

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

DRAFT NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE



November 2020

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Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

MESSAGE FROM CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT MARK COTREAU

Upon my arrival as your Rye Fire Chief in September 2017 I performed an initial needs assessment in the department. How did Rye match up to other similar communities in terms of EMS and Fire response capability, Equipment and apparatus needs etc.? Our assessment revealed the department had fallen well behind in basic quality apparatus and equipment any small department our size should have. There were also questions about our staffing and we seemed to have lost many call-members. The last 3 years have been spent shoring up our capability from an apparatus, equipment and services offered perspective.

Among other things, working together we have:

- Developed a 20-year Capital Plan for apparatus and major equipment. This plan is updated annually.
- Replaced our aging Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) utilizing a \$173,000 grant!
- Increased our incident command capability.
- Replaced our 1988 broken pumper ladder
- Upgraded our gas meters, broken pump valves and other basic equipment.
- Replaced our aging Jaws of Life and air bag system.
- Upgraded our aging ice rescue equipment
- Upgraded our water rescue equipment.
- Ocean rescue jet ski program in service July 1, 2019.
- Upgraded our cardiac monitor.

These improvements have made a significant positive difference in our service delivery but there is still an unaddressed concern from the initial assessment. Why are we losing call-members? What are the issues and how do we address them? Long ago there had been an effort to increase our staffing to what seemed to be an acknowledged need to have 3 firefighters on duty. Is this staffing level where we need to be? If so, how do we get there in an effective but value-driven manner?

In our 2019 Budget memo I acknowledged that we were looking at our staffing needs. I noted that we would do our research and be ready to discuss our staffing issue in this year's budget process. We have done that. This staffing assessment and strategic plan is the culmination of many hours of teamwork both internally and by an independent subject matter expert. I would like to thank the following folks for their help, patience and support on this project:

- Becky Bergeron, Town Administrator

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- Members of Rye Fire Rescue full-time and Call personnel
- Rye Firefighters Local 4411
- Chief Joe Landry, Stow MA for his independent expertise

This report identifies several significant service gaps that can be substantially improved upon. The recommendations at the conclusion of this report are practical, value-driven proposals. I thank you for taking the time to peruse this report. Please contact me personally if you have any suggestions or questions.

Mark Cotreau, EFO, CFO

II. SCOPE OF PROJECT

OUR PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

We identified the need to develop an objective data-driven approach to confirm the status of our fire-EMS system and answer the following research questions:

1. Does Rye Fire Rescue have adequate resources to provide effective, responsive, high-quality fire and EMS delivery to all residents and customers within the town of Rye?
2. What are the benefits and liabilities contained within our current fire and EMS service delivery model?
3. What are the benefits and liabilities contained within our current call force? What can be done to increase recruitment and retention of our call members?
4. What is the current status of our ALS system relative to providing top – notch ALS delivery now and in the future?
5. Is our current fire and EMS service delivery model adequate? If not, what should our fire and EMS service delivery model look like?

WHAT IS A STAFFING NEEDS ASSESSMENT STRATEGIC PLAN?

It is a living management tool that:

- Provides short-term fire and EMS direction
- Builds a shared community and public vision
- Sets short and long term community and fire department goals and objectives
- Optimizes use of all appropriate resources

Many Strategic Planning benefits result from using this consistent and cohesively-structured process across all levels of an organization and community. This process can also create an appropriate sense of urgency that can energize a fire department's increasingly 'customer-driven' approach to operations.

Successful fire and EMS organizations, like many government agencies and private companies, have recognized that attaining customer focus is essential. Aware of this necessity, public safety agencies must now strategically plan how they will deliver high-quality products and services to the public and their other customers through better, faster, and less expensive programs. Once their strategic goals are established, agency leaders must establish performance measures (for which they are fully accountable) to assess and ensure that their departments and agencies are, indeed, delivering on the promises made in their strategic plans.

Most importantly, Strategic Planning can be an opportunity to unify the management, staff, community stakeholders, and residents through a common understanding of where the organization is going, how everyone involved can work to that common purpose, and how progress and levels will measure success.

STEPS IN CREATING A STRATEGIC FIRE EMS PLAN

Today's fire and EMS organizations have entered into a very competitive evolutionary cycle. Community and Public demands continue to increase, while dollars and other resources continue to shrink. These new documented trends place increased pressure on the modern fire and emergency medical services manager, policymakers, and full-time staff to develop ways to be more cost effective and more efficient. In many cases, the community and public is demanding the accomplishment of specific goals, objectives, and services with fewer resources. Today's fire and emergency medical service leaders must work more efficiently with available resources, organizations must establish their direction based on constructive efforts while eliminating programs that currently do not serve the community well today and in the future.

To ensure that community needs were incorporated, a 'Community-Driven Strategic Planning' process was used to develop the Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan. Businesses often employ this type of process to identify market trends, allowing the service provider to focus resources while reducing risk and wasted effort. This process was adapted to meet Rye Fire Rescue's specific needs. This document is the result of several strategic planning sessions and includes valuable community input.

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WHERE DOES THE COMMUNITY FIT INTO THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS?

For many successful organizations, the voice of the community drives their operations and charts the course for their future. Fire departments, as well as state and city governments, have begun using the business model of focusing on their community of customers as one of the key motivators in planning for the future.

A "community-driven organization" is defined as one that *maintains a focus on the needs and expectations, both spoken and unspoken, of customers, both present and future, in the creation and/or improvement of the product or service provided.*

PLANNING STEPS

We followed these steps in our Strategic Planning:

1. Define the services provided to the community.
2. Establish the community's service priorities.
3. Establish the community's expectations of the organization.
4. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization and its services.
5. Identify those aspects of the organization and its services the community views positively.
6. Develop the Mission Statement, giving careful attention to the services currently provided and which logically can be provided in the future.
7. Establish the Values of the organization's membership.
8. Identify the **S**trengths of the organization.
9. Identify any **W**eaknesses of the organization.
10. Identify areas of **O**pportunity for the organization.
11. Identify potential **T**hreats to the organization.
12. Establish realistic goals and objectives for the future.
13. Identify implementation tasks for each objective.
14. Develop a **V**ision of the future.
15. Develop organizational and community commitment to the plan.

Implied within every stage of the Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Planning process is the ability to determine progress made toward the goals or targets set. This assessment ability is a monitoring function that simply tracks activities. It may be as simple as a "To Do List," or as complicated as a plan of action with milestones and performance measures. Also implied within the planning process is the ability to measure effectiveness of the actions taken in the conduct of the organization's business.

III. BACKGROUND

RYE FIRE RESCUE: MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Rye Fire Rescue Mission

The mission of Rye Fire Rescue is to prevent emergencies whenever possible; provide rapid and effective fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to the community, and strive to make Rye a safer place for all to live, work, and visit.

Rye Fire Rescue Vision

The vision of Rye Fire Rescue is to meet or exceed the expectations of our community by setting a high standard of excellence: guided by the principles of trust, integrity, honesty, loyalty, and respect for all.

Rye Fire Rescue Guiding Values

As an organization, we value:

Safety: We will strive to protect the lives and well-being of our community and our coworkers.

Professional Excellence: We believe the pursuit of excellence and demonstrating high professional standards are critical to our work. To ensure the best possible service for our community, we will support continuous training and encourage professional development. We will be dedicated, compassionate, trustworthy, and act with honesty and integrity.

Respect: We will respect our community and ourselves, while consistently exhibiting courtesy and compassion for those in need.

Innovation: We will foster an environment that allows new ideas and positive change to better serve our community.

Rye: Community Profile

Rye has 5,452 Residents (2018 US Census Bureau). Rye also has a large seasonal population due to the beaches located on its nine miles of ocean coastline. Rye also has service population and infrastructure which must provide effective Fire/EMS coverage including:

- Section of US Route 1
- Three Motels (Dunes, Pebble Cove, and Rosewood)
- Several Cabin rental Facilities
- One Hotel located on an Isolated Island in the Atlantic Ocean (Star Island Hotel)
- Two Nursing Facilities (Webster's at Rye and Evolve)
- Two Medical Facilities (Chiropractic and Spinal Facilities)

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- Two Schools (Elementary and Middle School)
- One Day Care Facility (Rye Country Day)
- One Special Needs day care facility (Learning Skills Academy)
- One Active Recreational/Commercial Fishing Harbor
- Four State Parks/Beaches (Odiorne, Wallis Sands, Jenness, and Rye Harbor State Park)
- Five Town Beaches (Wallis Sands, Foss, Cable, Sawyers, and Bass)
- Over 7 Miles of Coastline (Most in NH)
- In the flight path of Pease AFB
- Two Country Clubs w/ 18-hole golf courses (Abenaqui and Wentworth)

Rye Fire Department Profile

The Rye Fire Department is staffed by 10 full-time members (including the Fire Chief) and 12 call members. The full-time members are broken into 3 shifts of two and one shift of three. Each full-time shift has a minimum of one Lieutenant and one Firefighter that has a minimum FF2/EMT/CDL-B training. Several of the Full-time members are on surrounding specialized teams and those teams are as follows one is a member the regional SERT team (SWAT), One is a member the regional Start team (Hazmat), and two are members the Massachusetts FEMA team. Of the 12 call members, some are not active in the department, four are Fire/EMS certified, two are EMS certified only, four are Fire certified only, and two are defined as scene support.

The Rye Fire Department has one station and maintains a fleet of 6 Apparatus consisting of Two Ambulances, a Forestry truck, Two Class A Engines, and One Pumper-Ladder Truck. The Rye Fire Department also houses and responds throughout the seacoast area with a regional Air Supply Unit provided by the Seacoast Chief Fire Officers Association. Out of the seven total apparatus housed in the fire station 4 require a CDL-B license to drive. In addition to the apparatus the Fire Department also has an ocean rescue program featuring a Jet Ski stored at Rye Harbor during the summer season.

The Rye Fire Department is an all-hazards response agency providing Fire/Rescue protection and Advanced Life Support EMS services to town residents and guests. This includes but is not limited to Medical emergency Calls, Structure Fires, Alarm investigations, Motor Vehicle Collisions, search and rescue in both land and water, mitigation of hazardous conditions, and Service calls. The Rye Fire Department also performs fire inspection/prevention services, Child passenger seat installation/inspections, and CPR courses.

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Mutual Aid

Rye Fire rescue participates in the Seacoast Chief Fire Officers Mutual Aid System for both our fire and EMS services. In emergency services, a mutual aid agreement is a written agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries. This may occur due to an emergency response that exceeds local resources, such as a disaster or a multiple-alarm fire, or to ensure that there is a timely response to an emergency medical call. The agreement may call for an automatic response or by request only when an emergency occurs. It is important to keep in mind that Mutual Aid agreements are designed to supplement a community's emergency response, not replace it. Rye Fire Rescue is very active in our mutual aid system. We give mutual aid regularly to area communities and receive same on many occasions.

