



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

Fire Department

FIRE DEPARTMENT FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM FIRE CHIEF PRAVETZ

Dear Virginia Beach Community,

As Fire Chief, it is my honor to present the Virginia Beach Fire Department's annual report, highlighting the remarkable achievements and advancements made over the past year. The dedication and resilience of our team have driven innovations that enhance the safety and well-being of our city and residents.

This year saw significant strides in technology and operational efficiency. Our Communications and Information Technology (CIT) Bureau now manages a 24/7 Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) program, integrating fire drones into our response framework to support emergency operations, training, and community engagement. In collaboration with the City's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Department of Public Utilities, we also expanded our use of GIS to streamline data collection, automate key processes, and improve our strategic planning.

We welcomed a Special Events Captain to the Community Risk Reduction Division, a pivotal role that has greatly enhanced our event preparedness and operational effectiveness. Additionally, our Fire Rescue teams now have Aqua Lung Rapid Dive Kits, allowing for faster water rescues and life-saving interventions during emergencies.

Our commitment to honoring the legacy of our fallen heroes was especially poignant this year. We remember Captain Matthew R. Chiaverotti and Fire Investigator Master Firefighter Matthew Gallina, who both courageously served Virginia Beach. Their memory continues to inspire our dedication to duty and service. They remind us of the dangers we face and the steps we must take to improve the health and safety of our firefighters.

We celebrated outstanding individuals within our ranks, including Captain Scott Springer, our Firefighter of the Year, whose leadership has been instrumental in advancing our department's safety standards and operational effectiveness. Our personnel have also demonstrated their commitment beyond emergency response, as shown through their volunteer efforts with Habitat for Humanity and participation in crisis intervention training.

As we look toward the future, we are inspired by the strength of our community and our collective mission to protect and serve. We thank you for your ongoing support, which fuels our dedication to excellence in all that we do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Pravetz', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kenneth Pravetz

Fire Chief, Virginia Beach Fire Department

IN MEMORIAM

Virginia Beach Fire Department Master Firefighter Matthew A. Gallina, age 48, of Virginia Beach, Virginia, passed away on August 21, 2024, surrounded by his loving family and friends. Born on April 6, 1976, in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, he was the son of Nicholas A. and Susan (Griffith) Gallina.

Matt graduated from Atlantic Community High School in Delray Beach, Florida, in 1994. He proudly served in the U.S. Navy from 1994 to 2000, assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt. After leaving the Navy, he embarked on a distinguished career in the fire service and married his soulmate, Michelle (Brock) Gallina, celebrating 22 years of marriage in June.

In 2000, Matt began his fire service career after graduating from the Tidewater Regional Fire Academy, Class 73. He joined the Virginia Beach Fire Department in February 2002, serving at Engine 2C, Ladder 2C, Engine 14C, Engine 8C, Ladder 8C, and eventually moving to the Fire Marshal's Office as a Fire Investigator.



Matt was a proud member of the International Association of Firefighters and the International Association of Arson Investigators.

Outside of his professional life, Matt had a deep passion for baseball. He enjoyed playing, coaching, and watching the game, often spending time at the ballpark with his family and friends. He loved training Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, where he earned his black belt. He was also an avid

shooter and enjoyed spending time at the range. His quick wit, loyalty, and loving nature made him a cherished father and devoted husband.

Master Firefighter Gallina is survived by his wife, Michelle; their three children, Dominic, Mia, and Lincoln; his parents, Nicholas Gallina and Susan Griffith Gallina; his sisters, Krista Zyskowski and Stephanie Gallina; as well as extended family and many friends.



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

City Leadership



Mayor

Robert M. "Bobby" Dyer



District #1

David Hutcheson



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



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

Norman C. Williams, Jr.

Assistant Chief C-Shift

Eric C. Wilkerson

Assistant Chief Training & Special Operations

Michael W. Brashear

Budget & Finance Manager

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 Investigations; Fire Inspections; 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, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue Team, and the Hampton Roads Incident Management Team. The VBFD has been an Accredited Agency with the Commission on Fire Accreditation (CFAI) since 2001 having 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, 9 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 2023	FY 2024
Salaries	\$ 50,599,947.00	\$ 53,835,125.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 16,516,622.00	\$ 17,796,309.00
Professional Services	\$ 750,158.00	\$ 573,435.00
Internal Services	\$ 4,231,493.00	\$ 3,885,601.00
Other Charges	\$ 382,751.00	\$ 421,141.00
Supplies	\$ 1,029,629.00	\$ 959,798.00
Leases	\$ 243,356.00	\$ 257,526.00
Capital	\$ 75,622.00	\$ 8,500.00
Grand Total	\$ 73,829,578.00	\$ 77,737,435.00

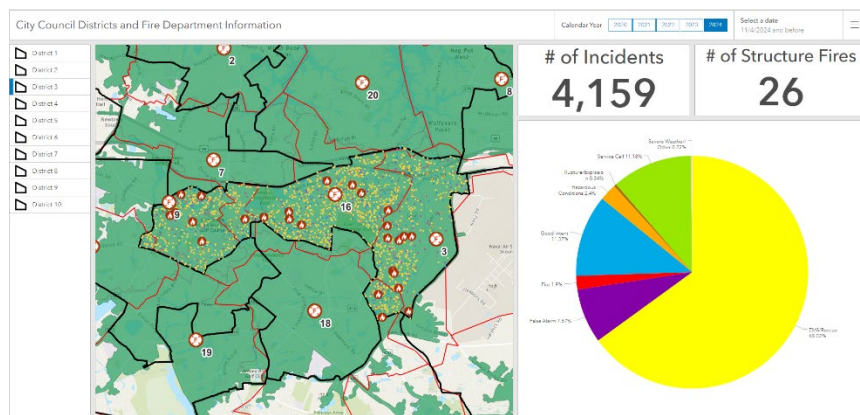
What's New

Unmanned Aerial System (UAS)

The Communications and Information Technology (CIT) Bureau is now managing a full-time Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) program. Pilots are assigned to an operational shift to supply 24/7 aerial coverage. The fire drone was added to the response matrix for certain incident types to be dispatched automatically. The Fire Drone also assists with pilot training, technical rescue and hazmat programs, incident pre-planning, community events, Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center (HEDFTC) assistance, and other tasks as assigned. The CIT Bureau continues to develop a UAS training site at the HEDFTC. This training site will be for departmental training, along with a plan of regional and national training in the future.



Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



The VBFD has partnered with the Department of Information Technology/GIS and the Department of Public Utilities to improve data collection and usage within the fire department. The Research, Analysis, and Planning (RAP) Bureau, the CIT Bureau, and the Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division have all played an important part in helping to

develop these technological advances for the department. Initiatives include collaborating with Public Utilities to combine and vet fire hydrant maintenance and location data; digitizing and automating data and information collection forms including inspections, smoke alarm installation, and significant incident summaries; and the creation of information dashboards to help better understand the fire department's current operational performance and to develop future goals. Utilizing GIS technologies and integrating them into the VBFD is a major part of the department's fifth strategic goal and will continue to be a focus moving forward.

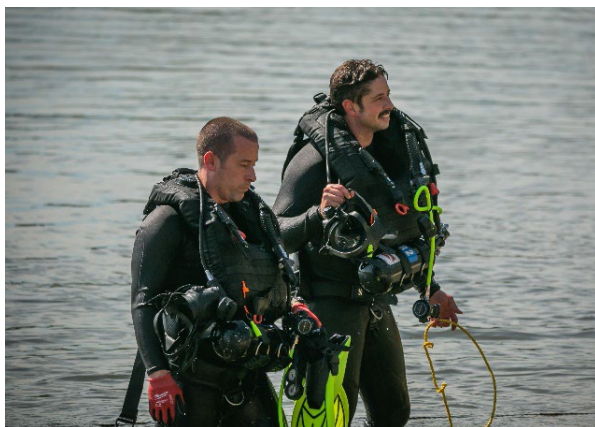
Special Events Captain

The Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division has added a new position of Special Events Captain. Since the inception of the role, it has proven to be pivotal in enhancing efficiency and preparedness in managing various aspects of operations. The captain's responsibilities extend to developing outstanding plans for special events, incidents, and any other emergency situations that we may encounter. The captain's strategic insight and expertise have been instrumental in the department's ability to effectively mitigate risks and ensure the safety of our community members. Moreover, the captain's role extends beyond just planned responses. They are also assisting efforts to transition the department's processes into the future. By leveraging electronic platforms and implementing innovative solutions, the department is improving data collection methods and streamlining the overall operational workflow. This forward-thinking approach not only enhances our capabilities but also ensures that we remain at the forefront of industry standards.

