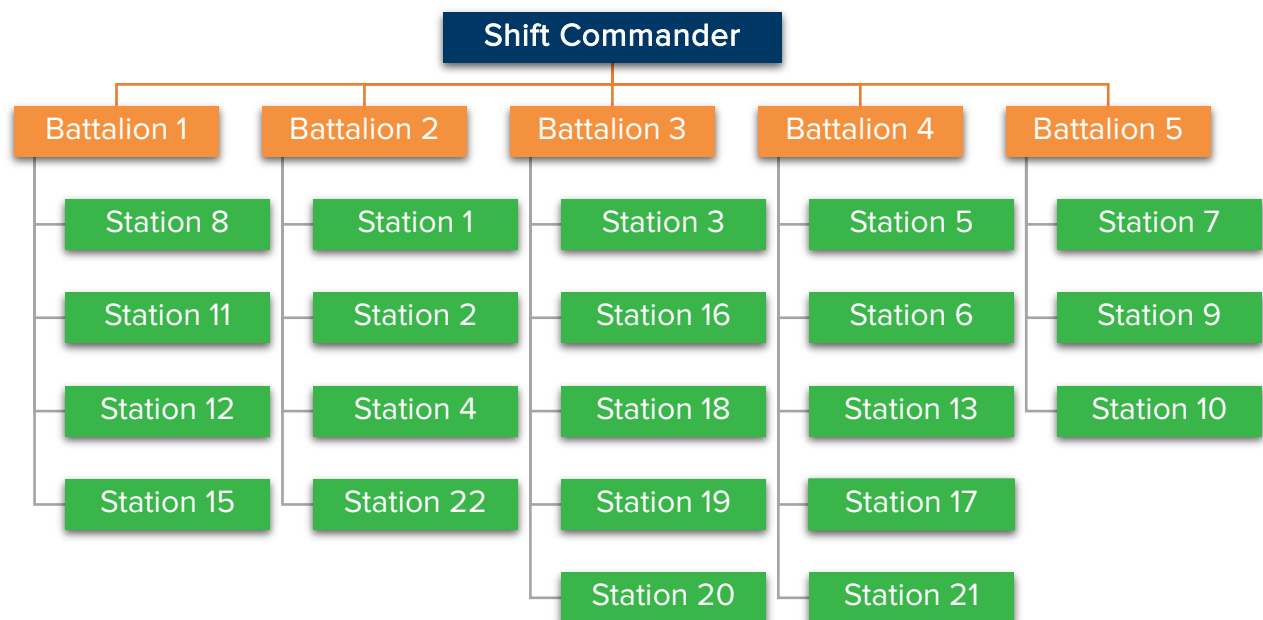
FY2023 Highlights

- Over 400 permits approved through Resort Management Office
- Special Olympics of Virginia Polar Plunge, Shamrock Sportsfest, Rodeo on the Beach, Something in the Water, Monsters on the Beach, Memorial Weekend, Jackalope Festival, Beach It Concert Series, 4th of July, East Coast Surfing Championships (ECSC), and Funk Fest Concerts
- The Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) is an internationally recognized leader in emergency response training, workforce training, and technical assistance. TEEX classes completed by Special Events Bureau members include:
 - AWR – 167: Sport and Special Event Risk Management
 - MGT – 412: Sports Venue Evacuation and Protective Actions
 - MGT – 466: Sport and Special Event Enhanced Risk Management and Assessment
- Working with the Office of Emergency Management to reorganize the Virginia Beach Incident Management Team (VBIMT)

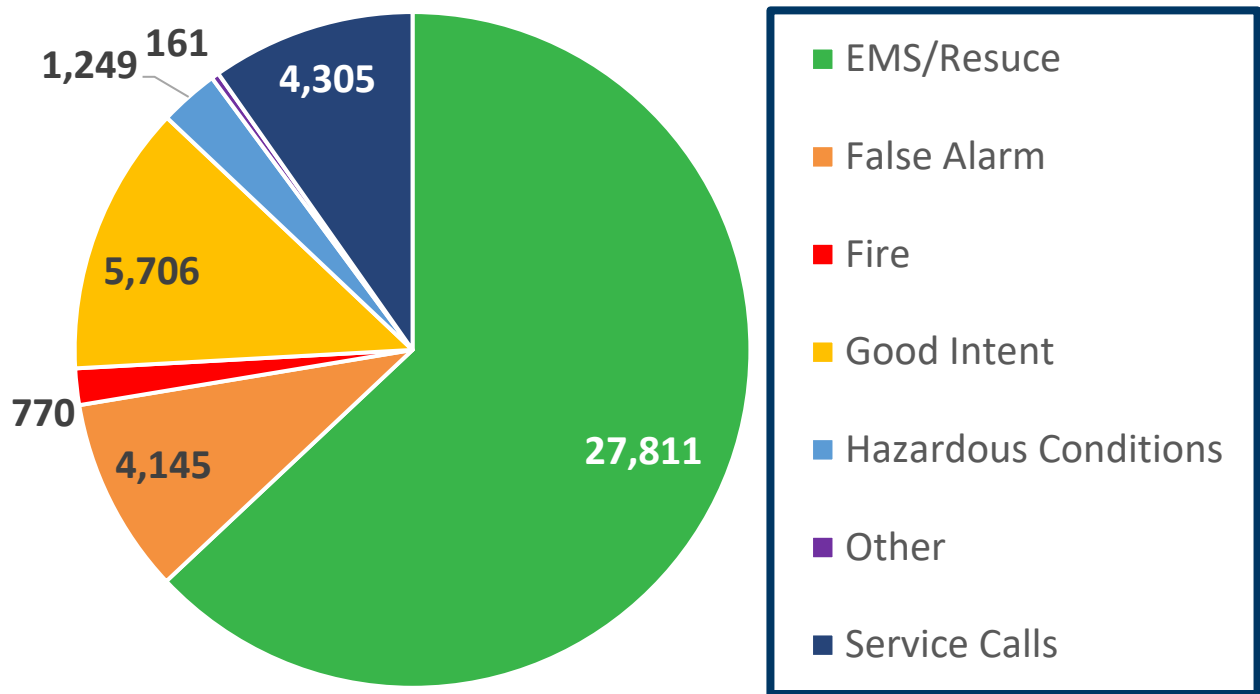
OPERATIONS BRANCH



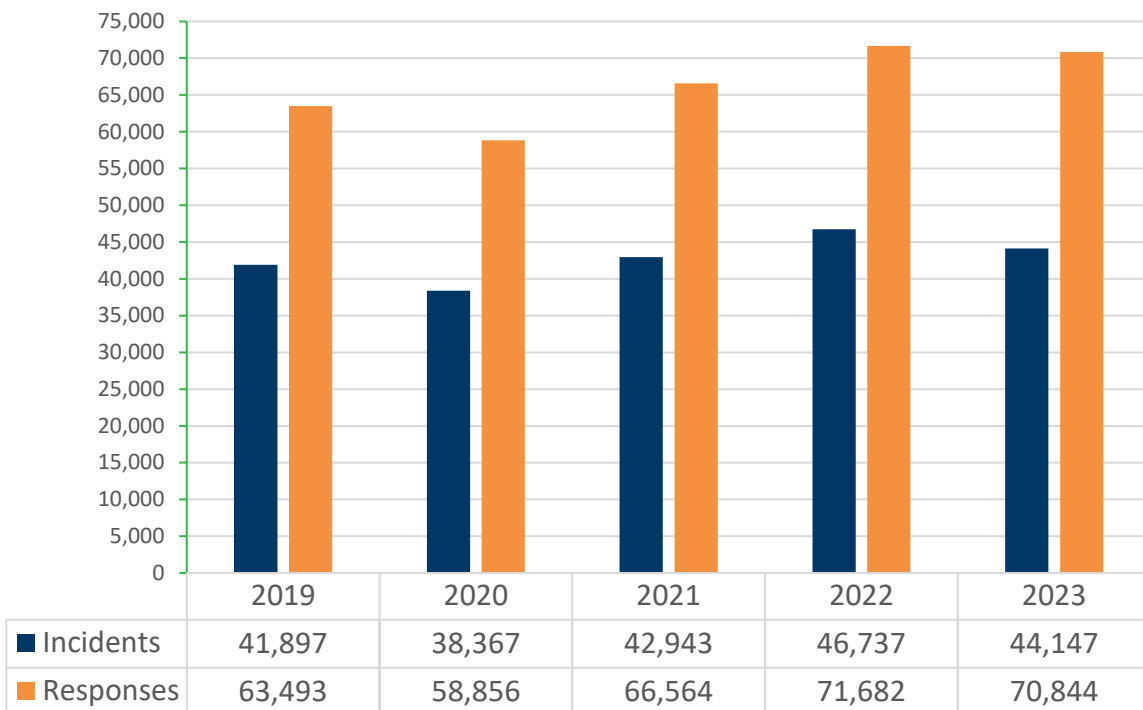
The VBFD operates **three shifts** (A, B, & C), each led by an Assistant Chief who serves as the **Shift Commander**. They are responsible for **5 Battalions**, each with a Battalion Chief charged with oversight of the stations and personnel within their respective areas.