Organizational History and Background

The Rye Fire Department was first started in the Rye Beach District and from the beginning was staffed by volunteers. In 1954 construction began on a station located on 563 Washington Rd moving the Fire Department out of the Rye Beach District this was completed in 1955. Up until 1955 the Rye Fire Department was Volunteer only. In 1955 the town of Rye hired three full-time Firefighters to serve the town of Rye along with the volunteer members. In 1956 the Fire Department had 46 total calls for the year. In 1962 the Rye Ambulance Corps was founded and was a separate organization from the Fire Department. In 1969 a full-time Fire Chief was hired replacing the Volunteer Chief bringing full-time staffing to four. Up until 1992 the Rye Fire Department provided Fire coverage for the town. Rye Ambulance Corp responded to EMS calls. In 1992 the Rye Ambulance Corps was dissolved and the Fire Department assumed responsibility for EMS coverage for the town of Rye.

Staffing in 1992 was seven career members (including a Full-time Chief) and nineteen Call members. In 1992 Fire Department had 347 total calls for the year. Through the 90's and 2000's staffing fluctuated on both the career and call staff.

In 2003 the voters approved a warrant article to add two full-time positions bringing the full-time staffing to nine including the Fire Chief. In 2007 a warrant article was passed to hire one additional full-time member to begin the process of achieving three personnel on each shift. This brought the full-time staffing to ten members including the Fire Chief. In 2008, due to a down-turn in the economy, no warrant article for addition personnel was presented. In 2019 the duties of the department were expanded with the addition of a ocean rescue jet ski program. This water rescue program was built from the ground up to provide a previously nonexistent service to the town. As of 2019 the Rye Fire Department has 10 Full-time Staff (including Full-time Fire Chief), one shift with three personnel and three shifts with two

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personnel, and 12 Call Members. In 2019 the Fire Department had 930 calls for the year compared to only 762 calls in 2007.

IV. OUR METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH

In early 2019 we committed to conducting a staffing assessment, the results of which, we would discuss in 2021 Budget preparation season. Our procedure was as follows:

- We examined historical data back to 1954 looking for trends in emergency call volume, Call force and full-time staffing numbers.
- We reviewed our independent customer survey results for our patients who are transported to the hospital.
- We reviewed our system data and trends.
- We performed some literature research
- We compared our department to those that are fairly comparable from a demographic and Fire/EMS service perspective. We did include our surrounding communities some of which are much larger and some much smaller due to their proximity. There are several communities that are close comparisons however. Close comparatives are always a challenge.
- We also surveyed area towns on their use of per-diem positions and Deputy Chief (or other #2 ranks) positions.
- To ensure we are taking an objective and independent look at our operations we hired the services of Fire Chief Joe Landry, EFO of the Stow MA fire department. Chief Landry has an extensive and successful history in combination staffed departments like Rye. Chief Landry's work included:
 - Interviews of all Full-time personnel.
 - Interviews of all Call Force members
 - Site visits to several area departments with varying organizational structures. Chiefs of these departments were interviewed. What are their challenges? What is working? Etc.
 - Findings and recommendations were issued.
- We performed an extensive SWOT analysis of our operational operations and capability as well as our administrative capacity

DEFINITIONS

Call Force: This is our part-time firefighting/EMS force. The members here do not work shifts like the full-time personnel do. This group is 'recalled' into the station when we respond to an emergency incident such as a medical emergency, water rescue, fire, or car accident.

Recall: This term is used to describe the process of notifying off-duty full-time and Call Force personnel to return to the fire station. This is done to both give added help to the scene and to staff the fire station in case another emergency response comes in.

Per-Diem Shift: This is a regular shift at the fire station worked by a part-time employee. A member of a call-force could be 'qualified' to also work per-diem shifts. Rye does not currently offer these shifts.

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First Due: This term is used to describe the first fire or EMS personnel to arrive at an emergency scene.

Simultaneous or Over-Lapping Call: This occurs when Rye fire Rescue is out on an emergency response and a second (or third) emergency response is dispatched. We use a combination of recalled personnel to respond to the second call. There is usually a delay to get the first due personnel to the scene. This can make a negative difference when critical calls are involved.

COMPARISON COMMUNITIES

When conducting the appropriate data collection and identifying the current and future service gaps Rye Fire Rescue surveyed fourteen (16) communities. These identified communities were either Seacoast NH communities some that border the community of Rye, NH or have similar service and infrastructure requirements of their fire and EMS departments. The sixteen identified communities are as follows:

- Rye
- North Hampton
- Exeter
- Hampton
- Portsmouth
- Greenland
- Manchester by The Sea, MA
- Wolfeboro
- Eastham, MA
- Marion, MA
- Wellfleet, MA
- Ogunquit, ME
- Moultonborough, NH
- Gilford, NH
- New Castle
- Newington

Table 1: A note on call volume comparisons. Most area communities, including Rye, assign a run number to each emergency response. For example, if a fire alarm comes in for 1 Central Road and 3 trucks eventually respond that is counted as 1 response for data purposes. There are however some communities that would assign a number to each truck that responds on that same call to 1 Central Road resulting in 3 responses for that same data point. This Table illustrates:

- Rye large amount of water relative to other towns
- Rye's closest comparable based on population, staffing and call volume seems to be Manchester by the Sea.

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TABLE 1 (2017 DATA)

Town	Land Sqmi	Water Sqmi	FT Members	Call Members	Call Volume	Number of Ambulances	Population
Rye, NH	12.6	24.1	10	16	905	2	5389
North Hampton, NH	13.9	0.5	14	2	1004	1	4413
Exeter, NH	19.7	0.4	30	5	4572	3	14690
Hampton, NH	12.9	1.8	46	0	4876	3	15397
Portsmouth, NH	15.6	1.2	62	0	6379	3	21458
Greenland, NH	10.5	2.8	2	35	403	1	3783
Manchester by the Sea, MA	9.2	9.0	12	7	1100	2	5321
Wolfeboro, NH	18.3	10.1	9	10	1342	0	6202
Eastham, MA	14.0	11.7	23	0	1829	2	4924
Marion, MA	14.0	12.1	2	40	1319	2	5014
Wellfleet, MA	19.8	15.6	12	11	1167	3	3168
Ogunquit, ME	4.1	11.0	10	30	727	2	1189
Moultonborough, NH	59.5	15.1	3	47	914	0	4042
Gilford, NH	38.9	14.8	14	27	1679	2	7103
Newington, NH	8.2	4.1	10	8	1211	1	804
New Castle, NH	0.8	1.3	2	12	200	0	981
Average	17.0	8.5	16	16	1852	2	6492

Table 2 illustrates:

- Although Ryes population is slightly below the group average, it's assessed value is above the group average. This includes the larger 3 communities.
- Rye's Nursing home infrastructure is well above the group average.
- Rye has the largest number of state parks and the only seasonal hotel/convention center off shore.

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TABLE 2

Town	Population	Assessed Value	Nursing Homes	Assisted Living	Islands Accessable by Boat Only Inhabited	State Parks
Rye,NH	5389	2,134,061,700	2	0	3 (1 w/ Hotel)	4
North Hampton, NH	4413	1,033,216,044	0	0	0	1
Exeter, NH	14690	1,781,687,610	1	3	0	0
Hampton, NH	15397	3,327,628,520	2	1	0	1
Portsmouth, NH	21458	5,486,753,322	2	1	0	0
Greenland, NH	3783	738,579,580	0	0	0	0
Manchester by the Sea, MA	5321	2,354,252,445	1	0	0	0
Wolfboro, NH	6202	1,967,486,400	1	0	14 (Residential)	1
Eastham, MA	4924	2,814,148,600	0	0	0	0
Marion, MA	5014	1,508,861,200	1	0	1 (Residential)	1
Wellfleet, MA	3168	2,354,931,990	0	0	0	0
Ogunquit, ME	1189	1,444,974,260	0	0	0	1
Moultonborough, NH	4042	2,946,102,530	0	0	19 (Residential)	0
Gilford, NH	7103	1,757,237,192	0	0	15 (Residential)	1
Newington, NH	804	1,061,074,253	0	0	0	0
New Castle, NH	981	733,348,193	0	0	0	1
Average	6492	2,090,271,490	0.6	0.3	3	0.7

Table 3-Table 6 illustrate Rye’s aging population. At nearly 29% Rye has the 3rd highest percentage of residents over the age of 65 behind New Castle and Wolfeboro. This is an important statistic and drives the large amount of complex medical emergencies we transport to the hospital. Even more of a driver to an EMS system is the number of residents over the age of 65 living alone. A full 19% of Rye’s larger number of over 65 population lives alone. Quick, quality advanced life support response becomes critical to patient care in this demographic.

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TABLE 3

Comparable Demographics for 65 and Over (All Data Obtained from 2018 US Census)					
Town	Total Population	Over 65y/o Population	Over 65y/o Percentage	Over 65y/o Living Alone Percentage	Median Age
Rye, NH	5319	1526	28.70%	19.10%	54.6
North Hampton, NH	4465	991	22.20%	9.10%	50.6
Exeter, NH	22086	4328	9.30%	16.10%	46.4
Hampton, NH	15412	3767	24.40%	13.80%	51.2
Portsmouth, NH	22576	4144	18.40%	11.60%	40.9
Greenland, NH	3941	684	17.40%	17.40%	44.2
Manchester by the Sea, MA	5370	1243	23.10%	9%	49.9
Wolfboro, NH	6212	2207	35.40%	13.80%	56.7
Eastham, MA	4893	999	20.40%	22.70%	59.4
Marion, MA	5100	749	14.70%	15.60%	50.8
Wellfleet, MA	3387	602	17.80%	18.60%	57
Ogunquit, ME	1163	241	20.70%	21.50%	59.5
Moultonborough, NH	4095	1114	27.50%	11.90%	52.9
Gilford, NH	7157	1771	24.70%	16.80%	49.5
Newington, NH	864	192	22.20%	nearly 11%	54.4
New Castle, NH	780	330	42.30%	17.70%	61.7
Average	7051	1556	23.08%	15.36%	52.5