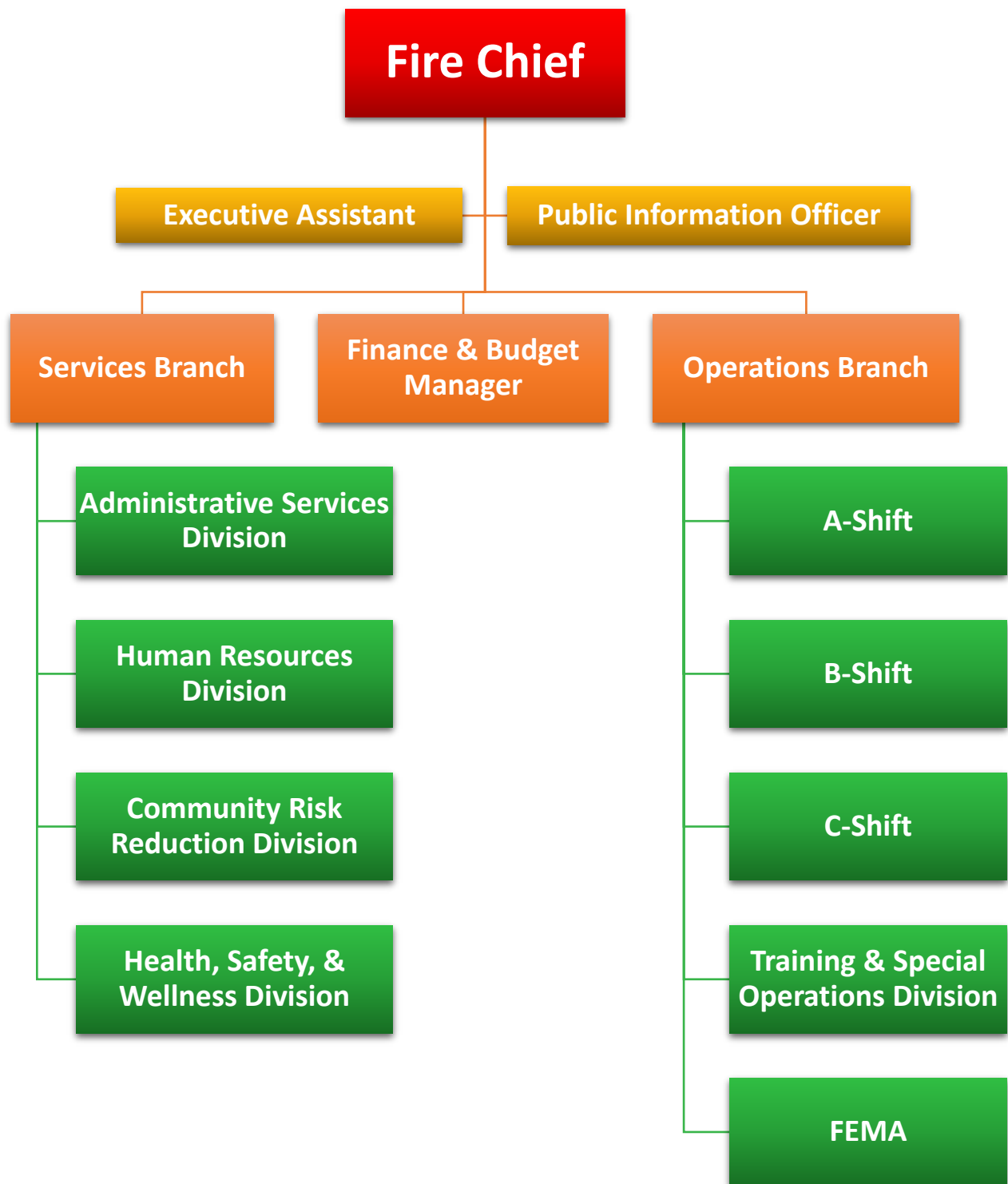


Rapid Dive System

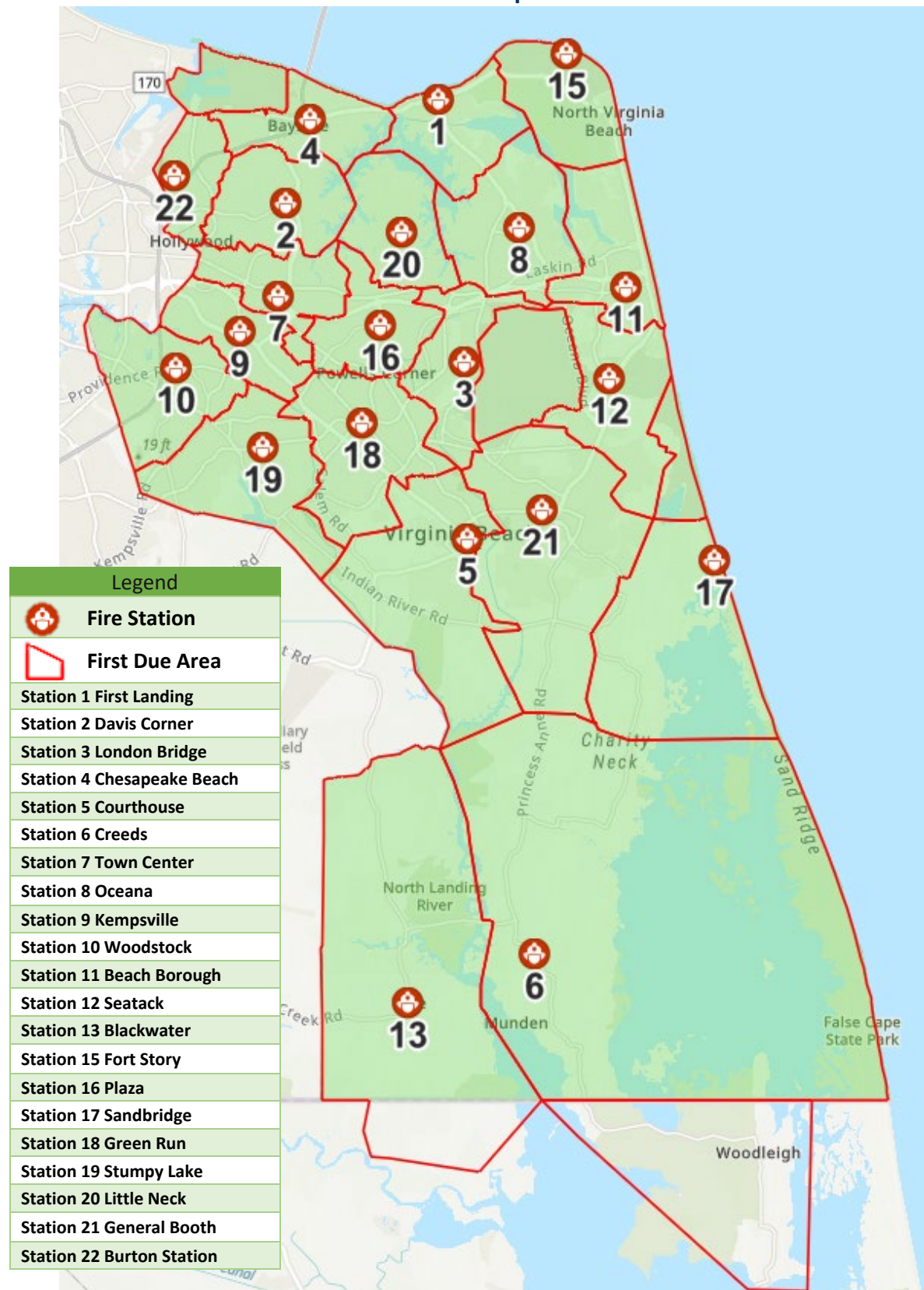
Each of the two Fire Rescue companies in the VBFD was outfitted with Aqua Lung Rapid Dive Kits. Like the Self-Contained Under Water Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA), the Rapid Dive kits are designed to allow the rescue diver to rapidly enter the water to search for persons trapped in submerged vehicles, near shore drownings, and overturned boats. The Rapid Dive kit is designed to be placed in-service within one minute after the arrival at the emergency scene, increasing the survivability profile of a person trapped in a submerged environment. This additional capability will provide a much-needed service to the citizens and visitors of Virginia Beach.



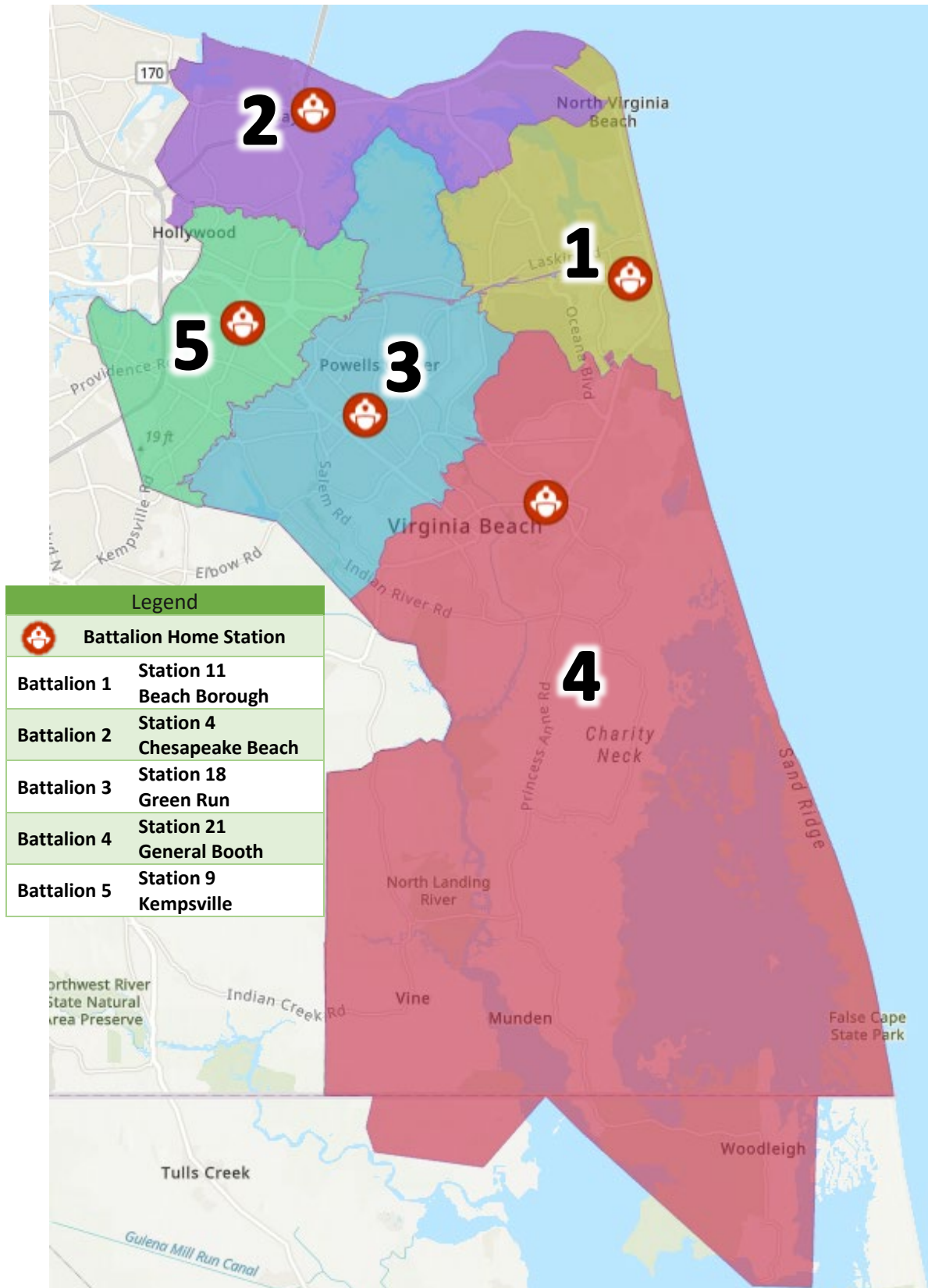
Organizational Chart



Fire Station First Due Area Map



Battalion Areas Map



SERVICES BRANCH

Services Branch

Business Applications Specialist

Administrative
Services
Division

Human
Resources
Division

Community Risk
Reduction
Division

Safety, Health,
& Wellness
Division

Communications & Information
Technology Bureau

Research, Analysis, & Planning
Bureau

Resource Management Bureau

Fire Prevention Bureau

Life Safety Education Bureau

Special Events/Emergency
Management Bureau

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

Communications & Information Technology Bureau

The VBFD is actively enhancing its technology through upgrades and expansions. Over the past year, the Communications and Information Technology (CIT) Bureau has implemented FirstNet cellular devices, replacing older Verizon devices. Collaborating with the City's IT Department, the CIT Bureau developed a plan to replace most VBFD computers, incorporating staff recommendations to ensure optimal functionality. Each engine, ladder, and fire rescue unit now has two desktop computers.