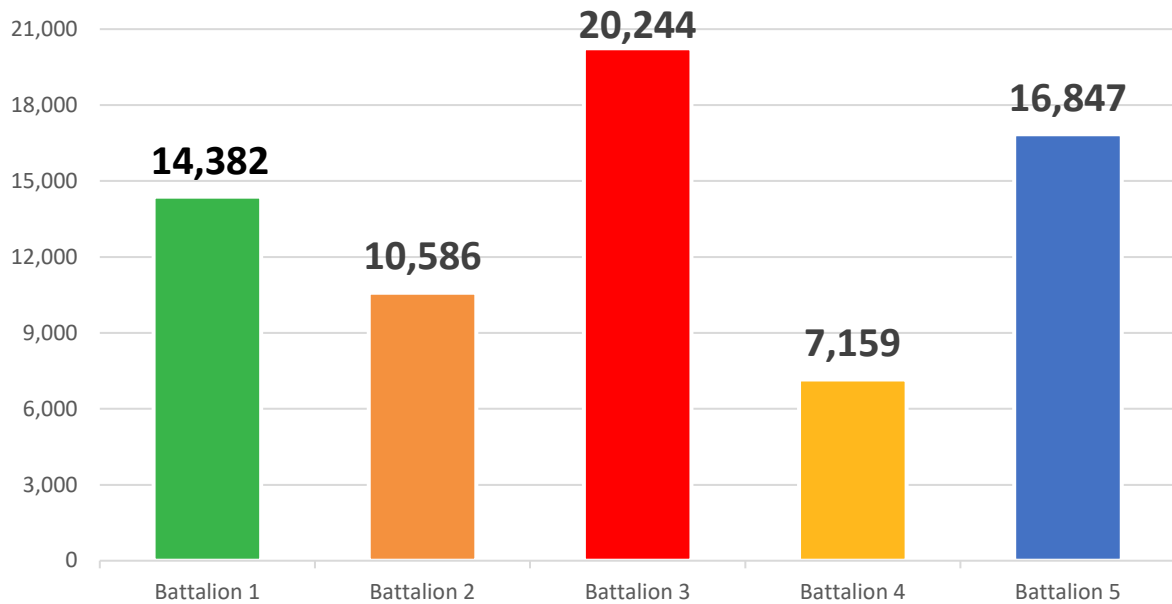
Calls for Service by Incident Type (Fiscal Year 2023)



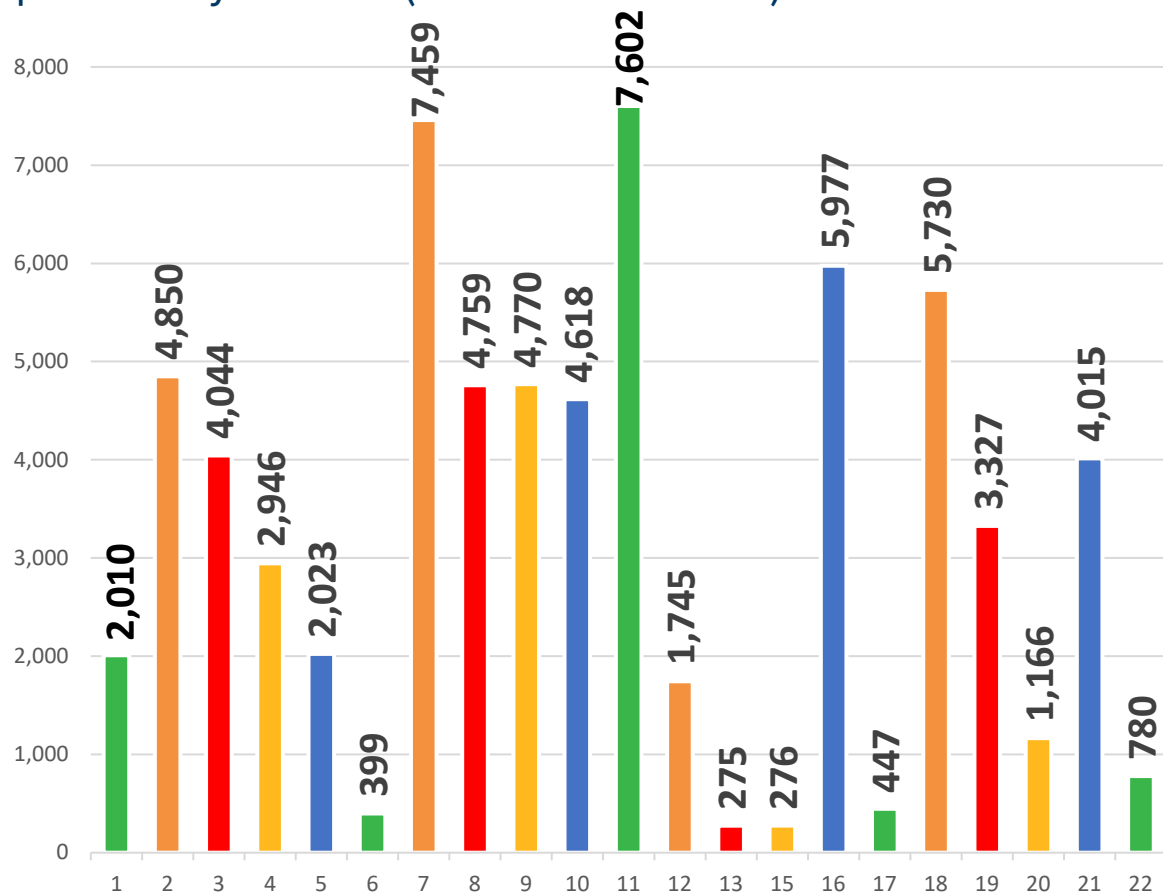
Total Incidents & Responses by Fiscal Year



Responses by Battalion Area (Fiscal Year 2023)



Responses by Station (Fiscal Year 2023)



Responses by Unit (Fiscal Year 2023)

Rank	Unit	Response Volume
1	Engine 18	4,305
2	Engine 7	3,813
3	Engine 16	3,767
4	Engine 2	3,327
5	Engine 19	3,327
6	Engine 9	3,117
7	Engine 10	3,112
8	Engine 8	3,083
9	Engine 11	2,580
10	Engine 14	2,517
11	Ladder 16	2,210
12	Engine 4	2,108
13	Engine 21	2,092
14	Ladder 7	2,057
15	Engine 5	1,966
16	Engine 3	1,771
17	Engine 12	1,659
18	Battalion 5	1,653
19	Ladder 8	1,558
20	Ladder 2	1,523
21	Ladder 10	1,506
22	Battalion 3	1,425
23	Engine 1	1,375
24	Fire Rescue 2	1,309
25	Ladder 11	1,298
26	Battalion 1	1,207
27	Engine 20	1,166
28	Ladder 21	1,166
29	Safety 1	1,141
30	Fire Rescue 1	1,112
31	Battalion 2	838
32	Battalion 4	757
33	Ladder 1	564
34	Engine 22	543
35	Engine 17	447
36	Engine 6	328
37	Engine 15	276
38	Car 10	267
39	Ladder 22	237
40	Engine 13	205
41	Support 8	118
42	Fire Boat 12	86
43	Fire Boat 1	71
44	Tanker 13	70
45	Tanker 6	59
46	Tanker 5	57
47	Hazmat 1	20
48	Tech 1	13
49	Fire Boat 6	12