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TABLE 4

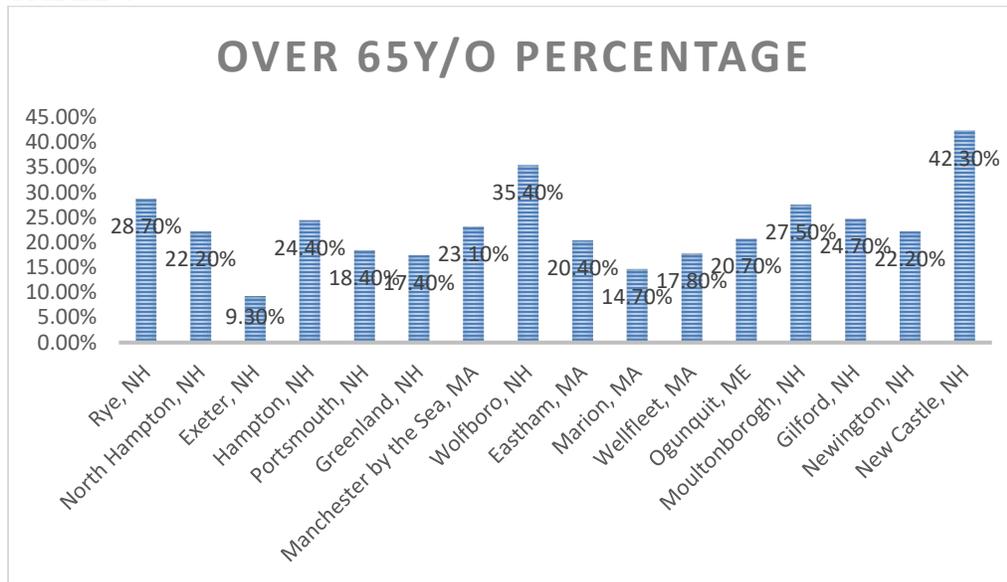
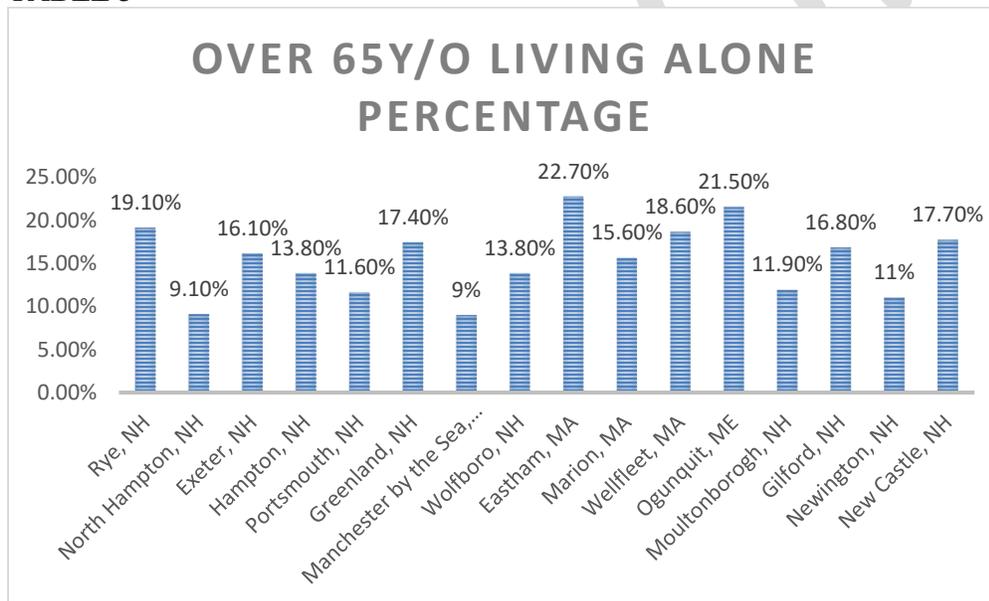
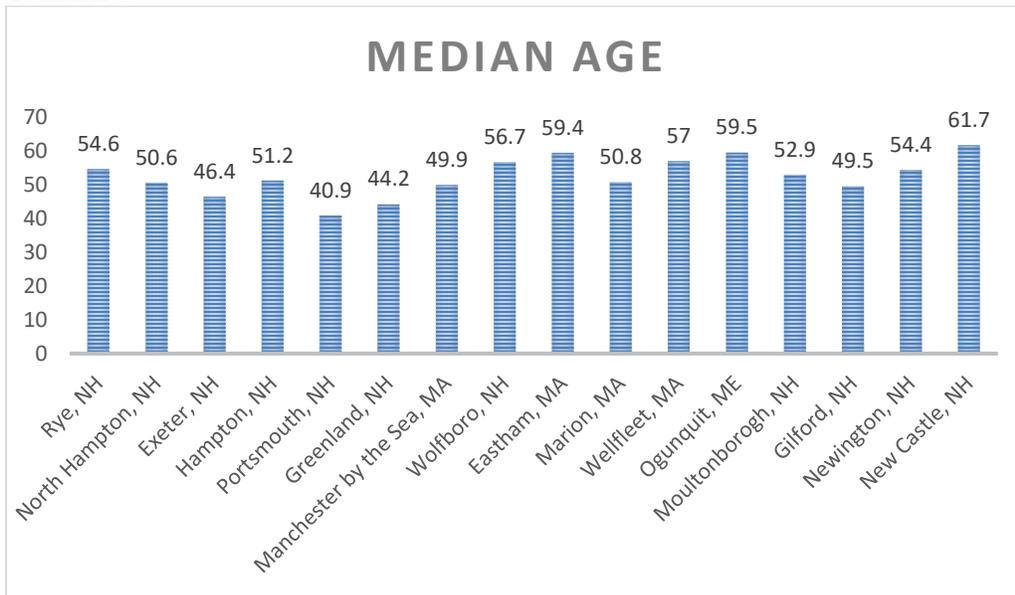


TABLE 5



Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

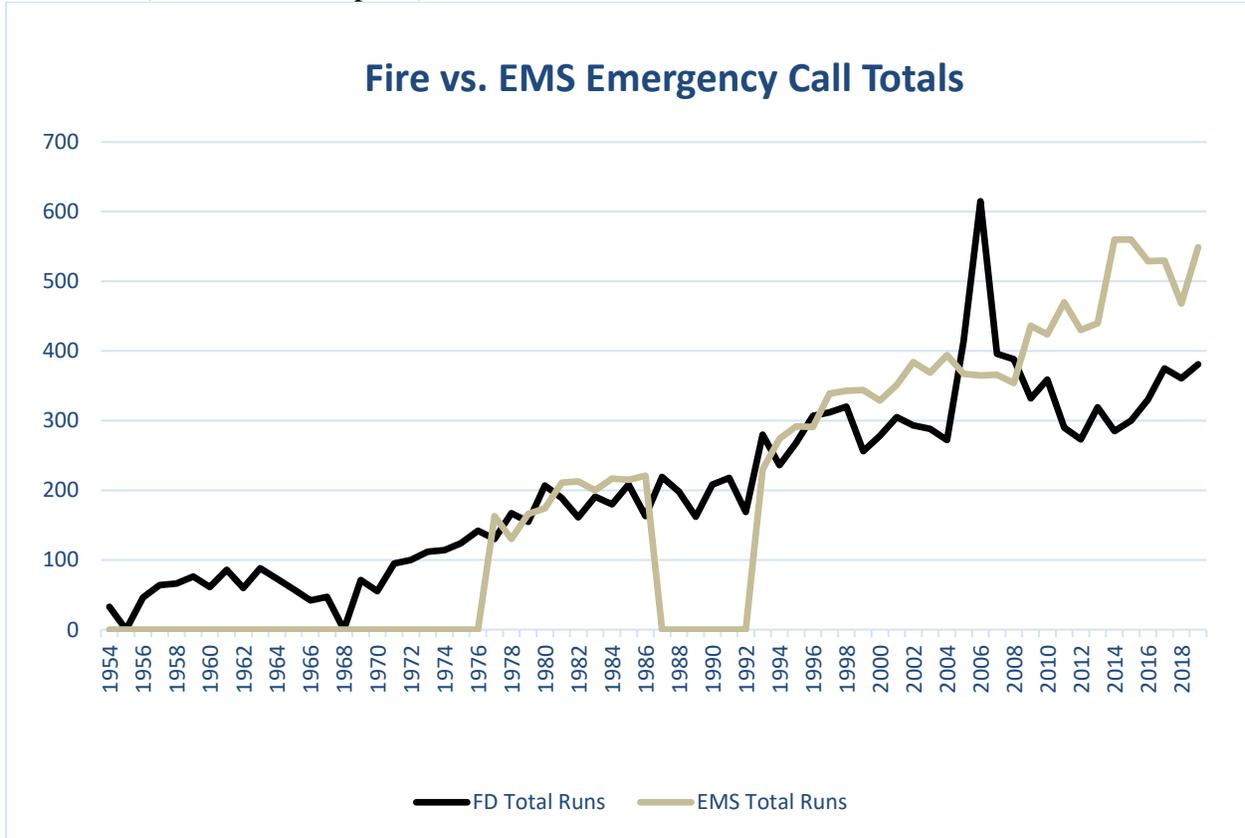
TABLE 6



Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Table 7 illustrates that Rye Fire Rescues Fire and EMS call volume is trending upward. EMS responses still out number fire responses.

TABLE 7 (Source Town reports)



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Table 8 and Table 9 examine full-time and call force staffing. The current call data for Rye is 12 call force members not the 16 listed.

- When considering FT and Call staffing as a package Manchester by the Sea, Wellfleet MA, and Wolfeboro seem to be our closest comparison.
- The trend is that those departments with the lowest FT staffing have much higher call member staffing. Those with higher FT staffing trend towards lower Call force staffing.