Key achievements include reworking the Response Committee, with Battalion Chief Brian Sullivan now serving as the chairperson of the Hampton Roads Interoperability Committee. The CIT Bureau is also testing Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) updates with IT and ECCS. Plans are underway to replace aging Toughbooks in the field with a successful proof-of-concept using iPads and LIFEPAKs equipped with cellular routers for electronic patient care reporting and 12-lead transmission.

International CAD Consortium



The VBFD hosted the International CAD Consortium in April 2024. Mayor Dyer and Fire Chief Pravetz welcomed over 120 public safety professionals, including representatives from 911 centers, IT, Fire, EMS, and Police departments across the United States and Canada. This year's consortium featured a roundtable format, encouraging attendees to engage in open discussions about common challenges and collaborative solutions in the public safety sector. This unique forum aims to foster networking and knowledge sharing among participants,

allowing them to explore best practices and innovative approaches to enhance their operations. The event culminated with presentations from various product vendors, who provided insights into the latest technologies and solutions relevant to the industry.



Research, Analysis, & Planning Bureau

The Research, Analysis, and Planning (RAP) Bureau was expanded in 2013 to address the VBFD's increasing demands for data analysis, planning, and research. It includes one battalion chief, a civilian Research and Analysis Manager, and an Administrative Specialist. The Bureau oversees the CFAI Accreditation process and ensures compliance with local and national regulations.

Key responsibilities include designing and analyzing data related to the VBFD's mission, coordinating with stakeholders, and supporting goal setting and budgeting. The RAP Bureau also produces major

publications like the Strategic Business Plan and Community Risk Analysis, while ensuring access to advanced business intelligence and GIS technology. It validates operational needs and budget plans using data from various records management tools and employs performance measures to support departmental programs and illustrate community service impacts.

43rd Annual Metro Fire Planners Conference

The VBFD hosted the 43rd Annual Metro Fire Planners Conference at the Westin Hotel Town Center. This conference is held to discuss trends and challenges faced by similarly sized fire departments and how these issues are being managed and overcome. It also provides an open, interactive, and informal forum for fire and emergency response industry experts to facilitate open interaction, share expert advice and best practices, communicate industry standards, and encourage robust dialogue and information sharing. Participants from across the country and Canada come prepared to seek ideas on challenges they are facing and offer innovative ideas, solutions, and methodologies to each other.



Resource Management Bureau

The Resource Management Bureau remains dedicated to supporting the Virginia Beach Fire Department's mission by ensuring efficient operations, timely delivery of supplies, and reducing overtime. This year, the focus was on anticipating operational needs and improving readiness. Key achievements include:

- Equipment Procurement:
 - A \$435,000 investment to replace all 1 ¾", 2 ½", and high-rise hoses on frontline trucks.
 - Restoring a full backstock of ground ladders, ensuring availability for training and emergency use.
 - Developing equipment caches for transitioning ladders into engines, which has proven effective in operations.
- Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC) Trial: The TIC trial was completed, and a proposal for TIC upgrades will be presented in early 2025, preparing the department for future advancements in firefighting technology.

The Bureau has made significant progress in meeting the department's needs and is committed to ensuring continued success in the year ahead. We look forward to working with senior staff, external agencies, and all VBFD members to drive further improvements.



HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

The Fire Human Resources (HR) Division is dedicated to serving both internal members of the Fire Department and the external community through a threefold mission:

1. **Providing Quality Service:** The HR team is committed to offering exceptional service to both internal personnel and external stakeholders, ensuring a smooth and efficient operational environment.
2. **Recruitment and Workforce Diversity:** The department strives to implement effective processes for recruiting and hiring a qualified workforce that is reflective of the community and citizens served by the Fire Department.
3. **Promoting an Inclusive Workplace:** The HR department works tirelessly to foster an inclusive and collaborative workplace, prioritizing open communication and positive employee relations at all organizational levels.



The Deputy Chief of Services oversees the Human Resources Bureau, which consists of a dedicated team of professionals, including a Human Resources Manager, Recruiter, Payroll Clerk, and Personnel/Operations Administrative Technician. Together, they work in close collaboration with the City's Human Resources department and Fire Department leadership to coordinate, enhance, and streamline all HR-related functions for over 550 personnel. Their responsibilities cover a wide range of human resources activities, such as:

- Recruitment and hiring
- Promotions and career progression
- Performance appraisals
- Staffing and compensation
- Employee relations
- Learning and development

The HR Division, in partnership with City Human Resources, also plays a critical role in ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. This includes reviewing, developing, and analyzing human resources programs, practices, and policies to guarantee adherence to all legal requirements.

Accomplishments for the Fiscal Year:

- **Application Review:** The Fire HR team reviewed over 800 applications, ensuring the best candidates were selected for the department.
- **Open House:** Hosted an Open House event attended by approximately 200 prospective candidates, providing valuable information about opportunities within the department.
- **Training Sessions:** Delivered various training sessions on payroll and HR-related topics, enhancing employee knowledge and operational efficiency.

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION

Fire Prevention Bureau

The members of the Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) 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 the cause and 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

FY 2024 Highlights

- 3765 annual fire inspections
- 389 attempt fire inspections
- 3144 re-inspections
- 38 attempt re-inspections
- 101 inspection requests
- 40 residential inspections
- 169 complaints
- 210 firewatch inspections
- 44 occupancy load calculations
- 77 red tag removals
- 146 investigation cases
- 11 life safety inspections
- 82 fire scene investigations
- 33 arsons – 11 arrests
- 7 bomb threats – 2 arrests
- 13 threaten to burn – 3 arrests



Life Safety Education Bureau

The Virginia Beach Fire Department's Life Safety Education Bureau focuses on delivering fire and life safety educational programs to reduce preventable injuries, deaths, and property loss in the community. As part of the Community Risk Reduction Division, life safety educators aim to proactively address safety issues and decrease emergencies through educational outreach and data-driven strategies.

The Bureau manages several programs, including Car Seat Safety, Youth Firesetting Prevention, Operation Smoke Alarm, and Older Adult Fire and Fall Prevention. The team also leads the nationally recognized "Safety Squad" program, which is vital for teaching young students interactive lessons in fire safety, injury prevention, and emergency preparedness.



Each year, it reaches around 30,000

students in Grades K-5. This program is a collaboration between VBFD, VBSchools, ECCS, OEM, and VBPD. This proactive and engaging approach helps create a safer community by empowering children with safety knowledge that can save lives. This program has been showcased at national and state conferences in Virginia, North Carolina, Colorado, Nevada, Florida, Tennessee, and Washington.

The Life Safety team, consisting of four specialists, exceeds NFPA 1035 training standards for public fire

and life safety educators and intervention specialists. All team members serve as nationally certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) and are equipped to conduct car seat checks and provide instructional training. Additionally, they are trained Youth Fire Intervention Specialists, enabling them to educate at-risk youth who have misused fire. The Life Safety Education Supervisor serves as a contract instructor for Virginia Department of Fire Programs delivering instruction in state certification courses, Fire and Life Safety Educator and Communicating with Your Community. She also regularly teaches Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention courses at the National Fire Academy in Emmittsburg, MD.

For more information or to request an educational program/presentation, scan the QR code here to visit the VBFD Fire & Life Safety Education website.



Special Events/Emergency Management Bureau

The Special Events/Emergency Management 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, occupancy 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 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.

The Bureau continues to complete special events throughout the year, including Last Night on the Town, the Shamrock Races, the NAS Oceana Airshow, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Airshow,

Jackelope, Reggae Fest, the United Service Organizations (USO), the East Coast Surfing Championship (ECSC), Surf-n-Santa, and the Holiday Parade.

SAFETY, HEALTH, & WELLNESS DIVISION

The Safety, Health, and Wellness Division is committed to enhancing the well-being and safety of personnel by eliminating unsafe conditions, reducing illness and injury, and preventing property damage while promoting a safe working environment. The Division includes a Battalion Chief, three Shift Safety Captains, a Health and Safety Coordinator, and a Public Safety Fitness Coordinator. Shift Safety Captains monitor personnel safety during incidents and investigate accidents and injuries. The Health and Safety Coordinator conducts fitness evaluations, leads group workouts, provides nutritional advice, and trains recruits. Overall, the Division focuses on fostering a culture of safety and wellness within the department.

In addition, the Division oversees a fully accredited Peer Support Program through a certified first responder counselor. The Peer Support Program is designed to complement professional counseling services. It acknowledges that some employees may prefer to seek support from trained fire department personnel who understand the unique challenges of



firefighting. The program aims to support employees during personal or professional crises, promote trust and anonymity, develop compassionate peer supporters, and ensure that these supporters receive appropriate training to effectively fulfill the program's objectives.

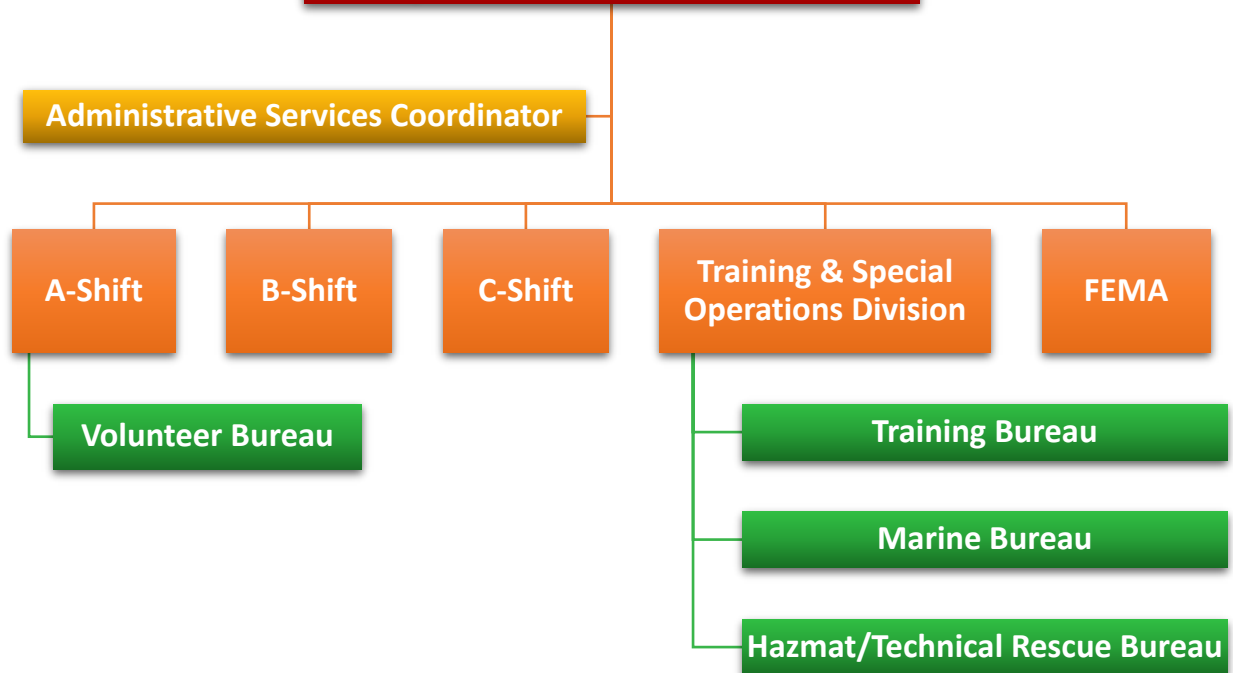
Recently, the VBFD participated in significant research initiatives, including participation in a University of North Carolina Slip, Trips, and Fall Program, involving 100 VBFD firefighters, with a follow-up study planned in the coming year, as well as a George Mason Research Project that compares the health and fitness of recruits with those in their first year of service. Additionally, the First Responder Support Group has been actively meeting monthly, and department-wide Galleri Cancer Screening initiatives have identified parameters for yearly testing.