Unit	Response Volume
Battalion 1	1,207
Battalion 2	838
Battalion 3	1,425
Battalion 4	757
Battalion 5	1,653
Car 10	267
Engine 1	1,375
Engine 2	3,327
Engine 3	1,771
Engine 4	2,108
Engine 5	1,966
Engine 6	328
Engine 7	3,813
Engine 8	3,083
Engine 9	3,117
Engine 10	3,112
Engine 11	2,580
Engine 12	1,659
Engine 13	205
Engine 14	2,517
Engine 15	276
Engine 16	3,767
Engine 17	447
Engine 18	4,305
Engine 19	3,327
Engine 20	1,166
Engine 21	2,092
Engine 22	543
Fire Boat 1	71
Fire Boat 6	12
Fire Boat 12	86
Fire Rescue 1	1,112
Fire Rescue 2	1,309
Hazmat 1	20
Ladder 1	564
Ladder 2	1,523
Ladder 7	2,057
Ladder 8	1,558
Ladder 10	1,506
Ladder 11	1,298
Ladder 16	2,210
Ladder 21	1,166
Ladder 22	237
Safety 1	1,141
Support 8	118
Tanker 5	57
Tanker 6	59
Tanker 13	70
Tech 1	13

FIRE STATIONS

Station 1 – First Landing

2837 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Unit Responses:

Engine 1	1,375
Ladder 1	564
Fire Boat 1	71



Station 2 – Davis Corner

4672 Haygood Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Unit Responses:

Engine 2	3,327
Ladder 2	1,523



Station 3 – London Bridge

600 Central Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Unit Responses:

Engine 3	1,771
Fire Rescue 1	1,112
Hazmat 1	20
Safety 1	1,141



Station 4 – Chesapeake Beach

2211 Greenwell Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Unit Responses:

Engine 4	2,108
Battalion 2	838

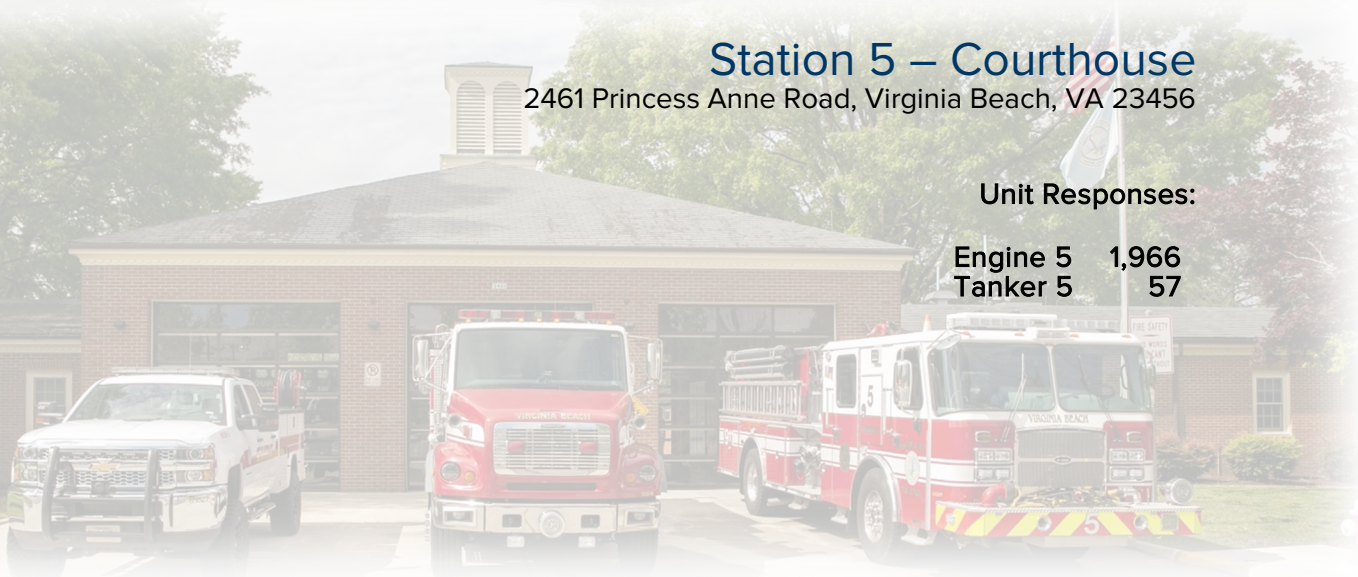


Station 5 – Courthouse

2461 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 5	1,966
Tanker 5	57



Station 6 – Creeds

595 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23457

Unit Responses:

Engine 6	328
Tanker 6	59
Fire Boat 6	12





Station 7 – Town Center

4817 Columbus Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Unit Responses:

Engine 7	3,813
Ladder 7	2,057
Fire Rescue 2	1,309
Tech 1	13
Car 10	267

Busiest Fire Rescue

Station 8 – Oceana

1201 Bayne Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Unit Responses:

Engine 8	3,083
Ladder 8	1,558
Support 8	118



Station 9 – Kempsville

5145 Ruritan Court, Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Unit Responses:

Engine 9	3,117
Battalion 5	1,653

Busiest Battalion





Station 10 – Woodstock

5656 Providence Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23464

Unit Responses:

Engine 10	3,112
Ladder 10	1,506

Station 11 – Beach Borough

800 Virginia Beach Boulevard, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Busiest Station

Unit Responses:

Engine 11	2,580
Engine 14	2,517
Ladder 11	1,298
Battalion 1	1,207



Station 12 – Seatack

949 S. Birdneck Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Unit Responses:

Engine 12	1,659
Fire Boat 12	86

Busiest Fire Boat

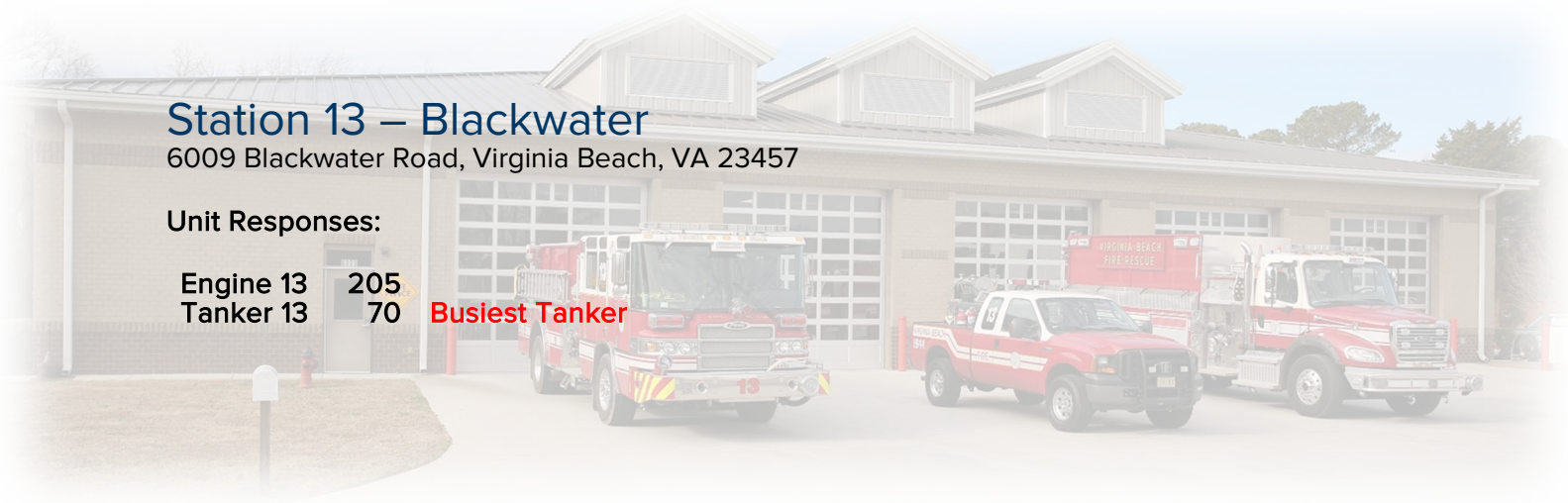


Station 13 – Blackwater

6009 Blackwater Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23457

Unit Responses:

Engine 13	205	
Tanker 13	70	Busiest Tanker



Station 15 – Fort Story

700 Atlantic Avenue, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, VA 23459

Unit Responses:

Engine 15	276	
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Station 16 – Plaza

3608 S. Plaza Trail, Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Unit Responses:

Engine 16	3,767	
Ladder 16	2,210	Busiest Ladder



Station 17 – Sandbridge

305 Sandbridge Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 17 447



Station 18 – Green Run

1601 S. Lynnhaven Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Busiest Engine	Engine 18	4,305
	Battalion 3	1,425



Station 19 – Stumpy Lake

4196 Pleasant Valley Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23464

Unit Responses:

Engine 19 3,327



Station 20 – Little Neck

885 Little Neck Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Unit Responses:

Engine 20 1,166



Station 21 – General Booth

1468 Nimmo Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 21	2,092
Ladder 21	1,166
Battalion 4	757



Station 22 – Burton Station

1160 Tolliver Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Unit Responses (since March 2023):

Engine 22	543
Ladder 22	237



TRAINING BUREAU

The Harry E. Diezel (former Fire Chief and Virginia Beach City Council Member) Fire Training Center is located near the Oceanfront on 23 acres. The training site includes classrooms, administrative offices, an auditorium, multimedia studio, apparatus bay, smokehouse, burn building, flashover simulator, Hazmat site, FEMA Virginia Task Force II Urban Search & Rescue & K9 site, and live fire training props in partnership with Virginia Natural Gas Company. The training bureau manages fire



academies that span six months and all ongoing department training to include: engine & ladder company in-services, specialized operations, career progression, officer leadership, volunteer support technician academy, and EMS training. The bureau supports our neighboring fire departments with the only burn building for Norfolk, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and the Navy Regional crews. The facility is also used by several State and Federal

agencies. The training bureau hosts and manages the Fire Cadet Program for youth ages 14 to 18. We are currently in the final process of a building addition that will provide improved gym and locker rooms to accommodate our larger academies. A decontamination room with gear lockers is also being added to provide a space to help reduce exposures from carcinogenic contaminants for our instructors.