TABLE 8

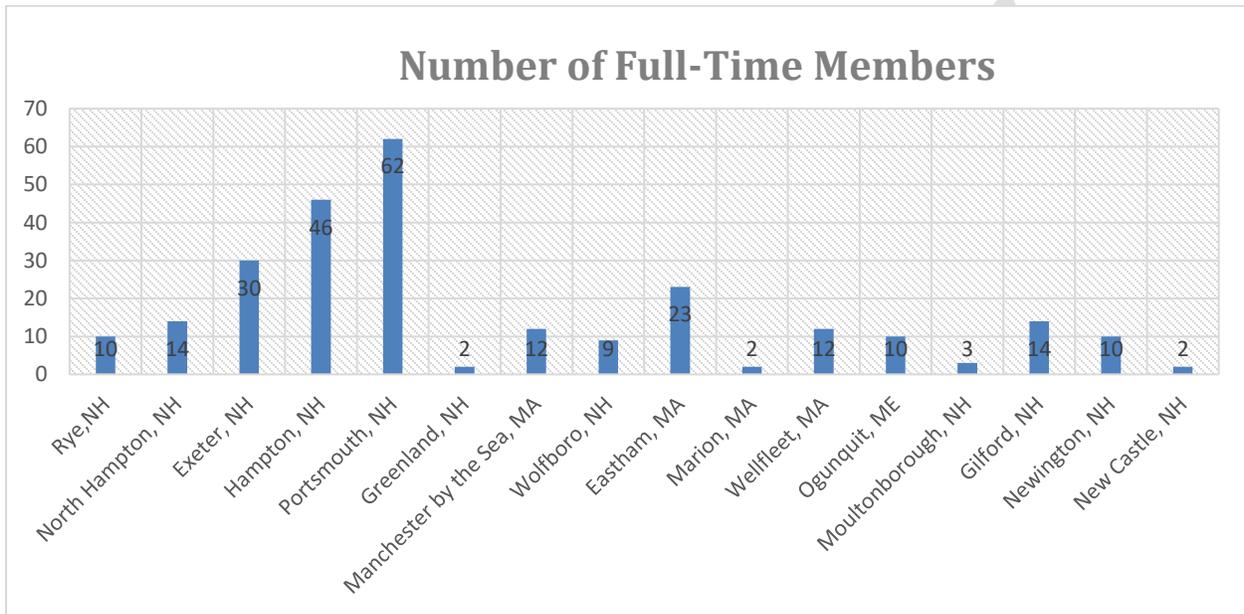
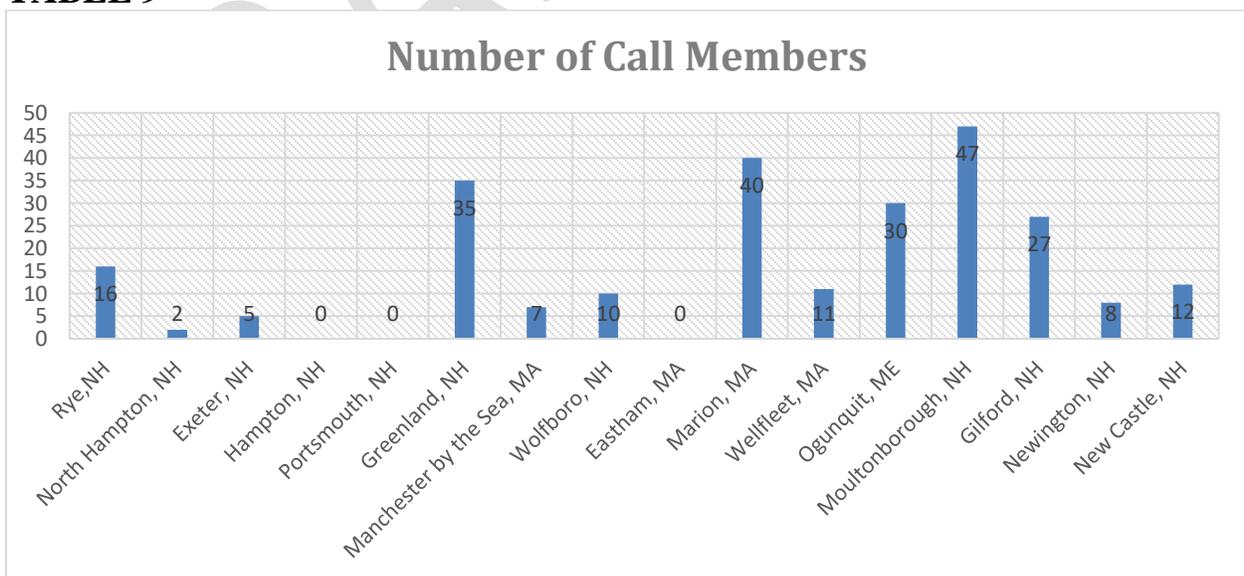


TABLE 9



Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

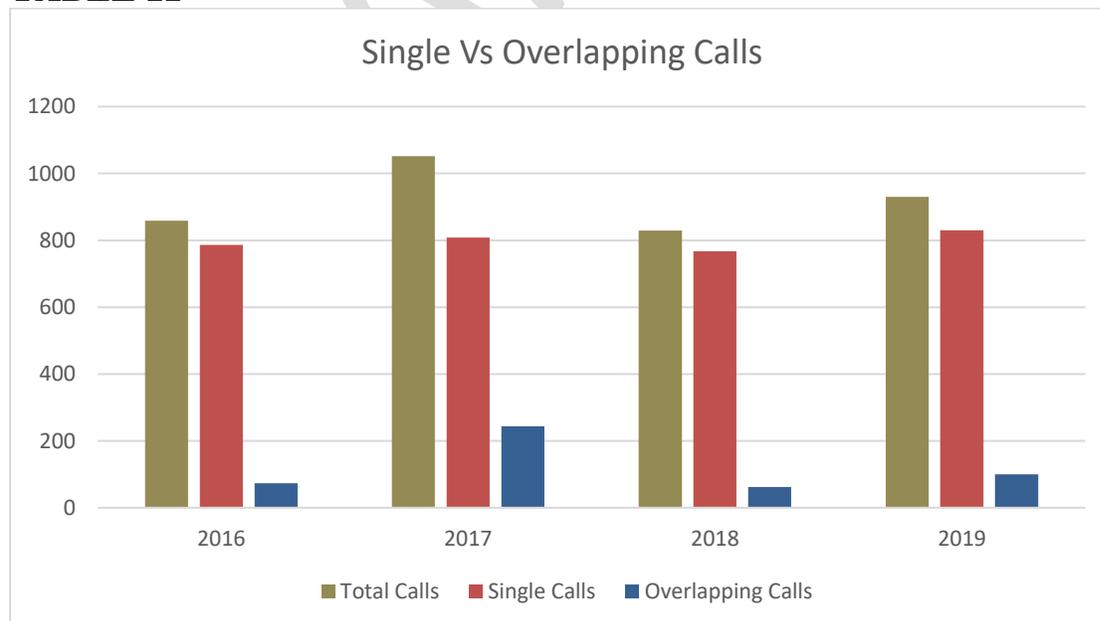
Table 10 and 11 speak to the predictability of simultaneous or calls for service when we are already handling an emergency call. In 2019 nearly 11% of our emergency calls occurred when we were already on another emergency call. This is also called our response reliability.

Response reliability is defined as the *'probability that the required amount of staffing and apparatus will be available'* when a fire or emergency call is received. This process requires the department to analyze its response performance data to determine how many simultaneous calls for service are received or are occurring close together. A common term used is "back-to-back calls."

TABLE 10

Rye Overlapping Incidents				
Year	Total Calls	Single Calls	OverLapping Calls	Notes
2016	859	786	73	
2017	1052	808	244	2017 Data Skewed Due to Different Call Reporting Method
2018	829	767	62	
2019	930	830	100	

TABLE 11

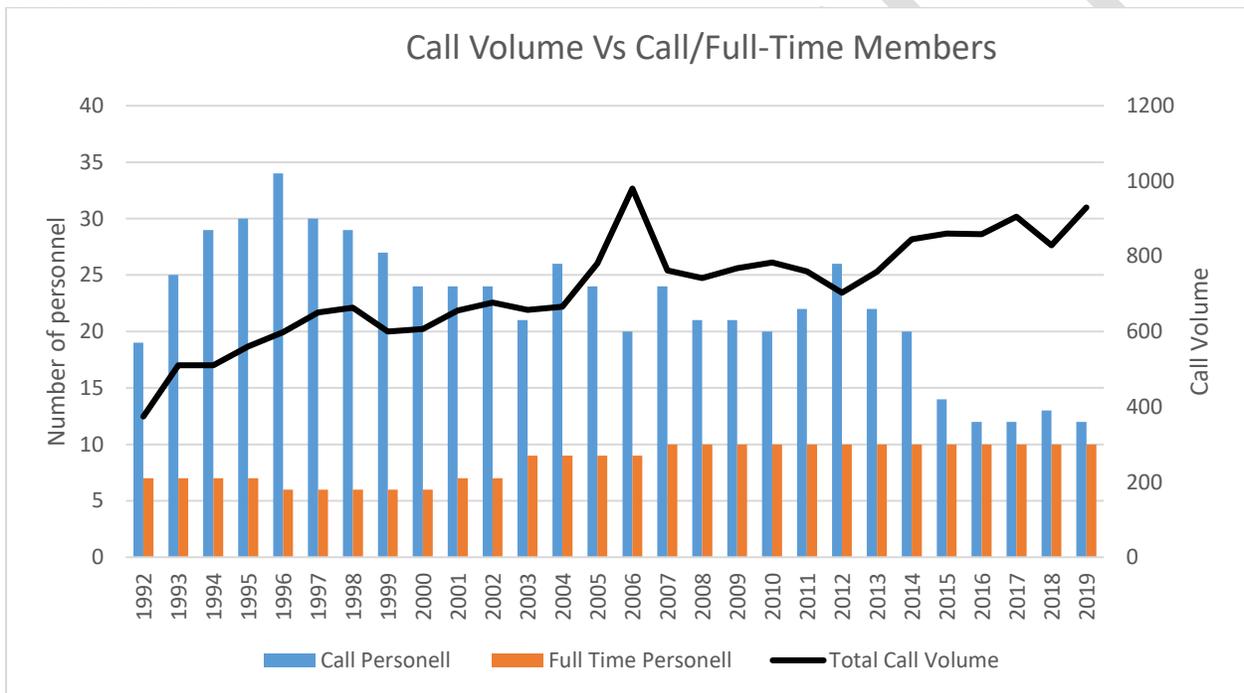


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Table 12 compares call volume trends with Full time and call staffing trends.

- The takeaway here is that call volume continues to rise while FT staffing has stayed steady since 2007. During this same period there has been a significant decline in the numbers of call force members available.

TABLE 12



Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Table 13: This table looks at 21 communities putting into perspective who uses per-diem positions vs. full-time staffing vs. using a deputy chief position. A few notes on this table:

- Per-Diem Staffing:
 - Those communities not using per-diem staffing have over 3 full-time shift staffing. Exceptions are Ogunquit (uses overtime to fill full-time 6 months/year); Moultonborough (who has 47 call force members on roster); South Hampton and Kensington.
- Deputy Chief Position: Out of 21 communities surveys only 3, including Rye, do not have some sort of Deputy Chief position under the Fire chief.