Plans are in place for the inclusion of additional cancer and cardiac tests in annual physicals, as well as to obtain a Dexascan in the upcoming year. These ongoing initiatives reflect our commitment to enhancing the health and safety of our personnel, and by addressing identified gaps and implementing strategic plans, we aim to further improve our services and outcomes in the future.

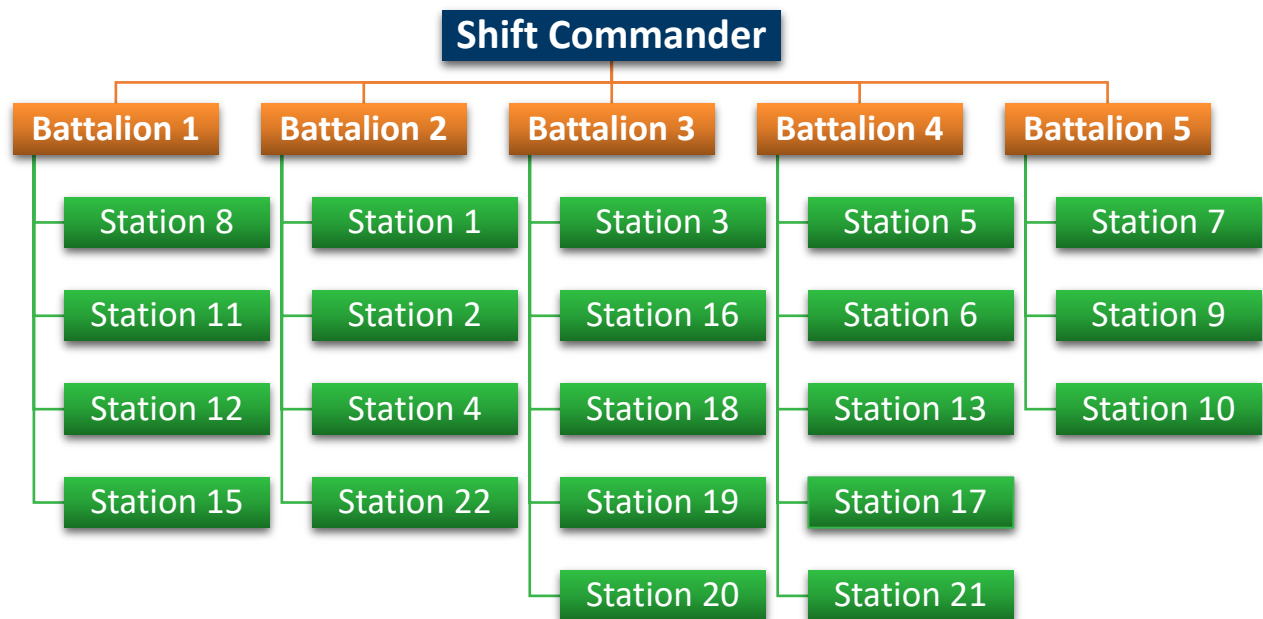


OPERATIONS BRANCH

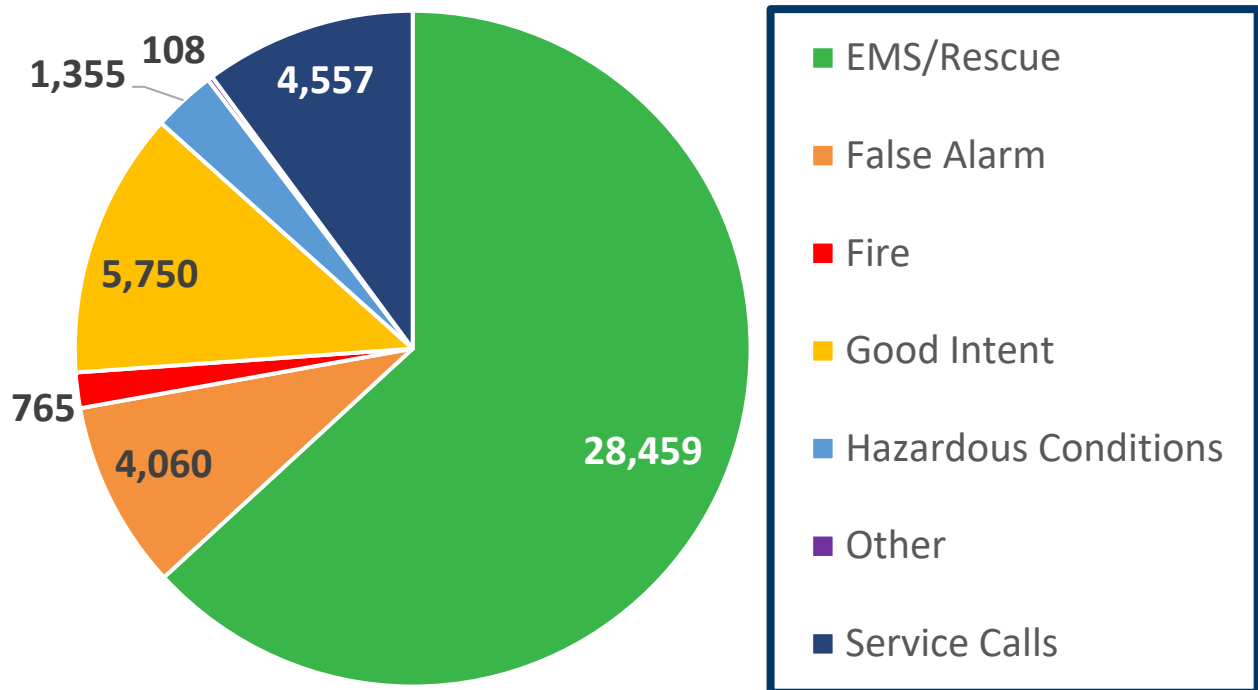
Operations Branch



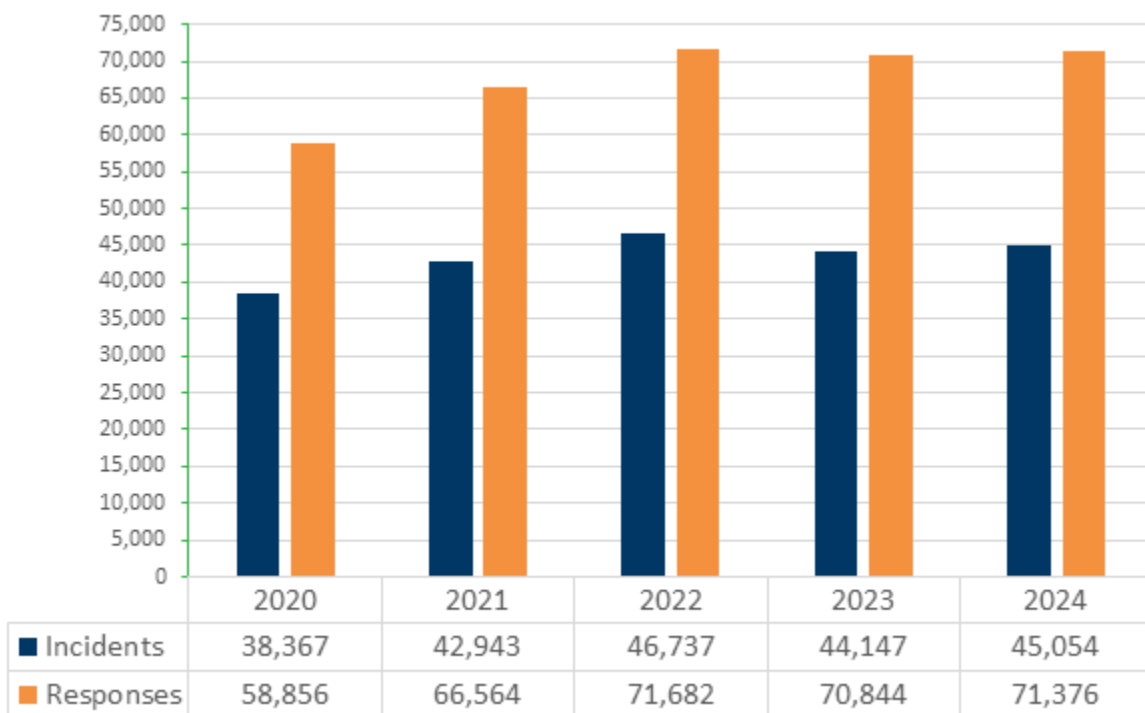
The VBFD operates **three shifts** (A, B, & C), each led by an Assistant Chief who serves as the **Shift Commander**. They are responsible for **five battalions**, each with a Battalion Chief charged with oversight of the stations and personnel within their respective areas.