Included in the Training Center is a civilian staffed multimedia studio including a photographer and video shop that films, produces, and edits many videos for several of the departments in the city. Examples include training videos, Chief Chats, live streams for training & events, VBFD social media (Facebook Twitter, Instagram), Every 15 Minutes with Virginia Beach Police, United Way videos, projects with VBTv, and our own training website.

Virginia Fire Rescue Conference

Hosted by the Virginia Fire Chief Association (VFCA), the four-day Virginia Fire Rescue Conference was held in February at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. More than 800 students and public safety officials from across the Commonwealth, along with more than 150 nationwide vendors, made it one of the largest attended conferences in its 25-year history.

This event provides vendors from across the country to showcase the next generation of fire apparatus and the latest and greatest fire equipment, technology, and fire/public safety gear.



In addition, the conference provides training opportunities to firefighters and emergency personnel from across the state. More than 100 sessions were taught by some of the most knowledgeable instructors and subject matter experts in the fire

service, including some of our own Virginia Beach Fire Department instructors. Students were provided with 10,000 hours of training that allowed them to earn and maintain career certifications.

Command Simulations

The VBFD has taken steps in recent years to develop a system of Command Sims training that provides consistency and improvement. Initially the push was to develop a new Battalion Chief Command board, along with a better system of accountability. Through development groups and a research process, new boards and systems were created. Once that was accomplished, the department committed to rotating all their Battalion Chiefs through regularly scheduled command simulations that were staffed with role players and facilitated by the Fire Training Center. Over a short period of time, it became quickly apparent that there were significant improvements in consistency between shifts. Building on those results, specific call type scenarios were built out and delivered to address specific call or building types, such as multi-family, high rise, big box, and high hazard/risk. Simulations were then developed to test specific scenarios within these call types, such as a Mayday scenario in a high rise or multi-family. Most recently the VBFD has shifted to preparing for large scale special events, based on the number scheduled in the resort area every year. Emphasis has also been placed on exposing more company officers to this training.



Recruit Classes

Virginia Beach Fire Academy Class 8

“Vigiles Urbani”

Graduated July 1, 2022

Firefighter Bradley, Gabriel

Firefighter Crawley, Evan

Firefighter Grady, Sean – Class Valedictorian

Firefighter Higgerson, Hunter

Firefighter Jones, Tristan

Firefighter Noaksson, Erik

Firefighter Oakley, Ryan

Firefighter Oshea, Brennen

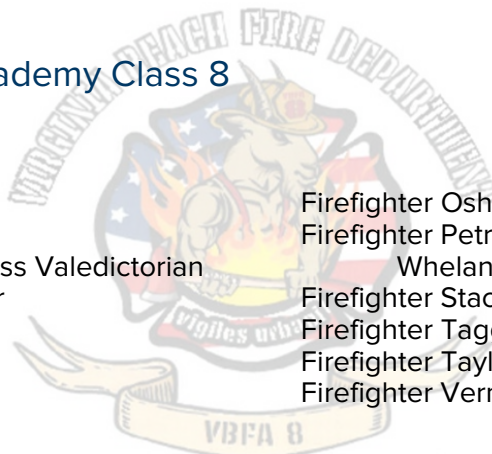
Firefighter Petroni, John – Christopher J.
Whelan Award Recipient

Firefighter Stacy, Ryland

Firefighter Taggart, Ian

Firefighter Taylor, Scott

Firefighter Vermeylen, Robin



Virginia Beach Fire Academy Class 9

“Where there is sacrifice, there is victory”

Certified Class

Graduated October 27, 2022

Firefighter Bailey, Adam

Firefighter Barrera, Joshua

Firefighter Camarella, John

Firefighter Lawhon, Bailey –

Jason Ray Workman
Award Recipient



Virginia Beach Fire Academy Class 10

“Slam atque post eam”

Graduated March 16, 2023

Firefighter Bierwirth, Hunter
Firefighter Csenar, Theodore
Firefighter Deforest, Robert
Firefighter Dickerson, Benjamin
Firefighter Haynes, Zachary
Firefighter Hewitt, Brandon
Firefighter Hierholzer, Cole – Jason Ray
Workman Award Recipient
Firefighter Hill, Patrick
Firefighter Johnson, Isaac – Class
Valedictorian
Firefighter Jones, Avery
Firefighter McMahon, Jeremy
Firefighter Muse Jr., Joseph

Firefighter Naggy, Joseph
Firefighter Ng, Hoi-Koeng
Firefighter Points, Jesse
Firefighter Rojas, Brandon
Firefighter Skala, Tyler
Firefighter Strawhand, Jacob
Firefighter VandeLinde, Cody
Firefighter Vest, Ellie – Christopher J.
Whelan Award Recipient
Firefighter Webb, William
Firefighter White, Danee
Firefighter Yeager, Svetlana
Firefighter Young, Kalib
Firefighter Zukowski, Corey



Virginia Beach Fire Academy Class 11

“Steam Rollin’”

Certified Class

Graduated April 5, 2023

Firefighter Dick, Christian
Firefighter Simmons, Nicolas
Firefighter Skalski, Steven
Firefighter Stofko, Greg
Firefighter Zuniga-Rocha, Juan

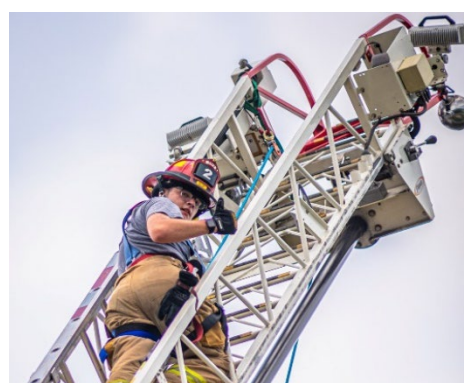


Cadet Program

The Virginia Beach Fire Cadet program is a hands-on, career-based program open to youth ages 14 (and completed the 8th grade) to 18 years old with an interest in learning more about a career in the field of Fire & Emergency Services. The Fire Cadet program exposes participants to many career experiences, leadership opportunities, and community service activities. The primary goal of the program is to help young adults choose a career path within the fire and emergency services and to challenge them to become responsible citizens of their communities.

Typically, the Fire Cadets meet on the first and third Monday of the month year-round at the Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center. During meeting nights, they PT and cover a preselected fire topic. The topic may include some classroom time or just train as you go instruction and demonstrations. A crew from the field will often assist more specialized training or manpower. They learn each topic individually and then are given the opportunity to put it all together during their Shift Day. On this day, they will have demonstrations and exercises that simulate technical rescue, high angle rescue with rappelling, an exterior residential fire, and a vehicle fire. In the past, we have invited neighboring city Cadet Programs and look forward to their participation in the future.

The Cadets are also requested to assist with events to include award ceremonies, funerals, parades, recruitment events, and community life safety events. Last year, they also volunteered to participate in the Memorial Day ceremony, the 9/11 Honor Log, the Special Olympics Competition, MDA Fill the Boot, and the Firefighter Challenge.



Cadet Shift Day

The Virginia Beach Fire Department Cadet Program hosted its annual Shift Day in July. The event entailed a full day of hands-on fire training including forcible entry, vehicle extrication, rappelling, and live fire evolutions for members ranging from ages 14 to 18. Each member had an opportunity to put into practice the skills and knowledge they gained throughout the year. Each evolution was designed to encourage team building, individual improvement, and mental resilience. The skills stations were proctored by on-duty, appropriately trained fire personnel and the scenario-based drills gave each member an opportunity to work alongside a professional fire crew.