TABLE 13

Comparable Communities Additional Staffing Info (Not including Admin Staff)			
Town	Per-Diem	Full-Time on Shift	Deputy Chief Position
Rye, NH	No	2	No
North Hampton, NH	No	3	Yes
Exeter, NH	No	6-7	Yes
Hampton, NH	No	10	Yes
Portsmouth, NH	No	15	Yes
Greenland, NH	Yes	1	Yes
Manchester by the Sea, MA	No	3	No
Wolfeboro, NH	No	3	Yes
Eastham, MA	No	5	Yes
Marion, MA	Yes	2-3	Yes
Wellfleet, MA	No	3-4	No
Ogunquit, ME	No	2-3	Yes
Moultonborough, NH	No	2 Day	Yes
Gilford, NH	No	4	Yes
Newington, NH	Yes	2	Yes
New Castle, NH	Yes	1-2 Day	Yes
Kensington, NH	No	0	Yes
Hampton Falls, NH	Yes	1	Yes
Barrington, NH	Yes	1 Day	Yes
South Hampton, NH	No	0	Yes
Seabrook, NH	No	6	Yes

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Table 14: is the current organizational chart for Rye Fire rescue. You will notice each shift has one paramedic. We are sending an additional member to paramedic school in 2021.

TABLE 14



SWOT Analysis

Defined: A **S.W.O.T. analysis** is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** involved in a project or in a business venture. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective.

- **Strengths:** characteristics of the department that give it an advantage over others in the industry. These are assets that can be capitalized or built upon.
- **Weaknesses:** are characteristics that place the department at a disadvantage relative to others. These are components that must be re-evaluated for effectiveness, need, and unanticipated consequences.
- **Opportunities:** *internal & external* chances to increase the capacity of the department. This involves the evaluation of utilizing what currently exists, or what is anticipated to surface that can bring the department closer to accomplishing its strategic challenges.
- **Threats:** *internal & external* challenges that form barriers the department seeks to overcome. Threats can be attitudinal, budgetary, environmental, or contextual; they can be perceived, or they can be real.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Informal and formal SWOT analysis sessions yielded the following results:

Strengths:

- Rye Fire Rescue enjoys good community support:
 - Apparatus replacement: Our 2018 capital improvement plan was well received and is updated annually. The community supported our recent purchase of a pumper ladder.
 - Water rescue/Jet Ski program: This program, supported by the community, has made a significant improvement to our ability to respond to water rescue incidents. Several successful rescue calls have proved the programs worth.
 - Our CIP is now working and fiscally viable.
 - Equipment replacement/upgrades: In the last 3 years we have upgraded critical equipment long needing attention. Examples are our 'Jaws of Life' replacement and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) upgrade. There were also smaller but just as critical equipment upgraded such as monitoring meters, rescue tools etc.
- Third Party 100% Patient Satisfaction Surveys: Each transported patient is asked to fill out a satisfaction survey (appendix A). Rye Fire Rescue consistently out performs the national benchmark of participating agencies.
- Dedicated Rye Fire Rescue members
- Paramedic level EMS provider on each shift, providing the community with rapid response top notch medical care. Rye won the PRH EMS agency of the year award in 2017!
- Robust mutual aid system: Rye is one of 42 communities actively participating in Seacoast Chief Fire Officers mutual aid system. This allows us to augment our resources when we have a significant event. Examples of our involvement in this system include:
 - We receive additional EMS and Fire staffed apparatus for those events we do not have the resources to handle ourselves. This system however is for augmenting a communities response to events not taking the place of a adequate first due response. We are also expected to offer service to other communities in kind.
 - We have agreements in place with our surrounding communities to start into reported fires in Rye. This does not replace first due response but does start the needed back-up towards Rye early in the event.
 - We have access to the districts SWAT Team, HazMat Team, regional Air supply trailers, command truck. Rye houses one of the regional air supply trailers. We also have members on the Swat Team and HazMat Team.
 - As of last year, Rye, Greenland and North Hampton are training together at Bethany Church twice monthly. This allows more training participants which is needed for certain types of training. This also allows firefighters who respond together to early phases of incidents to train together before hand.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Weaknesses:

Operational Weaknesses:

- Rye Fire rescue currently has 4 paramedics each assigned to 1 of 4 shifts. Although every shift member is an EMT or EMT-Advanced, there are certain critical advanced skills only paramedics are licensed to perform. If any of the paramedics quit or retire we will not be able to staff 1 paramedic per shift.
- Staff recall:
 - Off-duty and call force recall for an emergency incident is not predictable. 2019 data indicates an average of 1.74 off duty or call members responded to the station for station coverage. The call force represents approx.. 40% of the members coming back on recall. Unlike the full-time members, the qualifications of our recalled call force vary widely.
- Basic Medical Emergencies:
 - Currently there is no additional clinical help at the scene quickly to help the ambulance personnel.
 - Challenging stairways etc. often must be navigated without additional help
 - 2 off duty or qualified call members are required to staff the second ambulance.
 - Must wait for off duty or qualified call members to arrive at the station before a second emergency gets a quick local response. nearly 11% of our emergency calls overlap an ongoing incident.
- Critical ALS Level Medical Emergencies:
 - These challenging medical emergencies often require an additional attendant in the ambulance with the patient.
 - The ambulance crew of 2 typically is required to wait until off-duty members arrive at the scene for help with a multitude of urgent procedures such as:
 - Providing medications
 - Managing patients airway
 - IV access issues
- Motor Vehicle Accidents:
 - We typically are lacking first due Engine response to MVA's:
 - Nobody available to start initial patient treatment on that second or third patient.
 - Delays use of extrication tools such a Jaws of Life and air bags.
 - Delays fuel spill control
 - Delays vehicle fire precautions such as disconnecting batteries and hoseline placement.
- Fire Alarms and Fire Responses:
 - No pump operator:
 - We are typically not able to staff the 3 critical positions on a fire truck:
 - someone to run the pump on the fire truck. This ensures a predictable water supply for the inside firefighters. Pump operator is also critical in observing changing conditions from the outside. This is an important position on both Fire alarm and actual fire calls.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Operational Weaknesses cont.

- Someone to operate the water nozzle.
 - Someone to back-up the nozzle person and pull the needed fire hose as they advance.
 - Water supply that is interrupted while the two firefighters are in the fire building is a life threatening event for the firefighters.
 - We know of zero national benchmarks that allow our current practice.
 - Most mutual aid departments in our system do not call for our fire trucks due to our staffing of less than 3.
 - Huge safety issue
 - Liability issue for firefighters, residents and town.
- Jetski 1 and water operations: Rye Fire Rescues water rescue program has quickly proven its worth. Several significant rescues most notably the recent overturned skiff outside Rye Harbor has illustrated how challenging managing the necessary response to these critical incidents is.
 - We can staff the jet ski but lack someone to initiate the initial land based coordination needed to:
 - Coordinate with Coast Guard, Marine Patrol, and rescue boats such as Portsmouth and Hampton.
 - Coordinate with land based mutual aid such as ambulances, Ocean rescue swimmers heading into the scene.
 - Coordinate search of shore for a victim.
 - Keep in touch with Jet ski 1 crew to provide additional needed resources and as a safety should the crew need help.
- Ambulance VS Engine availability: Necessarily the shift firefighters are required to take the ambulance out on routine errands such as inspections, burning site inspections, district familiarization etc. This means that if a call comes in for a fire of some sort, the ambulance must return to the station to respond with the appropriate vehicle. This is not a rare occurrence and creates a substantial delay in response.
 - For example: Ambulance is out at Wentworth Road doing an inspection when a fire alarm came in for one of our assisted Living Communities. The ambulance had to respond back to the fire station and switch to staffing the fire engine, then respond in the engine to the scene.

Administrative Weaknesses:

- Wear and Tear on the ambulance: Because the ambulance must be used for virtually all inspections and other routine travel there is additional maintenance costs. This impacts long-term serviceability of the vehicle.
 - Our ambulance has a replacement cost of approx. \$240,000. It was placed in service July 2017 and already has over 54,000 miles.
 - Additional miles require more fuel cost, more tires, more brake replacements etc.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Administrative Weaknesses cont.

- Call force recruitment and retention:
 - This is a national issue. A National Fire administration whitepaper titled ‘Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services’ offers root causes for this national decline in volunteerism. The reasons include:
 - Increasing time demands
 - Increasing training requirements
 - Increasing call volume
 - Changes in suburban sociological climate
 - Leadership problems-internal conflict
 - Higher cost of housing
 - Aging communities
 - Federal LegislationFull report: https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2007_retention_and_recruitment_guide.pdf
 - Training expense. New call force members must be trained to national and state standards. This has been occurring at the expense of Rye Fire rescue. Many, although not all, call members aspire to be a full-time firefighter and thus leave for job opportunities. To some extent this has been an accepted role of call forces and one hopes there is a pay back on training dollars spent before the member leaves. A troubling trend we are seeing here in Rye are call force members who leave active status in Rye for part-time shift work commonly called ‘per-diems’ in other towns. Rye does not currently offer ‘per-diem’ shifts. We have had 3 members recently go inactive for this reason.
 - Not all call force members have the same qualifications. Some are an EMT at some level, some are certified as a firefighter, some are both. There are also a few who are support only. Currently in the rye call force of 12 members:
 - 2 are EMT only-no fire certification
 - 4 have fire certification-no EMT license
 - 4 are both EMT and fire certified.
 - 2 are support members.
 - Organizational structure policies and training needs to be addressed. Structure, policies and training in the call force were concerns we had before embarking on this study. The need for improvement was consistently brought up in internal interviews and is a common issue nationally
- Inadequate administrative capacity to support the departments mission:
 - In-station projects and responsibilities: Each member of Rye fire Rescue is assigned additional duties and responsibilities (Table 13). Although the responsibilities listed in Table 13 are comprehensive the work must get done during the operational shift rotation. This is challenging from both a workload and project continuity perspective.
 - Fire Chief is the only administrative staff. There is no administrative assistant and no Deputy Chief Position.
- The ambulance must be taken to even routine business that could be done with one member to remain available.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Administrative Weaknesses cont.

- Availability to public at station: Our customer service suffers when there is no staff at the station. This occurs when we are out on non-emergency duties
 - While out on routine business there is no staff to answer the door or field telephone calls for:
 - Request for permits
 - Plans review
 - Requests for site inspections
 - This is a source of customer complaints
 - Of particular concern is those emergency calls that get called in on our business line. We receive calls that are sometimes left on voice mail!

Opportunities:

Operational opportunities: The operational weaknesses listed above were examined for root causal factors. What reasonable value-driven solutions can make a significant positive impact for the future. Rye Fire Rescue now has modern dependable equipment. With the addition of our newly purchased pumper-ladder, our apparatus replacement plan is on track.