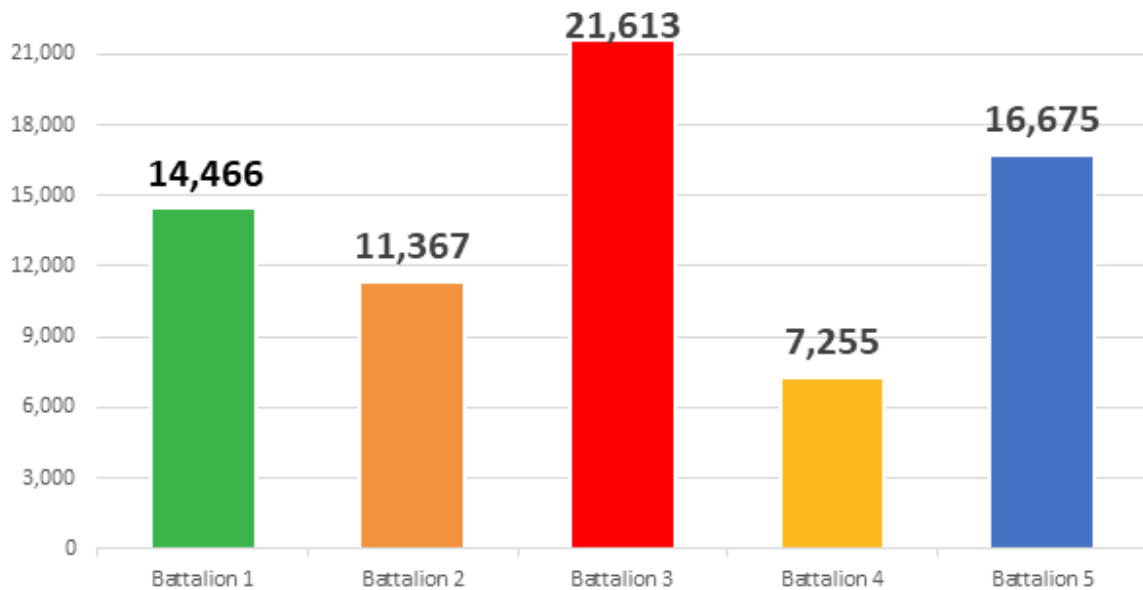
Calls for Service by Incident Type (Fiscal Year 2024)



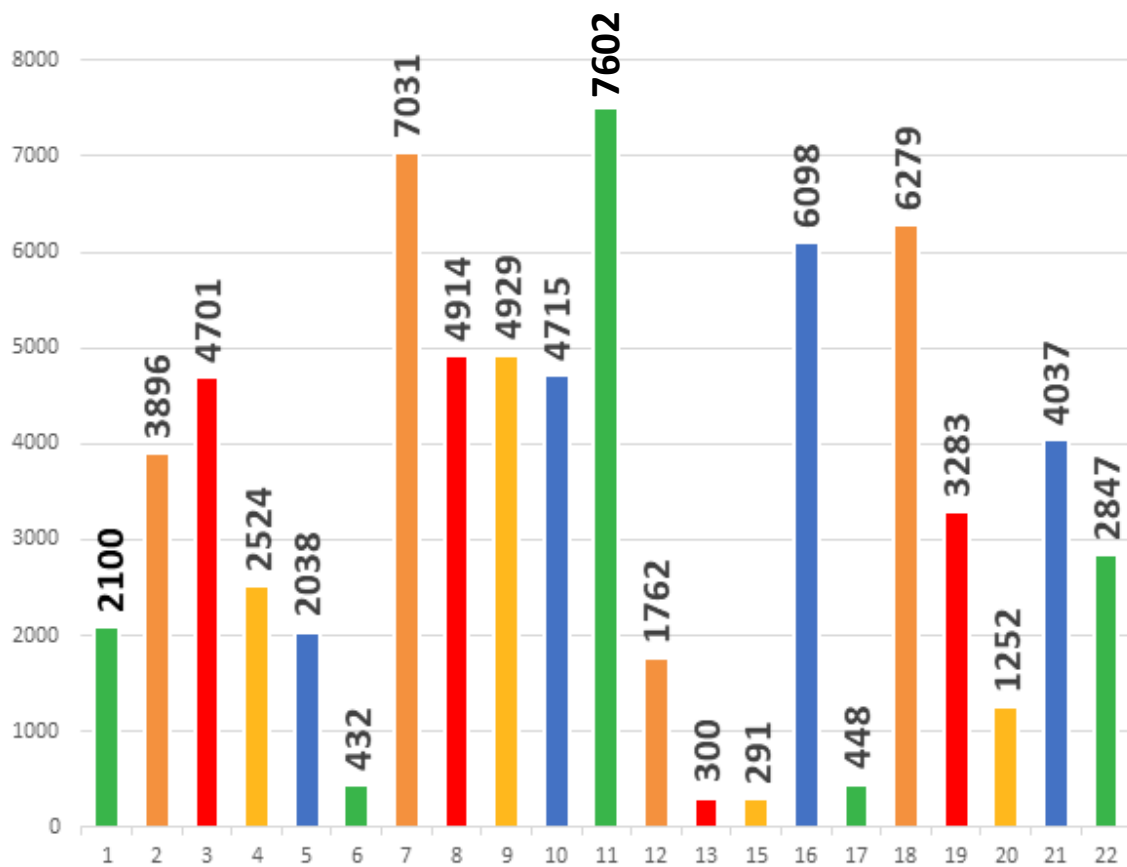
Total Incidents and Responses by Fiscal Year



Responses by Battalion Area (Fiscal Year 2024)



Responses by Station (Fiscal Year 2024)



Responses by Unit (Fiscal Year 2024 - Ranked)

Rank	Unit	Response Volume	Rank	Unit	Response Volume
1	Engine 18	4,403	27	Fire Rescue 2	1,249
2	Engine 16	3,856	28	Battalion 1	1,239
3	Engine 7	3,603	29	Fire Rescue 1	1,220
4	Engine 9	3,287	30	Safety 1	1,152
5	Engine 19	3,283	31	Ladder 2	1,058
6	Engine 8	3,218	32	Battalion 2	882
7	Engine 10	3,139	33	Ladder 22	853
8	Engine 2	2,838	34	Battalion 4	739
9	Engine 11	2,513	35	Ladder 1	554
10	Engine 14	2,476	36	Fire Drone 1	515
11	Ladder 16	2,242	37	Engine 17	448
12	Engine 22	1,994	38	Engine 6	363
13	Engine 21	1,989	39	Engine 35*	362
14	Engine 5	1,959	40	Engine 15	291
15	Ladder 7	1,913	41	Car 10	263
16	Engine 3	1,790	42	Engine 13	245
17	Engine 12	1,660	43	Fire Boat 12	102
18	Battalion 5	1,642	44	Support 8	100
19	Engine 4	1,642	45	Fire Boat 1	90
20	Ladder 8	1,596	46	Tanker 5	79
21	Ladder 10	1,576	47	Tanker 6	58
22	Battalion 3	1,514	48	Tanker 13	55
23	Engine 1	1,456	49	Hazmat 1	24
24	Ladder 21	1,309	50	Fire Boat 6	11
25	Ladder 11	1,271	51	Tech 1	3
26	Engine 20	1,252			

*Engine 35 was a temporary unit placed in service from September to November 2023, running out of Station 18.



Responses by Unit (Fiscal Year 2024 - Alphabetical)

Unit	Response Volume	Unit	Response Volume
Battalion 1	1,239	Engine 21	1,989
Battalion 2	882	Engine 22	1,994
Battalion 3	1,514	Engine 35*	362
Battalion 4	739	Fire Boat 1	90
Battalion 5	1,642	Fire Boat 6	11
Car 10	263	Fire Boat 12	102
Engine 1	1,456	Fire Drone 1	515
Engine 2	2,838	Fire Rescue 1	1,220
Engine 3	1,790	Fire Rescue 2	1,249
Engine 4	1,642	Hazmat 1	24
Engine 5	1,959	Ladder 1	554
Engine 6	363	Ladder 2	1,058
Engine 7	3,603	Ladder 7	1,913
Engine 8	3,218	Ladder 8	1,596
Engine 9	3,287	Ladder 10	1,576
Engine 10	3,139	Ladder 11	1,271
Engine 11	2,513	Ladder 16	2,242
Engine 12	1,660	Ladder 21	1,309
Engine 13	245	Ladder 22	853
Engine 14	2,476	Safety 1	1,152
Engine 15	291	Support 8	100
Engine 16	3,856	Tanker 5	79
Engine 17	448	Tanker 6	58
Engine 18	4,403	Tanker 13	55
Engine 19	3,283	Tech 1	3
Engine 20	1,252		

*Engine 35 was a temporary unit placed in service from September to November 2023, running out of Station 18.



FIRE STATIONS

Station 1 – First Landing

2837 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Unit Responses:

Engine 1	1,456
Ladder 1	554
Fire Boat 1	90



Station 2 – Davis Corner

4672 Haygood Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Unit Responses:

Engine 2	2,838
Ladder 2	1,058



Station 3 – London Bridge

600 Central Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Unit Responses:

Engine 3	1,790
Fire Rescue 1	1,220
Hazmat 1	24
Safety 1	1,152
Fire Drone 1	515



Station 4 – Chesapeake Beach

2211 Greenwell Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Unit Responses:

Engine 4	1,642
Battalion 2	882



Station 5 – Courthouse

2461 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 5	1,959
Tanker 5	79



Station 6 – Creeds

595 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23457

Unit Responses:

Engine 6	363
Tanker 6	58
Fire Boat 6	11



Station 7 – Town Center

4817 Columbus Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Unit Responses:

Engine 7	3,603
Ladder 7	1,913
Fire Rescue 2	1,249
Tech 1	3
Car 10	263

Station 8 – Oceana

1201 Bayne Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Unit Responses:

Engine 8	3,218
Ladder 8	1,596
Support 8	100

Station 9 – Kempsville

5145 Ruritan Court, Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Unit Responses:

Engine 9	3,287
Battalion	1,642

Station 10 – Woodstock

5656 Providence Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23464

Unit Responses:

Engine 10	3,139
Ladder 10	1,576



Station 11 – Beach Borough

800 Virginia Beach Boulevard, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Unit Responses:

Engine 11	2,513
Engine 14	2,476
Ladder 11	1,271
Battalion 1	1,239



Station 12 – Seatack

949 S. Birdneck Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Unit Responses:

Engine 12	1,660
Fire Boat 12	102

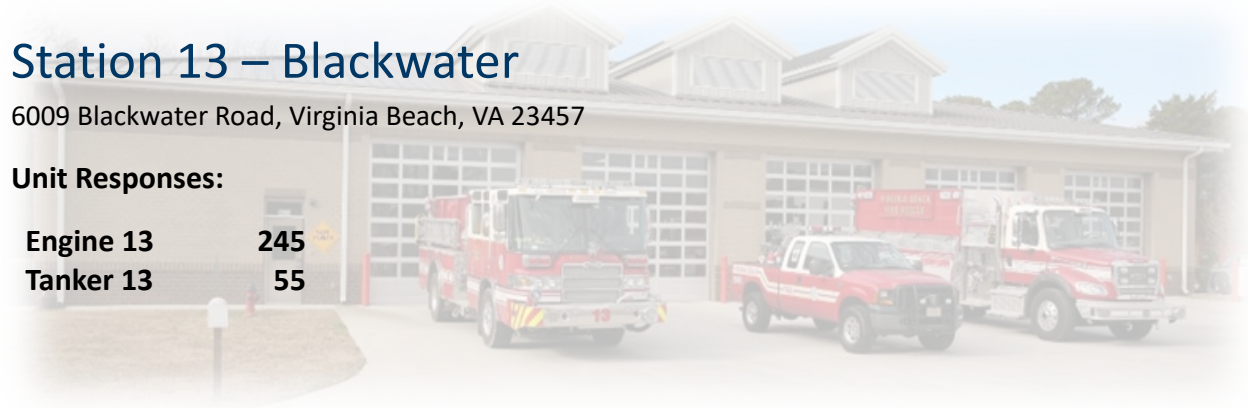


Station 13 – Blackwater

6009 Blackwater Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23457

Unit Responses:

Engine 13	245
Tanker 13	55



Station 15 – Fort Story

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

Unit Responses:

Engine 15	291
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Station 16 – Plaza

3608 S. Plaza Trail, Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Unit Responses:

Engine 16	3,856
Ladder 16	2,242



Station 17 – Sandbridge

305 Sandbridge Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 17 448



Station 18 – Green Run

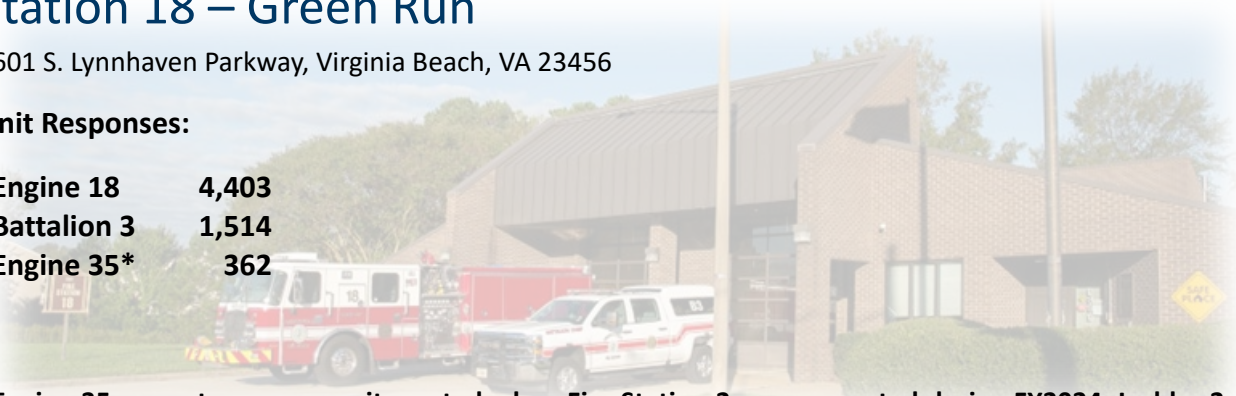
1601 S. Lynnhaven Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 18 4,403

Battalion 3 1,514

Engine 35* 362



*Engine 35 was a temporary unit created when Fire Station 2 was renovated during FY2024; Ladder 2 personnel temporarily staffed Engine 35 running out of Fire Station 18.

Station 19 – Stumpy Lake

4196 Pleasant Valley Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23464

Unit Responses:

Engine 19 3,283



Station 20 – Little Neck

885 Little Neck Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Unit Responses:

Engine 20 1,252



Station 21 – General Booth

1468 Nimmo Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Unit Responses:

Engine 21 1,989

Ladder 21 1,309

Battalion 4 739



Station 22 – Burton Station

1160 Tolliver Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Unit Responses:

Engine 22 1,994

Ladder 22 853



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 26-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

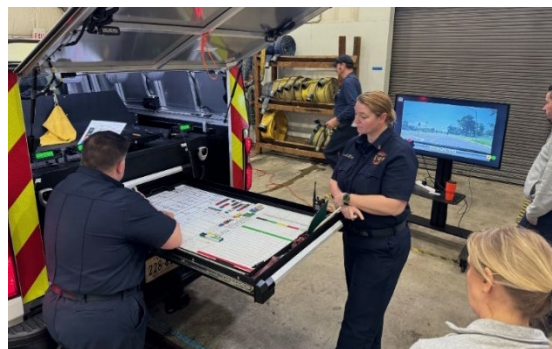
the state. More than 100 sessions were taught by some of the most knowledgeable instructors and subject matter experts in the fire service, including some of our own Virginia Beach Fire Department instructors.

Students were provided with 10,000 hours of training that allowed them to earn and maintain career certifications.

Command Simulations

The Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) has made significant strides in recent years to enhance its Command Sims training system, fostering consistency and improvement across the department. Initially, efforts focused on developing a new Battalion Chief Command board and a more robust accountability system. Through collaborative development groups and thorough research, new boards and systems were implemented.

Following these advancements, the department committed to rotating all Battalion Chiefs through regularly scheduled command simulations, which featured role players and were facilitated by the Fire Training Center. This initiative quickly yielded noticeable improvements in consistency among shifts. Building on this success, the VBFD created specific call-type scenarios to address various building and incident types, including multi-family dwellings, high-rises, big box stores, and high-hazard/risk situations. Simulations were designed to test particular scenarios, such as Mayday incidents in high-rise or multi-family settings.



More recently, the VBFD has shifted its focus toward preparing for large-scale special events, responding to the growing number of such events in the resort area each year. There has also been an emphasis on involving more company officers in this essential training.

Additionally, the VBFD collaborated with Virginia Beach EMS, Virginia Beach Emergency Communications & Citizen Services, and Virginia Natural Gas to conduct Command Simulations for emergencies involving natural gas, propane, and carbon monoxide. Crews engaged in

various scenarios aimed at improving inter-agency cooperation and developing strategies for safely managing these incidents, prioritizing the safety of both citizens and responders.

Ladder Academy

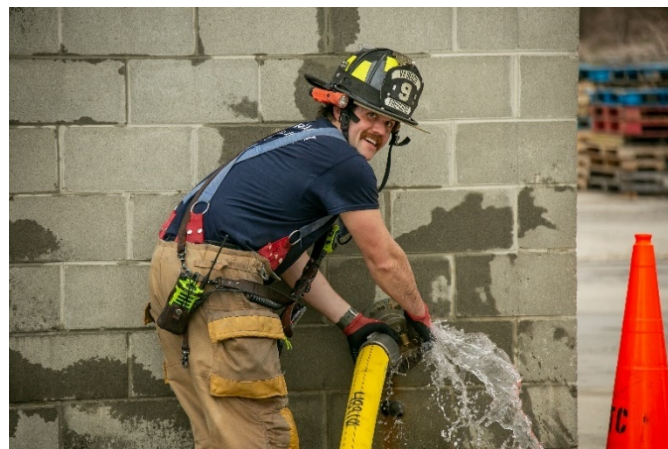
The 8th annual Virginia Beach Fire Department Ladder Academy took place at the Harry E. Diezel Fire Training Center over six days. This program aims to equip current and prospective ladder personnel with a realistic training environment that clearly communicates performance expectations on the fireground. Participants received



instruction on essential tasks performed by ladder company members, including aerial operations of VBFD ladder trucks, forcible entry, residential search and rescue techniques, civilian extraction methods, ground ladder use, various ladder throws and tool packages, and coordinated ventilation techniques for both residential and commercial structures.

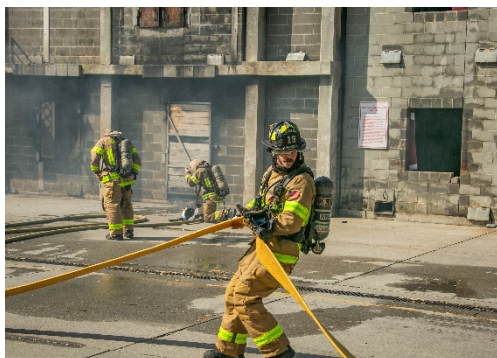
Driver/Pump Operator

The Driver Pump Operator (DPO) course is a comprehensive training program designed to equip firefighters with the essential skills needed to operate fire apparatus pumps effectively. Spanning a week, the course combines theoretical learning with hands-on practice to ensure participants can operate fire pumps safely and confidently in various emergency situations. Key topics include the mechanics of fire pumps, where participants learn about different types



(such as centrifugal and positive displacement) and their components, including impellers and discharge fittings. Additionally, the course covers flow and pressure calculations, teaching firefighters how to use formulas to determine flow rates and necessary pressures for various hose configurations. Practical applications involve hands-on exercises where participants operate actual fire pumps and practice simulated fireground operations, such as deploying hoses and adjusting pressures. Safety protocols are emphasized, focusing on personal protective equipment and situational awareness, while discussions on potential hazards help mitigate risks during pump operations. The course also includes basic troubleshooting techniques and routine maintenance practices to ensure the reliability of fire apparatus. By the end of the program,

participants are better equipped to operate fire pumps efficiently, calculate and adjust flow rates, troubleshoot basic issues, and perform essential maintenance, ultimately enhancing their operational effectiveness and contributing to overall fireground safety.



Recruit Classes

Virginia Beach Fire Academy 12

“The Endless Summer”

Graduated July 1, 2023

Daniel C. Bertka

Andrew D. Bjorklund

Trevor C. Conover – Jason Ray Workman Award

Taylor W. Ewing

Chad M. Filson – Class Valedictorian

Thomas R. Graves

Samuel J. Henry

Robert F. Holmes – Christopher J. Whelan Award

Justin J. Hughes

Cameron B. Hunt

Lukian M. Karlov

Rebecca L. Meekins

Trevor C. Mezzapeso

Otevious Simpson

Nicholas C. Stalder

Jacob C. Sutliff

Frederick T. Truss, Jr.



Virginia Beach Fire Academy 13

“Win, win, win!”

Graduated October 27, 2023

Leon D. Brown

Victoria F. Bryant

Michael R. Courtright

Greyson A. Derrick

Ian T. Nightingale

Joshua P. Reed

Jace N. Shute

Cory D. Vance



Virginia Beach Fire Academy 14

"All In"

Graduated April 23, 2024

Henry Carlson
Alex Cidlevicz
Brendon Clark
Ryenne Davidson
Andrew Edwards
Matthew Gaspar
James Irvin
Gavin Mcneill

Justin Morreim
Abdul Kareem Selwaeh
Christian Schaffer
Trevor Spencer
Daniel Suruga – Christopher J. Whelan Award
Carter Teeuwen
Kevin Tillman
Joshua Vales – Jason R. Workman Award



Virginia Beach Fire Academy 15

"Did you have fun?"

Graduated April 23, 2024

Carson Brinkman
Jacob Debevic
Devin Doughten
John Evans, Jr.
Samantha Fuller – Class Valedictorian
Brennan Garner
Biersan Gomez Curiel
Walter Hartman

Noah Hood
Shaun Jackson
Benjamin James – Jason R. Workman Award
Justin Jones
Amanda Kelly
Brian Russel
Trevor Sims – Christopher J. Whelan Award



Cadet Program

The Virginia Beach Fire Cadet Program is a hands-on initiative for youth aged 14 to 18 interested in Fire and Emergency Services careers. It offers participants career experiences, leadership training, and community service opportunities. The program meets twice a month for physical training and educational sessions on various fire topics, culminating in practical Shift Days with simulations of rescue operations and fire scenarios.



Cadets also assist with community events such as parades and memorial ceremonies, participating in activities like the Special Olympics and MDA Fill the Boot. In 2024, the program is expanding: three Cadets have joined as probationary firefighters, and a new pilot EMT course has begun with participants successfully completing certification exams. The program now requires a physical evaluation for Cadets due to the physical demands involved. Additionally, neighboring cities are invited to participate in events, enhancing collaborative training and outreach. Three Cadets completed VBFA recruit classes 14 and 15 and are currently assigned in operations as probationary firefighters.