Hampton Roads Volunteer Achievement Award

The Virginia Beach Fire Department Cadets were awarded the Hampton Roads Volunteer Achievement Award, for the Youth Volunteer Group category, at a ceremony held at the Westin, Town Center. The Cadets were recognized for their excellent community service and selfless desire to help others. They are often called upon as volunteers to assist with VBFD events such as graduations, award ceremonies, memorials, and large-scale training evolutions. They have also volunteered for the Special Olympics Competition, 9/11 memorial, Neptune Parade, Life Safety events, and much more.



SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Marine Bureau



The Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) Marine Bureau is part of the Special Operations Division. The Marine Team consists of six fire stations that support maritime firefighting and water rescue operations. Fire Station 1 crews man Fire Boat 1 which is a 2007 30-foot vessel docked at the Virginia Beach City Marina in the Lynnhaven Inlet. This vessel primarily covers the Lynnhaven Inlet, Lynnhaven River, Atlantic Ocean, and the Chesapeake Bay. Inflatable Rigid Boat (IRB) 1 is a trailered 2014 vessel also at Fire Station 1 which responds to assist Fire Boat 1 and can respond to the City of Virginia Beach's inland waters. Fire Station 12 crews man Fireboat 12 which is a 1977 41-foot vessel docked at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center Southside Annex in Rudee Inlet. This vessel primarily covers Rudee Inlet, Lake Rudee, Lake Wesley, and the Atlantic Ocean. Fire Stations 6 crews man Fireboat 6 which is a trailered 2010 24-foot vessel. This vessel responds to the Intercoastal Waterway, Back Bay, and within the Port of Virginia. Fire Rescue Boat 6 is a 16-foot trailered vessel at Fire Station 6 that can respond to low water and marsh areas of Back Bay. The VBFD Fire Boats are the only resources available

in Virginia Beach for marine firefighting. In addition to firefighting, these vessels respond to "all hazards" including boat accidents, distressed vessels, drownings, medical calls on the water, HazMat, vehicle accidents in the water, missing boaters and supports the United States Coast Guard.

Another component of the Marine Team is the Water Rescue Swimmer program. This program began in 2016 and today nearly all VBFD members are qualified as Surface Water Rescue swimmers. They can conduct water rescues off Fire Boats or from the shoreline of Virginia Beach's inland waters. Fire Stations 15, 11, and 17 are designated Surf Rescue Swimmer Fire Stations and have mandatory rescue swimmer staffing from April through October. These rescue swimmers are trained to the Surface Water Rescue and Surf Rescue



level. They normally assist the Virginia Beach Lifeguard System but can effectively make surf rescues during times and at locations where no lifeguards are available. There are close to 90 Surf Rescue Swimmers throughout the Virginia Beach Fire Department.

Special Olympics Virginia's Polar Plunge

One of the biggest and most well attended annual winter events held at the Oceanfront is the annual Polar Plunge, sponsored by Special Olympics Virginia. This year's event raised more than \$1.1 million. The Fire Department's Marine Team provided "in water" safeties to keep participants safe while they willingly plunged into freezing ocean waters. The newest component of the Marine Team is the Fire Rescue Swimmers (FRS), which respond to distressed swimmers. They not only respond to emergencies, but just as important, provide participants with a feeling of being safe, accepted, valued, and celebrated while they participate in these water activities. This is more than a service provided to our community, but a chance for first responders to meet members of our community and make a positive impact on a personal level. This positive interaction was highly recognized and commended by both the sponsors and families of participants. We are truly honored and grateful to be a part of this great community event.



They Will Surf Again Virginia Beach / Surfers Healing Camp



VBFD was honored to be a part of Life Rolls On Foundation's event, "They Will Surf Again Virginia Beach." Rescue swimmers were among the more than 300 volunteers who came together to support people of all ages, with various kinds of disabilities, for an epic day to bask in the sun and splash in the surf. Guests come from all over the country to participate in this annual event. With the help of volunteers, guests of all ages got to experience the power of the ocean and what it is like to surf. Our Marine Team and Rescue Swimmers also joined the Surfers Healing Camp at the Oceanfront. This two-day event is specifically geared towards providing children on the Autism Spectrum an opportunity to

learn to surf and experience the profound impact and overall healing effects of the ocean's water. This is the 17th year that Virginia Beach has hosted the Surfers Healing Foundation Team. Fire Captain Zeb Moseley stated, "VBFD's support of Life Rolls On and Surfer's Healing allows us to make a giant impact on both the participants and their families. It is such a rewarding experience to see the smiles and excitement on everyone's faces after they catch a wave and knowing that we played a small part in that, is incredible!"



Rescue Swimmer Course

As part of its annual Water Rescue School, members of the Virginia Beach Fire Department created a 3-day pilot program, Rescue Swimmer course, for the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. This inaugural School consisted of three courses including: Surface Water Rescue, Rescue Swimmer, and Surf Rescue.



rescue techniques using specialized equipment and without the use of an inherently buoyant personal flotation device.

The Rescue Swimmer course is designed to build upon and expand the skills taught in Surface Water Rescue – as well as provide a bridge to those wishing to pursue the more challenging surf and dive rescue curriculums. Rescue swimmers are trained how to perform advanced surface and sub-surface

Fourteen personnel from four different agencies to include Portsmouth Fire Department, York County Fire Department, Virginia State Police, and members of Virginia Beach Fire Department participated in this initial course offering.

The ultimate intent is to create a nationally recognized hub for water rescue in the City of Virginia Beach, similar to our Structural Collapse Course, and to build on this foundation and develop a self-supporting School offering multiple training tracks to enhance Surface Water Rescue.



Hazardous Materials Bureau

The Hazardous Materials Team is a specialized response team that is capable of handling hazardous materials emergencies, releases, or accidents. The Hazardous Materials Response team is made up of 27 members assigned to three shifts at Fire Station 3 in the London Bridge section of the city. All Hazardous Materials Team members are trained to meet the minimum standard level of “technician” set by OSHA. Over 75% of the team’s members are trained to the highest level under OSHA of “specialist”. The Hazardous Materials Team training is obtained through our partnership with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM).

The Virginia Beach Fire Department Hazardous Materials Team is a part of the Southside Regional Hazardous Materials response team along with the Cities of Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Chesapeake. The Southside Regional Hazardous Materials Team is responsible for managing hazardous materials releases throughout southeast Virginia.



Members of the Hazardous Materials response team are also cross trained in the technical rescue discipline. The cross training of the Hazardous Materials team allows the team to assist the Technical Rescue team on emergency incidents and provides a redundancy within the system.

Hazardous Materials Technician Course

The Virginia Beach Fire Department recently held a two-week Hazmat Technician Course in conjunction with the Southside Regional Hazardous Material Response. Seventeen students from fire departments across the southside region, successfully completed the 80-hour course at the Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center and are now certified as Hazmat Technicians in the Commonwealth. This training involves both didactic and practical training, and provides first responders with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively respond to hazardous materials incidents within their jurisdictions and the region. The instructor cadre is made up of experienced

Hazmat Specialists from Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, and Portsmouth. This is the third class that has been delivered as a partnership between the Virginia Beach Fire Department, Southside Regional Hazmat Team, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.



Technical Rescue Bureau

The Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) Technical Rescue Team (TRT) provides emergency response and mitigation to incidents concerning collapsed structures, confined spaces, rope and high angle rescues, trench collapse, and vehicle machinery entrapments. The TRT is made up of 27 members assigned to three shifts at Fire Station 7 located in the Town Center section of the city. All TRT members are trained to meet the “technician” level per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard for technical rescue training. Training for the TRT members is obtained through our partnership with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP).

The Virginia Beach Fire Department TRT is part of the Tidewater Regional Technical Rescue Team (TRTRT) along with the cities of Norfolk, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, and Suffolk. The VBFD is the lead agency of the TRTRT. The TRTRT is available to respond to technical rescue incidents throughout southeast Virginia.

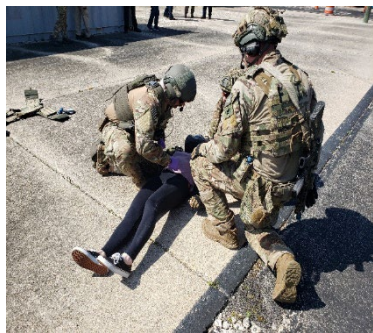
Members of the TRT are also cross trained as Hazardous Materials Technicians. The cross training of the TRT allows for the team to assist the Hazardous Materials team on emergency incidents and provides redundancy within the system.