The root cause of the significant operational weaknesses above comes down to staffing. Below are the improvements that transitioning our present shift staffing (3 shifts of 2 and 1 shift of 3) to 3 members per shift would yield. They are dramatic:

- Basic Medical Emergencies:
 - One member can remain in town after helping at the scene while 2 members transport the patient to the hospital. This will allow the remaining member to provide quick response to a simultaneous emergency call. This would be a significant improvement as nearly 11% of our emergency calls overlap with another emergency.
 - Only 1 recall member would be needed to staff the second ambulance.
- Critical ALS Level Medical Emergencies:
 - These are the serious calls such as heart attacks, strokes, and cardiac arrests. In these types of cases the third shift member is critical to speeding up the on-boarding of medications, establishing and maintaining an airway, IV access and other needed procedures. These procedures often need to be done simultaneously. This will enable a quicker transport to the hospital.
 - Below this SWOT analysis you will find a memo comparing our staffing and the staffing used by the Portsmouth Hospital ER to perform these same functions at a cardiac arrest at one of our scenes versus the hospital's emergency room.
- Motor Vehicle Accidents:
 - The third shift member can begin the evaluation of second or third patient begins quickly.
 - Environmental preventative measures such as fuel spill protective measures begin quickly
 - With the third member we can have rescue tools such as jaws and airbags on scene quickly.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Operational Opportunities cont.

- Fire Alarms and Fire Responses:
 - This is an area where a third shift member dramatically increases the effectiveness and safety of the first due fire truck at the scene. A three-person shift allows the first arriving fire truck to have someone pumping water through the hoselines while the other 2 members advance lines into the building. 3 person staffing for structure fires are not a luxury but rather the minimum national standard possible. The following link is to a public education video produced by the Belmont MA Fire Department. This contains an excellent illustration of the resources involved in mitigating a structure fire. While we have additional mutual aid coming into reported fires we need to arrive at the scene prepared to take quick action that will positively affect the outcome of the fire. This video can be found at <https://www.firefighternation.com/2020/10/23/belmont-ma-mock-house-fire-lessons/?fbclid=IwAR2ziGL54aa7gImH79PAWbcleHYH4YDXgonajlfoXdxKHMJEDRlcDWOnqU>
- Jet ski 1 and water operations:
 - In addition to simply staffing the jet ski, the three-person shift allows the capability to establish coordination on land. This allows quick coordination of incoming land mutual aid such as ambulances, additional rescue swimmers etc. and the water based agencies such as the Coast Guard, Marine Patrol, and fire rescue boats.
 - Perhaps most importantly, a three-person shift allows a person on land to keep in touch with Jetski 1 crew to provide additional needed resources and as a safety should the crew need help.
- Ambulance VS Engine availability: The staffing of both the ambulance and a fire truck is much more possible with a three-person shift. This dramatically reduces the occasions when the on-duty shift must return to the station for the correct apparatus when the call comes in while they are not in quarters.

Administrative Opportunities:

- Wear and Tear on the ambulance:
 - A three-person shift allows most non-emergent travel to be done with our pickup truck instead of an expensive ambulance. This improves long-term serviceability of the vehicle and limits wear and tear on the more expensive ambulance
- Call force retention and recruitment:
 - Allowing qualified Call force members to work part-time 'per-diem' shifts would eliminate the need for call force members to transfer to shift work at other area fire departments. This could also count towards three- member shift operational improvements. Members who recently went elsewhere for per-diem shifts all noted that they would have stayed in Rye if there was an opportunity for shift work.
 -

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Administrative Opportunities cont.

- Allowing call force members to work per-diem shifts would enhance on-duty training.
- Organizational improvements in terms of structure, policies and training clearly need to happen. This will take the necessary administrative capacity in an immediate and on-going effort.
- In-station projects and responsibilities:
 - Less staff on non-emergent business outside the fire station means lacking in-station projects and responsibilities get more attention.
- Availability to public at station:
 - A three-person shift increases the availability during routine business to answer the door or field a telephone call for:
 - Request for permits
 - Plans review
 - Requests for site inspections
 - fewer customer complaints

Threats:

Left unimproved, the organizational weaknesses discussed threatens Rye Fire Rescue in the following ways:

- Call force recruitment and retention will continue to be a challenge in the future.
- Recruiting/training paramedic level EMS responders continue to be a priority. Dropping below the current level of 4 paramedics (1 paramedic for each shift) would make covering each shift with a paramedic impractical.
- Operational weaknesses left unaddressed will compound as call volume increases.

End of SWOT Analysis-

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Operational concern illustrated:

When Rye Fire Rescue responds to an urgent call for help such as a heart attack or cardiac arrest much of the clinical procedures that would be done in the ER is actually performed on scene, often in the patients home. LT. MacGlashing, our EMS Coordinator, attempted to compare the resources available to perform those same procedures in the emergency room with the staffing available on the emergency scene in Rye. His results were startling. Below is his comparison:

Town of Rye Fire & Rescue *Memorandum*

To: Chief Cotreau
From: Lieutenant MacGlashing
Date: 10/08/2020
RE: Need for Three-Person EMS Crew

Chief,

This memo is to address The Rye Fire & Rescue current ambulance staffing and the need for a three- person crew to cover medical calls. Adequate manpower in the initial response of medical emergencies ensures the safety of the citizens of the Town. A minimum of two crew members are necessary to staff the EMS ambulance that transports a patient, one to operate the vehicle and one to attend the patient and provide ongoing care. However, many of the medical emergencies the Department responds to would benefit greatly from an additional EMS member. When responding to a medical emergency, time matters. It only stands to reason that a two-person crew simply takes more time to stabilize a patient in preparation for transporting them to a hospital than a three-person crew.

Below is an example showing the staffing difference between the Rye Fire & Rescue EMS shift crew and the Portsmouth Regional Hospital Emergency Room for a cardiac arrest and a heart

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attack. These are just two examples of the types of medical calls the Department responds to each week.

Scenario # 1 Cardiac arrest:

Rye Ambulance: Total Personnel - 2

Skills needed to treat and care for a patient in cardiac arrest.

1. Airway i.e. (bag valve mask, intubation)
2. CPR
3. Cardiac monitor.
4. Intravenous/ intraosseous access.
5. Medication administration.
6. Scribe for patient information.
7. Equipment runner/ manpower for moving the patient out of the house.

Portsmouth Regional Hospital Emergency Room: Total Providers - 7

The hospital has the following staff providing care and treatment to a patient suffering from an cardiac arrest: one respiratory therapist for airway; two nurses switching out every two minutes to perform CPR; one nurse for cardiac monitor; one nurse on IV and medications; one nurse doing paperwork and documentation. Additionally, there would be an Emergency Physician in the room to oversee the medical event.

Scenario # 2 Heart attack

Rye Fire Ambulance: Total Personnel – 2

Tasks that could be needed to care and treat a patient suffering from a heart attack:

1. Cardiac monitor/ 12 lead.
2. Documentation/ History of events leading up to medical event.
3. Aspirin.

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4. Intravenous access.
5. Blood labs.
6. Nitroglycerin, Heparin, Beta blockers, IV drip medications, IV blood pressure medications.
7. These patients are very delicate and need to be moved and transported very carefully to avoid causing stress to their heart.

Portsmouth Regional Hospital Emergency Room: Total Providers - 5

The hospital has the following staff providing care and treatment to a patient suffering from a heart attack: an emergency medicine physician, documentation nurse, medication nurse, a lab tech, and a Cath lab team which is comprised of three nurses and a cardiologist.

These cardiac scenarios are labor-intensive medical events. These tasks can be completed more efficiently when handled by multiple responders. Checking vital signs, intubation, establishing IV access and administering medication often needs to be done in a short amount of time in order to effectively treat a patient. An additional crew member would reduce scene time by completing tasks simultaneously rather than concurrently, thus increasing operational efficiency. A third crew member could mean the difference between one or two minutes when saving a life.

Also, most injuries to first responders occur during tasks that require lifting or abnormal movement by rescuers. Such tasks include lifting heavy objects (including both conscious and unconscious patients), manipulating injured body parts (such as splinting extremities, and back boarding a patient for spinal immobilization) and patient packaging. A larger crew will complete these tasks more efficiently by distributing the workload among more people and thereby reduce the likelihood of injury.

Ultimately, a three-person crew will shorten the amount of time EMS spends on the scene and make a difference in response efficiency for cardiac patients.

End of comparison-

Below is correspondence from Dr. Wallus, Rye's Medical Director and Medical Director for all municipal ambulance services in the seacoast area, confirming the valid comparison LT. MacGlashing conducted.

From: Harry Wallus <hjwallus@gmail.com>

Date: October 16, 2020 at 1:55:05 PM EDT

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

To: Jacob MacGlashing <JMacGlashing@town.rye.nh.us>

Subject: Re: Staffing memo

Hi Jake,

The staffing numbers you quote here are accurate for the ED. Our prehospital providers also have to concern themselves with family, any medical history/meds they can identify, extrication and transport. If feasible, I would without question recommend and support at minimum 3 prehospital providers on these calls. Please feel free to reach out to me if I may be of further assistance to you or the department.

Sincerely,

Harry J. Wallus DO, MPH, FACEP

End of correspondence-

Administrative Capacity in the Fire House

Table 13 below is a list of responsibilities assigned to our members. These responsibilities are assigned in addition to the regular duty shift work which can include:

- Checking apparatus for operational readiness.
- Emergency responses.
- Fire and medical reports for each response.
- Handling any public traffic coming to the door.
- Off-site inspections.
- Fire drills.
- Daily in-service training.

As you can see, this amounts to a challenging list of responsibilities to perform. Checking equipment and apparatus, training and responding to emergency calls are always the top priority. Therefore, the below list of member responsibilities, many of which are critical, often fall behind.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

TABLE 13

RYE FIRE RESCUE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

<u>"A" SHIFT</u> Lt/Paramedic Wunderly Station Supplies Capital Planning Inventory Control	<u>"B" SHIFT</u> Lt/Paramedic MacGlashing EMS Coordinator CQI EMS Training Ambulance Billing Lifeguard Program
FF/EMT John Klanchesser Firehouse Software E911 Public Eye I Am Responding Fire Alarm	FF/EMT John Cots Tools and small engines
<u>"C" SHIFT</u> Lt/EMT-A Chuck Gallant Vehicle Maintenance Fire Training Call Department Coordinator Vehicle Equipment Coordinator Community Education	<u>"D" SHIFT</u> Lt/EMT-A DiBartolomeo Fire Prevention Inspections Investigation Radios Hose Star Island Firehouse Software supervisor
FF/Paramedic Mike Rivet Jet Ski Program Ocean Rescue CQI	FF/Paramedic Chris Bohling Small Engines Tool Room
<u>CALL MEMBERS</u> Bob Whittet Chaplain Bryan Yeaton CQI Lexie Gorski CQI	

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Call Force

In our initial assessment of the department (2017-2018) we noticed that many of our call force members were not active. Informal feedback/observations by both call and full-time members noted that there had been a substantial decline in numbers over the years. Although there is a documented national shortage of Call Firefighters, none the less, this was concerning. There were concerns about updated policies, adequate training, Organizational leadership with-in the call department etc.