Cadet Shift Day

In July, the Virginia Beach Fire Department Cadet Program held its annual Shift Day, featuring a full day of hands-on fire training for participants aged 14 to 18. Activities included forcible entry, vehicle extrication, rappelling, and live fire evolutions, allowing Cadets to apply the skills they had learned throughout the year. Each training evolution focused on team building, personal growth, and mental resilience. On-duty, trained fire personnel supervised the skills stations, providing Cadets with the chance to work alongside professional fire crews in scenario-based drills.



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 Station 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, and missing boaters, and support 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 levels. 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 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 \$1.5 million. The Fire Department's Marine Team provided "in water" safeties to keep participants safe while they willingly plunged into freezing ocean waters. The Marine Team is the Fire Rescue Swimmers (FRS), which respond to distressed swimmers. They not only respond to emergencies, but just as important, they 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. VBFD Units worked in conjunction with VBPD, VB EMS, and the Virginian Port Authority.



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.

Members of VBFD, including E12, E14, and E15 and Life Safety Educators had a great time at the event, providing support in the water and on the beach to surfers and their families. Surfers Healing's mission is to enrich the lives of people living with autism by exposing them to the unique experience of surfing. The city is very proud and honored to have hosted the Surfers Healing Foundation Team for the 16th year.

Swift Water Team Deployment

On July 9, 2023, ten members of Virginia Task Force 2 (VATF-2), along with the Incident Support Team (IST) Cache Team and eight members of the Swift Water Team, were deployed to Vermont as part of the state's Emergency Management Compact Team (EMAC). This deployment was in response to severe storms and flooding that affected the region. The team assisted local agencies with search and rescue operations, supporting efforts across the state and conducting inspections of bridges and dams at the request of local and state officials. The storms resulted in significant flash flooding and landslides, highlighting the critical role of the task force in emergency response.



Hazardous Materials Bureau

The Hazardous Materials Response 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, the Southside Regional Hazmat Team, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.



Technical Rescue Bureau

The Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) Technical Rescue Team (TRT) is a specialized unit providing emergency response to a variety of incidents, including collapsed structures, confined spaces, high-angle rescues, trench collapses, and vehicle entrapments. Comprising 27 members, the TRT operates across three shifts from Fire Station 7 in the Town Center area. Each member is trained to the "technician" level as per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, with training facilitated through a partnership with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VD FP).



As part of the Tidewater Regional Technical Rescue Team (TRTRT) alongside Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Suffolk, the VBFD serves as the lead agency, allowing for coordinated technical rescue operations throughout southeastern Virginia. TRT members are also cross trained as Hazardous Materials Technicians, enhancing their ability to support the Hazardous Materials Team during emergencies and ensuring operational redundancy.

Additionally, the department has implemented a rapid diver program, equipping rescue companies to handle incidents involving drownings in lakes and retention ponds. Currently, approximately 40 personnel are certified divers or nearing completion of their training, developed in collaboration with Lynnhaven Dive and the police dive team and EMS.

Structural Collapse School

Last year, six members of the Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) completed the Structural Collapse Specialist (SCS) course, a weeklong program focused on essential skills for managing structural collapse incidents. Hosted by Virginia Task Force 2 (VATF-2) and supported by Spec Rescue International and FEMA, the course attracted 144 first responders from across the country, including some from as far as Washington State.



The training covered shoring, heavy lifting, airbag operations, metal cutting, and extrication techniques, culminating in a large-scale scenario. By completing this rigorous eight-day program, participants gained critical skills to effectively respond to emergencies in their respective Urban Search and Rescue Teams.



FBI SWAT Medic Program

The Virginia Beach Fire Department (VBFD) has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the FBI's Norfolk Field Office to provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) and tactical medicine for the FBI Norfolk SWAT Team. The VBFD's SWAT Medic program, established in 1995, is a leading model in tactical medicine. The partnership between VBFD and the FBI has been a benchmark for other FBI offices with similar agreements.

The team provides medical support for all SWAT training and operational missions, including high-risk warrant services, active shooter responses, and securing high-level federal officials. VBFD SWAT Medics are also recognized leaders in training, regularly facilitating courses for the FBI's Operational Medicine Division and local agencies across the Hampton Roads area.

FEMA – VIRGINIA TASK FORCE 2

The National Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Response System, established by FEMA in 1989, organizes federal, state, and local emergency response teams into integrated task forces specializing in urban search and rescue, disaster recovery, and emergency medicine. These task forces can deploy within six hours and are often pre-positioned for anticipated disasters.

The Virginia Beach Fire Department has sponsored Virginia Task Force 2 (VA-TF2) since its inception, comprising 220 members from 14 agencies in Southeastern Virginia, including 90 firefighters from VBFD. The sponsoring agency coordinates activities, manages federal

funding, procures equipment, provides training, and oversees deployments. VA-TF2 has participated in over 35 missions across the U.S., Haiti, and Puerto Rico.



VA-TF2 possesses a diverse range of capabilities essential for effective emergency response. The team conducts physical search and rescue operations in damaged structures and provides emergency medical



care for survivors and personnel. They perform damage reconnaissance and assessments, as well as utility evaluations and shut offs, to ensure safety during operations. VA-TF2 also conducts hazardous materials surveys and structural evaluations for immediate occupancy, enabling timely disaster relief efforts. Additionally, the task force is skilled in stabilization operations for damaged buildings, hazardous materials equipment deployment, and water rescue operations, allowing them to respond comprehensively to various emergencies.

VA-TF2 has participated in several notable responses to significant emergencies, including the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing, the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, and the 2001 Pentagon Attack. The task force was also involved in the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, the 2005 Hurricane Katrina response, and the 2010 Haiti earthquake. More recently, VA-TF2 responded to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, as well as the 2021 Champlain Towers Collapse in Florida. These missions highlight the task force's commitment and capability to address various large-scale disasters and emergencies.

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.



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Remembering Captain Matthew R. Chiaverotti

Virginia Fallen Firefighters & EMS Memorial Service



This year, Virginia Beach Fire Captain Matthew R. Chiaverotti was honored posthumously at both the 27th Annual Virginia Fallen Firefighters & Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service in Richmond, VA, and the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, MD. Captain Chiaverotti, who passed away on April 17, 2023, after a courageous battle with job-related Anaplastic Thyroid Cancer at the age of 44, dedicated over 20 years of service to Virginia Beach.

In the lead-up to the Memorial Weekend on May 4-5, 2024, the City of Virginia Beach and the Virginia Beach Fire Department participated in the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation's (NFFF) "Light the Night for Fallen Firefighters" campaign, illuminating city buildings, homes, and fire stations with red lights. During the event, Councilman David Hutcheson

read a proclamation recognizing the NFFF's Light the Night campaign, urging the public to illuminate their homes, businesses, and landmarks in red on May 4, 2024, in tribute to the fallen firefighters and their families.

Over thirty firefighters from the Virginia Beach Fire Department attended the Memorial Weekend to support the Chiaverotti family, with the Honor Guard participating in both the Candlelight Vigil and the Memorial Service. Captain Chiaverotti was among 226 firefighters honored and added to the bronze plaque at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial and one of seventeen honorees recognized at this year's Virginia Fallen Firefighters and EMS Memorial Service.



Live Life at a 10

More than 60 VBFD firefighters participated in a workout on April 18th, 2024, at Mount Trashmore Park in honor of Captain Chiaverotti. His wife, Sara, was on hand to cheer on the athletes who participated to honor and show their continued support for the Chiaverotti family.



Firefighter of the Year

Captain Scott M. Springer

Captain Scott Springer is a highly respected officer in the Virginia Beach Fire Department, exemplifying the department's Core Values through his motivation and compassion. With experience across engines, ladders, and the rescue company, he currently serves as Captain of Resource Management, overseeing the department's logistical needs with strategic efficiency.



Scott has played a key role in several projects, including:

- PPE Committee Lead:
 - Designed and implemented new turnout gear.
 - Addressed deficiencies in the Public Safety Capital Improvement Plan for gear replacement.
 - Initiated a new helmet standard adopted by Norfolk Fire Rescue.
 - Secured funding for turnout gear bags and additional ballistic vests.
- Committee Liaison:
 - Streamlined logistics with the EMS committee, reducing inventory waste.
 - Collaborated with the Ladder committee to acquire electric hydraulic extrication tools and vehicle stabilization systems.
 - Established the current uniform standard with the Uniform Committee.
 - Updated equipment trends and funding streams with the Engine and Ladder Committee.

As a certified purchaser for the City of Virginia Beach, Captain Springer ensures compliance with regulations and actively participates in operational duties, volunteering during special events to avoid mandatory holdovers. He recently completed the VBFD Captain's Academy and was selected as one of 40 future leaders at the VA Fire Chief's Association Chief Officer Academy.

Scott is also a dedicated member of the VBFD Honor Guard, participating in significant events like graduation and memorial ceremonies. He served as a family liaison during the May 31st active shooter incident, showing deep commitment to community support.

Beyond the VBFD, he is an accomplished Rescue Squad Officer with VATF-2, responding to emergencies, including the Champlain Towers collapse in Florida. He also instructs the VBFD/VATF-2 Structural Collapse Specialist course.

Scott serves as Logistics Chief for the VFCA Fire Rescue Conference, helping organize educational events for firefighters statewide. His expertise in turnout gear design has influenced industry standards, enhancing safety nationwide.

Despite his many achievements, Captain Springer remains humble and focused on serving others. The Virginia Beach Fire Department proudly presents him with the 2023 Firefighter of the Year award.

Virginia Fire Chiefs Association

Virginia Beach Fire Department's Deputy Chief Vance Cooper was sworn in as the President of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association (VFCA) during the opening ceremony of the Virginia Fire Rescue Conference 2024 at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

Chief Cooper has been a board member of the VFCA since 2018, serving most recently as 1st Vice President. He has been with the Virginia Beach Fire Department since 1990 and has held the rank of Deputy Chief of Operations since 2016. His extensive experience includes various operational assignments and staff functions, notably as a task force leader for the Virginia Task Force Two (VA-TF2) Urban Search and Rescue Team.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Fire Administration from Hampton University and a Master of Public Administration from Old Dominion University. Additionally, he is a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program, is accredited as a Chief Fire Officer, and completed leadership programs at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and the West Point School of Leadership.