FBI SWAT Medic Program

The Virginia Beach Fire Department has a working Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) - Norfolk Field Office to provide Advance Life Support (ALS) and tactical medicine for the Norfolk FBI Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team. The VBFD's SWAT Medic program has been in operation since its inception in 1995 and is a model medical component which utilizes the latest techniques in tactical medicine. The VBFD/FBI partnership developed over the years has been a model for other offices in the bureau who operate with an MOU from a locality such as ours.



VBFD SWAT-Medics are called out to provide medical support to the FBI Norfolk Divisions SWAT Team. Currently the medical team has seven active duty VBFD paramedics, and one Emergency Room physician; Dr. Joseph Lang who serves as the Operational Medical Director for the program. This coming year the team is moving to add new members to the team in preparation of current team members retiring over the next year. The new selectees will take part in a multi-day rigorous selection process alongside FBI Agents seeking a position on the SWAT Team.



VBFD SWAT-Medics are responsible for covering all training venues and all operational support during callouts. The team is called out to assist on numerous missions each year ranging from high-risk warrant service, active shooter response, critical incident response and being attached to a security detail for high level officials in the Federal Government just to name a few. Additionally, the VBFD SWAT-Medics have established the reputation as being on the forefront of training and are specifically requested to help facilitate training for the Bureaus Operational Medicine Division and numerous localities in the Hampton Roads Region. Our team helps to ensure our Law Enforcement Partners are trained and prepared

for medical emergencies with the most up to date treatment modalities.

FEMA – VIRGINIA TASK FORCE 2

The National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System, established under the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 1989, is a framework for organizing federal, state, and local partner emergency response teams as integrated federal disaster response task forces.

Each task force is a team specializing in urban search and rescue, disaster recovery, and emergency medicine. The task forces are equipped and ready to deploy within six hours in various response models. When federal support is anticipated prior to an event such as a hurricane, System resources are often pre-positioned along with other federal responders to expedite support following the disaster.

Since 1989, the Virginia Beach Fire Department has been the sponsoring agency for VA-TF2. Our Task Force is comprised of 220 members from 14 participating agencies in Southeastern Virginia, 90 of which are Virginia Beach Firefighters, with the training and expertise to respond to natural disasters as well as man-made incidents such as terrorist attacks. The role of the sponsoring agency is to coordinate all task force activities such as: Managing federal grant funding, procuring necessary supplies and equipment, providing training to task force members, and coordinating all deployment activities. The Task Force has been deployed to more than 35 missions throughout the United States, Haiti, and Puerto Rico.

Capabilities of VATF-2:

- Physical search and rescue operations in damaged/collapsed structures.
- Emergency medical care for entrapped survivors, task force personnel and search canines.
- Reconnaissance to assess damage and needs, and provide feedback to local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal officials.
- Assessment/shut-off of utilities to houses and other buildings.
- Hazardous materials surveys/evaluations.
- Structural/hazard evaluations of buildings needed for immediate occupancy to support disaster relief operations.
- Stabilizing damaged structures, including shoring and cribbing operations on damaged buildings.
- Hazardous Materials Equipment Push Packages for operations in a contaminated environment.
- Search and rescue operations in a water environment.

Significant events the Virginia Task Force 2 has responded to:

- 1995 Murrah Federal Building Bombing, Oklahoma City
- 1996 Summer Olympics, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2001 Pentagon 9/11/2001, Arlington, Virginia
- 2002 Winter Olympics, Salt Lake City, Utah
- 2005 Hurricane Katrina, Waveland, Mississippi and New Orleans, Louisiana
- 2010 7.1 Earthquake, Port-Au-Prince, Haiti
- 2017 Hurricane Irma and Maria, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and US Virgin Islands
- 2021 Champlain Towers Collapse, Surfside, Florida



VOLUNTEER BUREAU

Oceana Volunteer Fire Department

The Oceana Volunteer Fire Department (OVFD), incorporated in 1948, is the only remaining active volunteer fire organization within the City of Virginia Beach, and serves under the umbrella of the Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD). Members provide a variety of services to the VBFD, and ultimately the citizens of Virginia



Beach. Volunteer Support Technicians, Firefighters, Training Instructors, and Administrative Personnel allow for covering a wide range of interests and accommodate personnel with a wide variety of job skills and flexible schedules.

Volunteer Support Technicians and Firefighters augment the career staff and aid with on-scene firefighting, air, light, and equipment support. The volunteers' support truck is the primary VBFD Rehabilitation (REHAB) unit, providing on-scene refreshment and REHAB services to emergency personnel. They work a wide range of emergency scene incidents varying from automobile accidents to large structural fires. In conjunction with their VBFD career counterparts, certified training instructors provide a quality training program. OVFD has an array of qualified administrative personnel who carry out required monitoring and documentation of personnel actions and department business affairs.

Statistics

OVFD Total Staffed Hours – 6,371
OVFD Total Response Hours – 815
OVFD Total Administration/Maintenance Hours – 2,950

Volunteer Recognition Award

In September, Fire Chief David Hutcheson presented Volunteer Battalion Chief Wayne Richardson with a Volunteer Recognition Award for his 45 years of public service and dedication to the OVFD. Volunteer Battalion Chief Richardson has provided more than 30,000 hours of volunteer service to the Virginia Beach community.



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Virginia Fallen Firefighters & EMS Memorial Service

Virginia Beach Firefighter Captain Sean H. Land was one of four honorees recognized posthumously at the 25th Annual Virginia Fallen Firefighters & Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service in Richmond. The service was established to honor and celebrate the bravery and courage of firefighters and EMS personnel who perished in the line of duty, in accordance with the Virginia Line of Duty Act (§ 9.1-400). Captain Land died on February 5, 2020, due to a medical condition at the age of 50. He served the city of Virginia Beach for 30 years. Members of the Virginia Beach Fire Department's Honor Guard participated in the event as well as special remarks from Fire Chief Dave Hutcheson who stated, "We remember Sean's passion for serving his community and his immeasurable contributions to the fire service and the city of Virginia Beach. May we never forget the supreme sacrifices that our brothers and sisters make for the citizens of Virginia Beach and to the Fire Department."



Firefighter of the Year

Master Firefighter Vincent G. Smith, III

Master Firefighter Smith exemplifies selflessness, professionalism, and a caring image that the public associates with members of the fire service. He embodies what it means to be a firefighter. He is first to start a task and the last to leave, ensuring everything is completed to his high standards. His attitude of excellence is contagious and spreads to his fellow firefighters at the station, making everyone better because of it.

MFF Smith has always been one to take on special projects and complete them in a professional and timely manner. MFF Smith has overseen the meter maintenance at Company 3 for several years now and has been the lead on servicing all hazmat meters on the rescues, ladders, and boats. He observed a trend in meter failures and identified that many of the department's meters had reached the end of their service life. As a result, he spearheaded an effort to obtain new meters for all ladder and rescue companies.

MFF Smith was chosen to work with two battalion chiefs and two captains to help create the Swiftwater Rescue Team. Over a period of about 18 months, MFF Smith worked tirelessly to make the concept of a Swiftwater Rescue Team, based out of



Virginia Beach, a reality. He took the lead in researching, sourcing, and facilitating the procurement of all the myriad gear and equipment needed to make the team deployable. From personal protective equipment like helmets, dry suits, and personal flotation devices to boats, motors, and trailers. He assisted wherever necessary. He was the first to volunteer to pick up and transport trucks and equipment when needed. He spent time on and off duty preparing equipment for training and cleaning and rehabbing it afterward. When the department needed to put together its own boat operator training class due to limited ability to send team members out of the area for training, MFF Smith was invaluable in both the planning and delivery of that training. Alongside his peers, he established policy, training, and equipment to deploy statewide and as part of any Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests that may be made to the state.

MFF Smith gives nothing but his best to everything he does. He has an outstanding work ethic and unwavering positive attitude toward fellow firefighters, the Virginia Beach Fire Department, and the citizens of Virginia Beach.

National Fire Protection Association Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) named Jessica Xenakis, life safety education coordinator for the Virginia Beach Fire Department, as the 2023 Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year. Xenakis was chosen as the best of the best from nominations submitted from across the United States and Canada. This prestigious award is given to recognize educators who take the lead role in making their communities safer through innovative and measurable fire and burn prevention education. The city is so proud of the work of our life safety education staff. Fire Chief Ken Pravetz stated, *“Jessica has been instrumental to the revitalization of the programs. She has implemented new ideas and new teaching methods that truly resonate with her audience, which make our community a much safer place. This award is recognition of how far she has moved the needle in solidifying fire life safety education into our community.”*



Life Safety Education Specialist Kristin Mauer’s nomination stated, “The amount of time Jessica devotes to identifying every opportunity to effectively reach and teach fire and life safety to the citizens of Virginia Beach (and beyond) is truly remarkable. Her desire to deliver quality, data-driven lessons and resources to our most at-risk citizens is the driving force behind how and why our department is so very successful and well-received by our community members. Jessica’s leadership in her department coupled with her tenacity, innovative thinking, and authentic approach to delivering fire and life safety education to the public will make her an excellent candidate and representative for this prestigious award.”