As we begin to discuss our call force, I would like to make it very clear that we respect and appreciate the good work and community spirit evident in our call force members! They are a terrific group! You will notice the number of call force members has dropped significantly since the early 2000's (Table 10). Nationally, there are market conditions driving some of this: Families are busier than they use to be. Members have to have a high commitment to obtain the higher professional training requirements which have increased dramatically over the years. Years ago more members worked locally and the employers would allow members to leave work and respond. This is no longer the case. The number of call force members at Rye Fire Rescue can also be a bit misleading. Of the 12 call force members currently on Rye Fire Rescue not all are equally qualified:

- 1 is qualified to work shifts (both EMT and firefighter qualified AND can operate fire apparatus)
- 4 are EMT qualified and cannot perform firefighting.
- 5 are firefighters only and cannot serve on the ambulance
- 2 are support only. This means they are not EMS or Firefighting certified but serves with us in other ways.
- 3 work per-diem shifts in neighboring towns. Rye as yet does not offer per-diem shifts.

Additionally, the availability of each member (FT and Call) to come back on recall varies. There are calls with 0 callback members and calls with 4 and every place between. For example:

- In 2019 the average number of members responding to the station when an emergency call came in was 1.74persons per recall.
- Member recall is critical to our operations for both scene resources' and station coverage for other calls that may come in. Nearly 11% of Rye's emergency calls overlap with another on-going emergency in town.

Internal member interviews were conducted by Chief Joe Landry. All full-time and call force members were encouraged to participate. Both Call force and full-time members contributed to the interviews. Below is Chief Landry's internal member interview summary.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan

Rye Fire Department Member Interview Summary

Over a three-day period, twelve interviews were conducted with a diverse group of members. The results yielded were consistent from member to member with a few outliers. As in most organizations, the lack of recognized documentation and formal guidance was a common denominator of reported issues. In some cases, this documentation may exist but the need to incorporate them into the day to day operation is critical for the future of the Rye Fire Department.

For the most part, Full-Time members that are engaged into in the day to day operation describe their roles and responsibilities as clearly defined with some inconsistencies. These inconsistencies should be addressed prior to discussing any alternative staffing models. The Call members frequently described that there is very little known about the organization's structure. For the members that recognized structure it was commonly related to institutional knowledge or department history not documentation.

Training was a common topic of discussion for a majority of the department. Although training is available with some recent changes, there is still a majority of members unsatisfied with either the content or consistency. Training is critical for Firefighter Safety as well as a major contributing factor for engagement and retention of Call Firefighters. The ability to attend a scheduled event and interact with other members on a regular basis contributes to cohesion within the department.

Department structure and chain of command was not specifically noted but appeared to be a hidden factor within the responses. Both Full-Time and Call Firefighters made note of the departments basic structure which includes the Full-Time Lieutenants with one member making note of a Call Lieutenant. Follow up questioning on the subject noted the position currently has no formal structure within the organization. The need to define and reinforce all ranking positions will be critical to success in the future.

End of summary-

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Interviews were also conducted with several other fire departments. The Rye Fire Chief accompanied Chief Landry to the various communities. Some were all Call Force departments and others were a combination call force and full-time department such as Rye. Although comparisons were not always 'apples to apples' some valuable common threads were found. Below is Chief Landry's summary:

Rye Fire Department

Neighboring Community Interview Summary

Interviews were conducted with neighboring communities recognized to have similar response demographics to the Rye Fire Department. The communities included Epping, Newington, Kensington and Hampton Falls. For the most part the responses were consistent from one to the next. The common denominator for all would be the lack of personnel for the operations. This is a common theme across the country that volunteer/combination organizations are struggling to maintain their numbers.

Each department interviewed utilized their own distinctive scheduling process which appeared to meet the minimum basic needs for everyday initial responses. Each department did indicate that beyond the initial response it was very difficult to achieve operational goals without a strong reliance on mutual aid from neighboring communities. Each community also noted that part-time, and per-diem employees commonly work for one or more department. This practice can also cause a strain on the availability of members returning as Call Firefighters when a large-scale event occurs.

A couple of the departments indicated the need to develop a family like culture between the members to support engagement and commitment. The incorporation of family events into the daily operation offers the members a sense of community within the organization which could increase involvement. The need to define parameters would be critical to ensure accountability in this type of environment. This type of structure is more common on all Call/Volunteer organizations. Although not impossible in combination departments, there are some territorial issues with this environment.

Each department staffing model afforded benefits as well as challenges. When Full-Time staffing was in place there was obviously a higher standard of consistency and accountability for shifts. As the models moved from Full-Time to Per-Diem or Part-Time there was a benefit of a guaranteed response but the ability to manage and schedule became much more challenging. The ability

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to remain flexible for temporary employees while holding them accountable will always be a labor intensive for management but not impossible. Obviously, these models are the most cost efficient while attempting to reach staffing a minimum that will be safe for the public as well as the department members.

In contrast the all Call/Volunteer organizations interviewed expressed concern regarding response times as well as sustainability in the future. The reliance on off duty responders as a staffing option has and will always be a gamble that each community must evaluate the level of accepted risk.

Each department expressed a specific value related to their respective staffing and response models. It would be in the best interest of the Rye Fire Department to utilize the examples and experiences of these local but diverse department to build a model that fits all aspects of response for the citizens of the Town of Rye.

End of summary-

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

V. FINDINGS

What we learned from our research was that while we provide high quality on scene fire and EMS delivery, resulting in high customer satisfaction, there are substantial service gaps in our response model that need to be addressed. The results of this research and report reveal that we need to take some immediate corrective action to ensure we are providing the best fire/EMS service of possible to the citizens and guests of the town of Rye.

ANSWERS TO OUR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this section we will answer each primary research question. We will draw conclusions as to what is working and where there are service gaps. A service gap is the difference between the intended service level an organization plans to deliver, and the actual level of services delivered. In our context the service gap is service below the intended service level.

FINDING #1: Adequacy of Rye Fire Rescue Resources

Question: Does Rye Fire Rescue have adequate resources to provide effective, responsive, high-quality fire and EMS delivery to all residents and customers within the town of Rye?

Finding: Yes and no. Our apparatus and equipment are in good shape. We cannot, however, provide first due adequate minimum staffing at many incident scenes. First the good news:

- Rye fire Rescue's apparatus now follow a 20-year replacement plan. The plan is well thought out and, except for 2 purchase leases, will be self-funding (given existing funding sources). Our newly acquired pumper-ladder has modernized our response from an apparatus perspective. It is now very important to follow the replacement plan as laid out.
- Rye Fire rescue equipment has the quality modern equipment a smaller fire EMS agency like Rye's should have.
- Rye Fire rescue employs talented, community-oriented members in both our regular and call force rosters. The over-all satisfaction noted in our patient surveys attest to this.
- SERVICE GAP: Rye fire rescue does not have the ability to fully handle all the tasks required of a first due response agency. These tasks are outlined below in finding#2.
- SERVICE GAP: Rye Fire rescue can not maintain quick initial response to overlapping calls when out on an emergency response. Our turn around time for a typical medical call transporting to the hospital is 60-90 minutes. Nearly 11% of our emergency calls overlap another call.

FINDING #2: Operational Benefits and Liabilities

Question: What are the benefits and liabilities contained within our current fire and EMS service delivery model?

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Finding:

- Third Party 100% Patient Satisfaction Surveys: Each transported patient is asked to fill out a satisfaction survey (appendix A). Rye Fire Rescue consistently outperforms the national benchmark of participating agencies.
- Dedicated Rye Fire Rescue members
- Paramedic level EMS provider on each shift, providing the community with rapid response top notch medical care. Rye won the PRH EMS agency of the year award in 2017!
- Robust mutual aid system: Rye is one of 42 communities actively participating in Seacoast Chief Fire Officers mutual aid system. This allows us to augment our resources when we have a significant event.
- **CRITICAL SERVICE GAP:** We are typically not able to staff the 3 critical positions on a fire truck:
 - someone to run the pump on the fire truck. This ensures a predictable water supply for the inside firefighters. Pump operator is also critical in observing changing conditions from the outside. This is an important position on both Fire alarm and actual fire calls.
 - Someone to operate the water nozzle.
 - Someone to back-up the nozzle person and pull the needed fire hose as they advance.
- **SERVICE GAP:** Off-duty and call force recall for an emergency incident is not predictable. 2019 data indicates an average of 1.74 off duty or call members responded to the station for station coverage.
- **SERVICE GAP:** The ambulance crew of 2 typically is required to wait until off-duty members arrive at the scene for additional help completing a multitude of urgent procedures such as:
 - Providing medications
 - Managing patients airway
 - IV access issues
- **SERVICE GAP:** We typically are lacking first due Engine response to MVA's:
 - Nobody available to start initial patient treatment on that second or third patient.
 - Delays use of extrication tools such a Jaws of Life and air bags.
 - Delays fuel spill control
 - Delays vehicle fire precautions such as disconnecting batteries and hose line placement.
- **SERVICE GAP:** We can staff the jet ski but lack someone to initiate the initial land-based coordination needed to:
 - Coordinate with Coast Guard, Marine Patrol, and rescue boats such as Portsmouth and Hampton.
 - Coordinate with land based mutual aid such as ambulances, Ocean rescue swimmers heading into the scene.
 - Coordinate search of shore for a victim.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- SERVICE GAP: There is a delay in the response of a fire truck should the ambulance be out of quarters for some other business. This scenario requires the ambulance to respond not to the incident scene but back to the station to first get the fire truck and then respond to the incident scene.
- SERVICE GAP: Our customer service suffers when there is no staff at the station. This occurs when we are out on non-emergency duties
- While out on routine business there is no staff to answer the door or field a telephone call for:
 - Request for permits
 - Plans review
 - Requests for site inspections
 - This is a source of customer complaints

FINDING #3: Call Force Benefits and Liabilities

Question: What are the benefits and liabilities contained within our current call force? What can be done to increase recruitment and retention of our call members?

Finding:

- Recruitment and retention of call force members is a well-documented national problem. Evidence confirms that seacoast area departments are having these same recruitment and retention issues. The call force is an important component of a small fire department. Quality dedicated call force members are to be valued. The evidence suggests recruitment and retention will continue to be an issue for Rye Fire Rescue in the future.
- The number of call firefighters coming back on recall for emergencies is not predictable. Additionally, the qualifications of the call members on recall vary often restricting their ability to respond to certain types of calls. As discussed, some call members are trained for both EMS and Fire, but many are one or the other. There are also a few that give scene support duties only.
- SERVICE GAP: Talented Call force members are being trained by Rye Fire rescue only to leave active service in Rye. Expenses include costly baseline medical examinations, firefighting certification and EMT licensing. The reason given is often to work per-diem shifts in one or more nearby communities.
- SERVICE GAP: Talented call force members do not have adequate organizational support such as policies, procedures and training. This is at least partially due to lack of administrative capacity to address these important issues on an on-going basis.