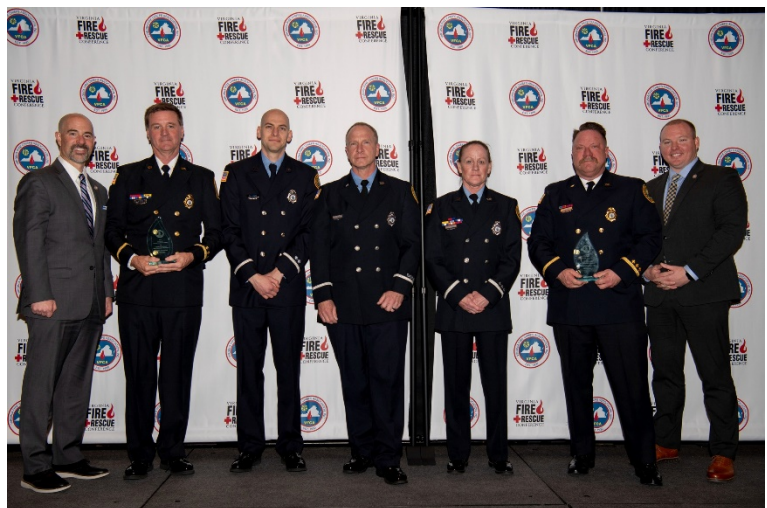
The VFCA serves Virginia communities through its fire service leaders, advancing the fire and rescue service via leadership, education, and advocacy. Its Legislative Committee works year-round to identify and advocate for legislation that enhances firefighters' safety across the Commonwealth. The association welcomes participation from all who serve and protect Virginia's communities.

Governor's Fire Service Awards

Firefighters from the Virginia Beach Fire Department's Engine Company 17—Sandbridge Station—were honored by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and the Virginia Fire Services Board for their exemplary response to a structure fire on July 5, 2023, in the 2900 block of Sand Bend Road.

Early that morning, retired Captain Rob Valentine spotted a nearby home ablaze. Upon learning that two individuals were trapped on a third-story balcony, he rushed to the scene.

Engine 17, led by Captain Matthew Cooley and including Master Firefighters Christine Barakey, Timothy Heard, and Kevin Wirth, quickly deployed a hose line for protection and raised a 28-foot extension ladder.



As they reached the balcony, they assisted one occupant onto the ladder. The second occupant, forced to escape the growing heat, climbed over the railing. Firefighters positioned themselves to help cushion the fall. Both victims were safely transferred to EMS with minor injuries. Retired Captain Valentine remained on scene to assist with logistics and hose management.

The swift actions and teamwork of all involved ensured the successful rescue of two individuals from a fully engulfed structure, preventing serious injuries or fatalities.

Established in 2002, the Governor's Fire Service Awards recognize excellence in Virginia's fire services. The Career Outstanding Fire Department Response Award honors exceptional responses demonstrating cooperation, critical decision-making, and effective teamwork.

Blue Angels Back-Seat Rider

As part of N.A.S. Oceana's Air Show, the U.S. Navy Blue Angels selected Deputy Chief Amy Valdez of the Virginia Beach Fire Department as this year's "Back-seat Rider." In this unique opportunity, she flew in one of their Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornets, piloted by LCDR Thomas Zimmerman in Blue #7.

Deputy Chief Valdez's selection highlights her commitment to the community, and she experienced an unforgettable flight with the renowned Blue Angels, showcasing the teamwork and precision that define the Navy's elite aerial demonstration squadron.



Crisis Intervention Graduates

Battalion Chief Richard Trent, Captain Noel Garo, and Master Firefighters Christine Barakey and Ned Lowery graduated with critical skills in crisis intervention. Supporting our community remains our top priority.

The Virginia Beach Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is a collaboration among local departments dedicated to assisting individuals with mental illnesses and brain disorders. This partnership includes law enforcement officers, mental health providers, and first responders.

The CIT training involves 40 hours of specialized curriculum focused on verbal de-escalation tactics and mental health awareness. Participants receive instruction from subject matter experts on mental health disorders, treatment options, and effective ways to support community members and their families.



Heroes Building for Habitat for Humanity



Members of the Virginia Beach Fire Department participated in this year's Heroes Building Week (HBW), coordinated by Habitat for Humanity of South Hampton Roads (Habitat SHR). This initiative honors our brave first responders and essential workers while constructing an affordable home for a deserving local low-income family. Construction on the home began on April 10th, with participation from the Chesapeake and Norfolk Fire Departments as well.

This collaborative effort highlights the commitment of our first responders to give back to the community and support families in need.

Executive Fire Officer Program

In May 2024, Battalion Chief Kyle Bosiljevac of the Virginia Beach Fire Department graduated from the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program in Emmitsburg, Maryland. This prestigious program is the flagship initiative of the NFA, designed to equip senior fire officers with a comprehensive understanding of fire and emergency medical services (EMS) administration. The EFO Program focuses on leadership strategies for addressing complex challenges within communities.



Leadership in Police Organization Course

Battalion Chief Norman Williams, Captain Brian Parker, and Captain Marcus Croft graduated from the Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO) Course at the Law Enforcement Training Academy. This intensive three-week program focuses on leadership across various levels—individuals, groups, and organizations. While the LPO course is primarily designed for the law enforcement community, its leadership principles are applicable to professionals in all fields.



Virginia Fire Academy Graduates

Captain Christopher Strong graduated from the Virginia Fire Officers Academy, while Captain Scott M. Springer completed the Virginia Chief Officer Academy. Both leadership programs are sponsored by the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association.

The Virginia Fire Officer Academy is a week-long residential program aimed at developing current and aspiring company officers. It focuses on enhancing leadership skills, personal accountability, and fostering cultural changes to improve firefighter safety.



The Virginia Chief Officer Academy, a six-day residential course, is designed for aspiring and new company officers. It features lectures from fire service leaders, guiding participants on their journey to executive-level leadership.

Vision 20/20's Symposium 8

Members of the Virginia Beach Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction Division (CRR) recently attended Vision 20/20's Symposium 8 in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, joining over 400 fire service leaders and CRR professionals from across the nation. The symposium focused on sharing best practices, strategies, and resources to enhance community safety, health, and resilience.

VBFD's Safety Squad elementary school program was prominently featured as a model initiative, showcasing its effectiveness on a national stage. This recognition highlights the department's commitment to proactive community engagement and safety education.



Promotions

- Assistant Chief Brashear, Michael
- Assistant Chief Williams, Norman
- Battalion Chief Betts, Sean Betts
- Battalion Chief Pittman, Matthew
- Battalion Chief Raftery, William
- Captain Davis, Marquel
- Captain Howard, Michael
- Captain Lehlbach, Kevin
- Captain Mugan, Daniel
- Captain Riley, Mitch
- Captain Teal, Zachary
- Captain White, Andrew

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:

- Battalion Chief Compton, David
- Master Firefighter Asencio, Jeremy
- Master Firefighter Boone, Randy
- Master Firefighter Hine, Brittany

Annual Awards

Medal of Honor

- Master Firefighter Heard, Timothy
- Master Firefighter Wirth, Kevin

Medal of Merit

- Master Firefighter McQuarrie, Max
- Master Firefighter Millard, Sean
- Master Firefighter Ussery, Kristina
- Xenakis, Jessica

Life Saving Award

- Captain Beauchaine, Scott
- Captain Beaumont, Jeremy
- Captain Cooley, Matthew
- Captain DaSilva, Dean (Retired)
- Captain Felch, Richard
- Captain Lee, Andrew
- Captain Mitchell, David
- Captain Parker, Brian
- Captain Raftery, William
- Captain Riley, Mitchell
- Captain Smith, Michael
- Captain Valentine, Robert (Retired)
- Captain Walker, Michael
- Captain Xenakis, Joshua
- Master Firefighter Harper, Cayla
- Master Firefighter Jonas, Cecil
- Master Firefighter Keane, Matthew
- Master Firefighter Kelly, Chris
- Master Firefighter Kornegay, Caleb
- Master Firefighter Kundert, Christopher
- Master Firefighter Lockhart, Shannon
- Master Firefighter Mauch, David
- Master Firefighter Milliner, Bradford
- Master Firefighter Sayre, Lawrence
- Master Firefighter Sdankus, Bryan
- Master Firefighter Smith, Vincent
- Master Firefighter Sparks, Bryce
- Master Firefighter Wazlak, Chris
- Master Firefighter Williams, Richard
- Master Firefighter York, Justin
- Firefighter Barnes, Hunter
- Firefighter Bernotas, John
- Firefighter Bradley, Gabriel
- Firefighter Brenon, Cody
- Firefighter Connelly, John
- Firefighter Conner, Jason
- Firefighter DeGhetto, Dean
- Firefighter Eason, Patrick

- Firefighter Grulke, Justin
- Firefighter Hierholzer, Cole
- Firefighter Joyner, Hunter
- Firefighter Oshea, Brennen
- Firefighter Payne, Geoffrey
- Firefighter Points, Jesse
- Firefighter Rhodes, Jonathan
- Firefighter Sonsteng, Heather
- Firefighter Swindell, Adam
- Firefighter Taylor, Scott
- Firefighter Vandeline, Cody
- Firefighter Weikel, Andrew
- Hagaman, Alex

Meritorious Conduct Award

- Captain Dycus, Christopher
- Captain Hale, Christina
- Master Firefighter Arendt, Wesley
- Master Firefighter Barakey, Christine
- Master Firefighter Shepherd, Denver
- Firefighter Kidd, Kyle

Commendation Award

- Battalion Chief Probst, Jason
- Battalion Chief Sullivan, Brian
- Captain Howard, Michael
- Captain Moseley, Zebulon
- Captain Springer, Scott
- Master Firefighter Baedke, Joshua
- Master Firefighter Cephas, Calvin
- Master Firefighter Daugherty, Christopher
- Master Firefighter Miller, Thomas
- Master Firefighter Spudis, Kym
- Master Firefighter Stanton, Jeremy
- Master Firefighter Ussery, Kristina
- Beatty, Cailyn
- Bethurum, Chuck
- Filomarino, Gina

- Filomarino, William
- Floyd, Jeff
- Fraizer, Christine
- Holmes, Christine
- Keck, Ellen
- Moss, Lisa
- Perry, Amy
- Smith, Jeff
- Steitz, David

Meritorious Unit Citation

- Captain Moss, Justin
- Master Firefighter Szymanski III, Stanley
- Master Firefighter Zach, Scott

Commendation Unit Citation

- Master Firefighter Arab, Ryan
- Cox, Carolyn
- Cox, Shawn
- Gill, Kathleen
- Mauer, Kristin
- Xenakis, Jessica

Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) Scholarship Recipients

- Master Firefighter Vick, Michael
- Firefighter Eason, Patrick
- Firefighter Six, James

Retirements



Assistant Chief
Crandell, Jack



Battalion Chief
Skelany, William



Captain
Elliot, John



Master Firefighter
Ballou, James



Master Firefighter
Frey, William



Master Firefighter
Graham, Scott



Master Firefighter
McAndrews, Edward



Master Firefighter
Medina, Israel



Master Firefighter
Peterson, Deidra



Master Firefighter
Roberts, Justin



Master Firefighter
Slaven, Scott



Master Firefighter
Wright, Tom

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

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