Xenakis accepted her award at the 2023 NFPA Conference & Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, as part of the 2023 NFPA Conference & Expo in May. She was also a speaker at the conference as part of the Spotlight on Public Education program.

The Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year award is awarded to qualified educators in the United States and Canada who:

- Work for a local/municipal fire department or fire marshal’s office.
- Use NFPA educational programs and materials in a consistent and creative way for their community/audience, and
- Demonstrate excellence and innovation in reaching out to the community with NFPA materials.

As part of Xenakis’ recognition, she was awarded:

- \$1,000 for a charity of her choice
- Paid registration to attend the 2023 NFPA Conference & Expo
- \$1,000 donation to the Virginia Beach Fire Prevention Bureau’s Life Safety Education Division to support public education activities: and
- A Golden Sparky the Fire Dog® Statue Award



Drive Safe Hampton Roads John T. Hanna Award



Jessica Xenakis, life safety education coordinator for the Virginia Beach Fire Department, along with Master Firefighter, Ryan Arab were named as the Drive Safe Hampton Roads John T. Hanna Award recipients for 2022. The award recognizes traffic safety excellence for outstanding achievement in occupant protection. Xenakis and Arab have devoted countless hours evaluating, revising, and rebuilding VBFD's car seat program, making it more accessible to citizens. Since 2021, their teamwork has included becoming nationally certified instructors, training 56 local individuals to become CPST's

resulting in 713 car seat checks being implemented by the close of 2022. In addition, they collaborated with Hall Mile One Automotive Group to spearhead a "Buckle Up for Life" seat check event where over 50 car seats were given away and installed properly for local families in need. The team won a \$5,000.00 Community Services Microgrant in 2022, from the city of Virginia Beach allocating much-needed funding for training education expenses for expanding the program and reach to the community. Xenakis and Arab are currently conducting their first CPST hybrid training course with both local and regional students enrolled.

Firefighter Challenge Southeast Region 2023

The Firefighter Challenge is a program of the First Responder Institute, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Challenge participants run the job skills-based course tackling the Five Essential Functions wearing full turnout gear and a self-contained breathing apparatus. Participants have three main categories to compete in: individual, tandem (2-person), and relay (5-person). Competitions simulate the physical demands of real-life firefighting by climbing the five-story tower, hoisting, chopping, dragging hoses, and rescuing a life-sized, 175-pound "victim" as they race against themselves, their opponents, and the clock. It was an amazing show of strength, athleticism, endurance, and comradery. Looking forward to next year's competition!

The following personnel participated in the event:

- Assistant Chief Trent, Lorna
- Captain Ashbury, Keith
- Master Firefighter Davis, Marquel
- Firefighter Berard, Kevin
- Firefighter Harper, Cayla
- Firefighter Lyons, Kathleen
- Firefighter Simmons, Nicolas
- Firefighter Vest, Ellie
- Firefighter Yeager, Svetlana



Pictured are VBFD award recipients: Captain Keith Ashbury, Firefighter Cayla Harper, Master Firefighter Marquel Davis and Firefighter Svetlana Yeager.

Captain Keith Ashbury:

- 3rd Place Overall Event Male Age 50-59 Category
- 2nd Place 2023 Southeast Region Male Age 50-59 Category



Firefighter Cayla Harper:

- 1st Place Overall Event Female Division 2
- 1st Place 2023 Southeast Region Female Division 2
- 3rd Place 2023 Southeast Coed Tandem Category
- Qualified for the Lion's Den. Individual Female who finished under 3 minutes

Master Firefighter Marquel Davis:

- 2nd Place Overall Event Male Division 2
- 2nd Place 2023 Southeast Region Male Division 2
- 3rd Place 2023 Southeast Coed Tandem Category

Firefighter Svetlana Yeager Awards:

- 1st Place Overall Event Female Division 3
- 1st Place 2023 Southeast Region Female Division 3

Governor's Fire Service Awards

Two Virginia Beach Fire Department employees were the recipients of the 2022 Governor's Fire Service Awards as part of the annual Virginia Fire Rescue Conference held at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

Life Safety Education Supervisor Jessica Xenakis was awarded the Excellence In Virginia Community Risk Reduction for her outstanding teaching expertise into the creation of a new virtual learning resource (www.vbfdlifesafety.com). She also created the VBFD Safety Squad Program, an interactive station-based fire and injury prevention curriculum.

Public Information Officer Barbara Morrison was awarded the Civilian Excellence In Virginia Fire Service Support. She was recognized for building and maintaining interdepartmental relationships and for new and innovative ways to ensure the department's messaging had the greatest amount of reach and impact as possible. In addition to her role as Public Information Officer, she worked closely with the Life Education team and spearheaded and advised on countless online fire safety



campaigns that ultimately helped the team gain over a 200% growth on the department's most utilized social media platforms.

Congratulations to Jessica and Barb on this outstanding recognition.

Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce Award

Master Firefighter Brenden McDaniel and Firefighters Matthew McQuarrie, Justin Tabora, and Samuel Hutcheson were presented with a Lifesaving Award as part of the Hampton Road Chamber's 2022 Valor Award ceremony held at the Virginia Beach Convention Center in June. On August 15, 2021, Engine 14 was dispatched to a possible drowning at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. When crews arrived, they discovered two male swimmers, approximately 150-200 yards offshore, who were both struggling to keep afloat. All four crew members had been trained and certified as Fire Rescue Swimmers. While other units were enroute, MFF McDaniel managed the incident and communication with VBEMS



while Firefighter McQuarrie and Tabora entered the water, followed by Firefighter Hutcheson. After several minutes they reached both swimmers and brought them back to shore safely before turning them over to VBEMS paramedics on scene for transport. We are fortunate to have such highly skilled firefighters, in multiple disciplines, to respond to emergency calls. We are grateful for the outstanding lifesaving efforts demonstrated by this crew.

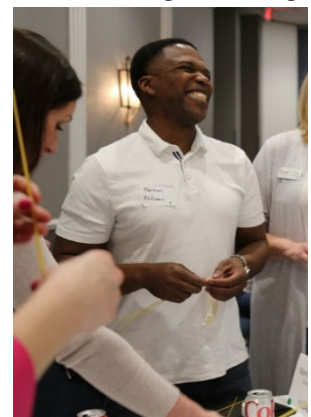
Lead 757



Lead 757 is one of the oldest and largest leadership organizations in Hampton Roads and is sponsored by the Hampton Roads Chamber. The group focuses on education and dialogue on critical issue that impact the region. This focus assists leaders in being better informed on regional issues and generating increased civic engagement. The class takes multiple

field trips during the Lead 757 program whereby each trip is focused on different topics that impact the region such as transportation, education, infrastructure, and the maritime industry.

The public safety portion of the trip was conducted at the Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center where Captain Jon Rigolo of the VBFD and a Task Force leader of FEMA VA Task Force 2 gave a lecture on the FEMA Task Force capabilities, the Task Force response and leadership challenges of the Surfside Condominium collapse in Florida and how the Virginia Beach Fire Department houses and supports this national asset. After the lecture,



members were given a tour of the training facility and had the opportunity to view and operate some of the equipment used by the VBFD on emergency scenes.

The VBFD's own Battalion Chief Norman Williams participated in 2022's Lead 757 program and graduated in November.

Leadership in Police Organizations Course



Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO) is the International Association of Chiefs of Police's (IACP) flagship leadership development training program and is locally delivered by the Virginia Beach Police Department instructor cadre. LPO is a three-week course that explores leadership at the individual, group, and organizational levels. The course teaches students about these levels of leadership through applied learning, translation of theory to practice, and practical leadership strategies. LPO is offered to not only police officers, but also firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, emergency communications personnel, and other civilian leaders.

Battalion Chiefs Edward "Woody" Landgrover and Kyle Bosiljevac represented the Virginia Beach Fire Department in 2022's LPO course, while Captains William Shay Dortch and Henry Duchene competed the 2023 offering.



National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program

The National Fire Academy (NFA) is the instructional entity within the U.S. Fire Administration and is focused on supplementation of existing programs of education and training for career and volunteer fire and EMS personnel throughout the nation. Through the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program, the NFA seeks to inspire, educate, and empower current and future fire service leaders and create public service champions within communities. EFO is composed of four focus areas: self, organization, community, and capstone. These areas are expounded upon over the course of several years. Although the EFO program has recently been revamped, legacy students under the original four-year program are finishing their curriculum. The Virginia Beach Fire Department is proud to announce that Battalion Chief Brian Phillips completed the legacy EFO Program in 2022.



Office of Volunteer Resources Recognition

Master Firefighter Kristina Ussery was recognized by the Office of Volunteer Resources for her outstanding leadership and management of the department's volunteer Fire Cadet program. Master Firefighter Ussery has more than 22 years of service in the public safety field and more than 16 years as a firefighter and paramedic with the City of Virginia Beach. For the last several years, Master Firefighter Ussery has been assigned to the Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center as a training instructor and manager of the Fire Cadet Program.



Virginia Chief Officer and Fire Officer Academies



The Virginia Chief Officer Academy (VCOA) is a week-long residential leadership course designed to prepare the newly appointed or prospective chief officer for various aspects of leadership challenges they may face. The program includes lectures from fire service leaders from across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The VCOA staff and instructors guide students on a leadership journey starting with personal leadership all the way to executive level leadership. Battalion Chief Tavish Valdez represented the Virginia Beach Fire Department in 2022's VCOA.

The Virginia Fire Officer Academy (VFOA) is a week-long residential program designed to develop current or aspiring company officers. The theme of the VFOA is "Safety Through Leadership" and is based on the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. The program is focused on improving leadership techniques,

personal accountability, and fostering the cultural change required to improve firefighter safety. Captain Richard Wall represented the Virginia Beach Fire Department in 2022's VFOA.

Virginia Fire Marshal Academy 44th Basic Law Enforcement Session

The Virginia Fire Marshal Academy (VFMA) Basic Law Enforcement session is a 10-week (400 hour) course for Fire Marshals with police powers. This advanced course is designed to develop current Fire Marshals within the guidelines outlined in §27-34.2:1. Police powers of fire marshals. Over the period of instruction, students are exposed to a variety of classroom, field exercises, practical exercises, and examinations that align with the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Virginia Beach Fire Department's own Captain Paul Roenker Trent graduated from 2023's VFMA Basic Law Enforcement session.



Promotions

- Fire Chief Pravetz, Kenneth
- Deputy Chief Valdez, Amy
- Assistant Chief Trent, Lorna
- Battalion Chief Barakey, Daniel
- Battalion Chief Compton, David
- Battalion Chief Fletcher, Fulgham
- Battalion Chief Landgrover, Edward
- Battalion Chief Stone, Thomas
- Battalion Chief Zimba, Lawrence
- Captain Aguerrebere, Jose
- Captain Cifelli, Paul
- Captain Clark, Jason
- Captain Degges, Derek
- Captain Flynn, Bradley
- Captain Forestiere, Anthony
- Captain Hale, Christina
- Captain Meller, Daniel
- Captain Rooks, David
- Captain Sass, Shawn
- Captain Semaria, Richard
- Captain Stevens, Nicholas
- Captain Strong, Christopher
- Captain Williams, Neil

Military Deployments

The Virginia Beach Fire Department would like to recognize the following members who were deployed for military service and thank them for their service:

- Captain Compton, David
- Master Firefighter Asencio, Jeremy
- Master Firefighter Boone, Randy
- Master Firefighter Hine, Brittany
- Firefighter Brown Jr., Richard

Annual Awards

Medal of Merit

- Captain Gonano, Max
- Master Firefighter Jones, Deborah

Life Saving Awards

- Captain Chiaverotti, Matthew
- Captain Davis, Michael
- Captain Geiger, Joel
- Captain Hale, Joseph
- Captain Hall, Shawn
- Captain Lane, Edward
- Master Firefighter Chellew, Michael
- Master Firefighter Cooke, Justin
- Master Firefighter Geller, Christopher
- Master Firefighter Hering, Mark
- Master Firefighter Hiltibran, Mark
- Master Firefighter Hofler, Joel
- Master Firefighter Jones, Deborah
- Master Firefighter Kahler, Christopher
- Master Firefighter McDaniel, Brenden
- Master Firefighter Padgett, Draper
- Master Firefighter Roenker, Jeffrey
- Master Firefighter Savell, Aaron
- Master Firefighter Sigwart, Paul
- Master Firefighter Skelaney, William K.
- Master Firefighter Wachtmeister, Hans
- Master Firefighter Wheatley, Guy
- Master Firefighter Williams, Richard
- Master Firefighter Zach, Christopher
- Firefighter Bunch, Brandon
- Firefighter Ewing, Brittany
- Firefighter Hutcheson, Samuel
- Firefighter McCullen, Christian
- Firefighter McQuarrie, Matthew
- Firefighter Powell, Cameron
- Firefighter Swindell, Adam
- Firefighter Tabora, Justin
- Firefighter Zamenick, Rudy
- Firefighter McGinnis, Kirk; *Newport News Fire Department*
- Clark, Piper

Meritorious Conduct Awards

- Captain Elliott, Jonathan
- Master Firefighter Eason, Derek
- Master Firefighter Pitrone, Theodore
- Master Firefighter Schoepke, Mark
- Firefighter Hauser, Benjamin
- Firefighter Mason, John

Commendation Awards

- Deputy Chief Pravetz, Kenneth
- District Chief Wilkerson, Eric
- Battalion Chief Valdez, Victor
- Captain Fulgham, Fletcher
- Master Firefighter Arab, Ryan
- Aydlette, Donna
- Parke, Maria
- Probst, Storm

Meritorious Unit Citations

- Captain Creamer, Joshua
- Captain Geiger, Joel
- Master Firefighter Koller, Michael
- Master Firefighter Simons, Erik
- Master Firefighter Wheatley, Guy

Outstanding Service Awards

- Master Firefighter Smith, Ray; *Retired*
- Hintzke, James, *Valhalla's Forge LLC*
- Johnson, Bill

FDIC Scholarships

- Master Firefighter Smith III, Vincent
- Firefighter Harper, Cayla
- Firefighter Jacobs, Krystal
- Firefighter Schwaner, Matthew

Retirements



Fire Chief Hutcheson, David



Battalion Chief Darling, Rob



Battalion Chief Ludford, John



Battalion Chief Seigh, Patrick



Captain DaSilva, Dean



Captain Hall, Shawn



Captain Hill, Harold



Captain Mayo, Mark



Master Firefighter Alger, Eric



Master Firefighter Hinckle, Chris



Master Firefighter Hundley, Mark



Master Firefighter Moss, Adam



Master Firefighter Nichols, Jason



Master Firefighter Wachtmeister, Hans



Master Firefighter White, Nicholas



Fire Inspector Crow, Keith



Alston, Margarita
Human Resources



RESOURCES

Join Our Team!

The Virginia Beach Fire Department is interested in working with dedicated, compassionate, and hardworking people. If you are looking for a rewarding career as part of our highly trained and professional team, visit our website (<https://fire.virginiabeach.gov/>) to inquire about the application process. Volunteer opportunities are also available for adults and teenagers!

Minimum requirements include:

- At least 18 years old at time of written test.
- High school graduate or GED at time of eligibility list.
- Valid driver's license at time of application.
- Eligible to work in the U.S. at time of application.

Programs

Operation Smoke Alarm

In need of a smoke alarm or assistance? The Operation Smoke Alarm program is designed to provide and install smoke alarm(s) free of charge to Virginia Beach residents who own AND live in the requested home. Factors considered for providing this service:

- Not having a working smoke alarm in the home.
- Not being financially able to purchase alarms.
- Having at least one child under the age of 18.
- Having anyone over 60 years of age living in the home.
- Not being physically able to install an alarm on your own.



To apply, contact the VBFD Life Safety Education Division at 757-385-2875 or scan the QR code above!

Child Passenger Safety Program

The Virginia Beach Fire Department Life Safety Education crew is available to provide you with the tools, resources, and assistance to install your child's car seat properly every time! To schedule an appointment, contact the VBFD Life Safety Education Division at 757-385-2875 or scan the QR code here!





CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

Fire Department

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Virginia Beach, VA 23462

(757) 385-8882

vbfire@vbgov.com

<https://fire.virginiabeach.gov/>

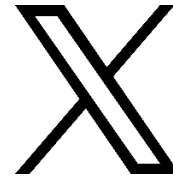
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