FINDING #4: Advanced Life support (ALS)

Question: What is the current status of our ALS system relative to providing top – notch ALS delivery now and in the future?

Finding: Rye fire rescue clearly delivers high quality Advanced Life support, but the system is at risk.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- The benefits of our system include the ability to place highly trained Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTA's) as well as Paramedics on the scene of most medical emergencies received and appropriately dispatched in the Town of Rye.
- Rye Fire Rescue members are community oriented. Members are also regarded by our patients as compassionate and capable. Evidence of this is contained within our independent 100% patient satisfaction survey results.
- **SERVICE RISK:** Rye Fire rescue currently has 4 paramedic level members. There is one on each of 4 shifts. Paramedics are also hard to recruit in this area and nationally. It will be important to maintain an optimum level of 6 paramedic level providers. This will allow us to provide a minimum of one per shift even after a retirement or resignation.
- **SERVICE GAP:** Critical procedures for our sickest patients often take longer than necessary due to 2-person shift staffing. A third clinical person quickly on scene would greatly speed up this process and benefit the patient. This was confirmed by our medical director Dr. Wallus.
- **SERVICE GAP:** There is often no members left in town to respond to a second medical emergency. nearly 11% of Rye's calls for emergency response overlap with existing calls. A third clinical person would often be available for quick initial response to the second emergency call. This fast initial response is critical for very sick patients and important whether we can staff our second ambulance for the call or need mutual aid.

FINDING #5: Adequacy of our Delivery Model

Question: Is our current fire and EMS service delivery model adequate? If not, what should our fire and EMS service delivery model look like?

Finding: No. Our response model needs to change. Rye Fire rescue currently makes good use of the areas mutual aid system. This is good but our INITIAL response to most emergencies is inadequate. A three-person staffing of fire apparatus are the minimum practical standard throughout the country. Arriving at any fire response without being able to fill out all 3 engine company positions keeps us from performing critical evolutions needed to mitigate the emergency and is an unacceptable safety risk.

- **SERVICE GAP:** Rye Fire rescue's current response model is as follows:
 - One station
 - Operational staffing of 2 members per shift
 - Administrative staffing of 1 Fire Chief
 - Call Force of maximum of 15 authorized positions.
- Rye Fire rescues future model should ensure a three-person shift and adequate administrative capacity to provide the needed operational, training and organization support. This is a customer driven change that will enhance the long term survivability, treatment and overall delivery care of our patients. The future model should look like this:
 - One station
 - Operational staffing of 3 members per shift (the additional member could be full-time or per-diem)
 - Administrative staffing of 1 Fire chief and 1 Deputy Chief
 - Call force of maximum 15 authorized positions

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

In addition to providing critical help at our emergency scenes, this proposed change to our response model will also allow us to save wear and tear on our more expensive fire apparatus and ambulances because they will no longer need to go out on the routine inspections, fire drills etc. Many but not all, of the simpler service calls can be completed without need for recall.

VI. STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1: Minimum of Three Members on each shift

The goal here is to raise the staffing level of the department to a **minimum of three members per shift**. This will have a major positive impact on our documented operational weaknesses and service gaps. These resulting improvements include:

- Basic Medical Emergencies:
 - There will be an additional EMT on hand to help with Clinical assistance
 - During the 60-90 minute hospital transport turn around time the third member will be available for first due response to a second emergency call. nearly 11% of our emergency calls overlap an ongoing incident.
- Critical ALS Level Medical Emergencies:
 - There will immediately be an additional member to help with a multitude of urgent procedures such as:
 - Providing medications
 - Managing patients airway
 - IV access issues
- Motor Vehicle Accidents:
 - With a third member on shift we will:
 - be available to start initial patient treatment on that second or third patient.
 - Have early use of extrication tools such a Jaws of Life and air bags.
 - Have early access to fuel spill control equipment
 - Be able to act early on vehicle fire precautions such as disconnecting batteries and hose line placement.
- Fire Alarms and Fire Responses:
 - A third shift member here rectifies a critical service gap and serious safety hazard:
 - With a third shift member we will have someone to run the pump on the fire truck while the hose line is taken into the building and operated. This will ensure a predictable water supply for the inside firefighters. This is important position on both Fire alarm and actual fire calls.
 - This will also create safe minimum staffing for our members when they respond to fires in other communities on mutual aid.
 - Solves a huge safety and liability issue for firefighters, residents and town.
- Jetski 1 and water operations:
 - This also solves a safety issue. With a third shift member we can staff the jet ski for rescues and have someone to initiate the initial land based coordination needed to:

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- Coordinate with Coast Guard, Marine Patrol, and rescue boats such as Portsmouth and Hampton.
 - Coordinate with land based mutual aid such as ambulances, Ocean rescue swimmers heading into the scene.
 - Coordinate search of shore for a victim.
 - Keep in touch with Jetski 1 crew to provide additional needed resources and as a safety should the crew need help.
- Ambulance VS Engine availability: A third shift member will enable the correct truck to respond immediately to an emergency incident without a potential trip back to the station to exchange vehicles. This corrects what has not been a rare occurrence and substantially increases safety margins for our residents as well as our members.

Administrative Weaknesses also Improve:

- A third shift member will help reduce wear and tear on our expensive ambulance: The ambulance will no-longer have to be used for virtually all inspections and other routine travel which incurs additional maintenance costs and impacts long-term serviceability of the vehicle. Many routine inspections and other travel will be done in a pick-up truck thus saving the cost of more fuel and expensive brakes, tires etc. The odometer on the ambulance will slow down resulting in a longer service life for the vehicle.
- A third shift member means there will be more availability to the public at the station: Our customer service suffers when there is no staff at the station. While not the total answer, this will greatly help to reduce our public complaints. More often will there be staff to answer the door or take a phone call for
 - Request for permits
 - Plans review
 - Requests for site inspections

RECOMMENDATION #1: IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

The following are several implementation options that will allow the fire department to meet the staffing levels necessary for Rye Fire Rescue to provide the service that the citizens of Rye expect and are entitled to. In developing these implementation options we attempted to balance the ideal and often more expensive option for a more reasonable value-driven solution:

Option #1:

Hire **three new fulltime Firefighter/EMT's** and place one on each two-person shift raising the staffing level from the current complement of two members to three members per shift.

While hiring 3 full-time firefighter-EMT's is the optimal operational answer the financial implication to this option is substantial due to benefit and retirement costs. Full-time personnel are more stable in that the

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

training you invest in them is typically rewarded with a longer-term commitment. Approximate cost of hiring 3 full-time firefighters is as follows:

- Three firefighter/EMT's starting salary with retirement etc: \$240,240
- Three firefighter/EMT's family health insurance 2021 rates: \$119,088
- Overtime created by additional vacation/per: \$17,388
- Three sets turnout gear at \$2400 each: \$ 7,200

TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #1 \$383,916
Total 2021 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$195,558

Option #2:

Hire enough **new part-time 'per-diem' Firefighter/EMT's** needed to place one on each two-person shift raising the staffing level from the current complement of two members to three members per shift.

Hiring part-time 'per-diem' firefighter EMT's has advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is that the retention of a per-diem employee will vary more than a full-time employee. The per-diem may be there for a longer duration or until they find a full time position elsewhere. There will have to be more effort placed in recruiting per-diem employees. Using per-diem employees will help to retain some of our call force members as they are obvious candidates for that position. The financial impact of this option is much less than option 1. We will budget the number of hours the three shifts that currently have two members work in 1 year as follows:

- There are 2,184 Per-diem hours per shift per year. 3 shifts needing per-diem coverage equals 6,552 total hours at \$24/hr. Include fica annual cost: \$169,828
- Plan for 6 sets of turnout gear at \$2,400 each: \$14,400

TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #2 \$184,228
Total 2021 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$99,314

Option #3:

Hire enough **new part-time 'per-diem' Firefighter/EMT's** needed to place a third member on one two-person shift in 2021 raising the staffing level from the current complement of two members to three members on one shift. In 2022 fund the remaining hours required to bring all remaining shifts up to 3 members.

Hiring part-time 'per-diem' firefighter EMT's has advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is that the retention of a per-diem employee will vary more than a full-time employee. The per-diem may be there for a longer duration or until they find a full time position elsewhere. There will have to be more effort placed in recruiting per-diem employees. Using per-diem employees will help to retain some of our call force members as they are obvious candidates for that position. The overall financial impact is like option 2 however the impact is spread over two budget years.

2021: we will budget to bring one shift up to 3 members from July 1-December 31, 2021:

- There are 2,184 hours per shift per year at \$24/hr add FICA: \$56,609
- Two sets turnout gear (some may have Rye turnout gear): \$4,800

TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #1 Year 1 \$61,409
Total 2021 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$33,104

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

2022: We will carry over 2021 annual cost less turnout gear cost. We will then budget to bring remaining 2 shifts up to three members.

- 4,368 hours to bring remaining 2 shifts up to 3 members add FICA: \$113,218
 - New Funding for remaining 6 months of year 1 \$28,304
 - Four sets turnout gear (some may have Rye turnout gear): \$9,600
- TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #1 Year 2 \$151,122
Total 2022 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$94,513

Option #4:

Hire enough **new part-time ‘per-diem’ Firefighter/EMT’s** needed to place a third member on one two-person shift in 2021 raising the staffing level from the current complement of two members to three members on one shift. Repeat this process in 2022 and 2023 at which time all shifts will be funded at three members. Each newly funded shift coverage will start July first of that year.

Hiring part-time ‘per-diem’ firefighter EMT’s has advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage is that the retention of a per-diem employee will vary more than a full-time employee. The per-diem may be there for a longer duration or until they find a full-time position elsewhere. There will have to be more effort placed in recruiting per-diem employees. Using per-diem employees will help to retain some of our call force members as they are obvious candidates for that position. The overall financial impact is like option 2 however the impact is spread over three budget years.

2021: we will budget to bring one shift up to 3 members from July 1-December 31, 2021:

- There are 2,184 hours per shift per year at \$24/hr add FICA: \$56,609
 - Two sets turnout gear (some may have Rye turnout gear): \$4,800
- TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #4 Year 1 \$61,409
Total 2021 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$33,104

2022: We will carry over 2021 annual cost less turnout gear cost. We will then budget to bring remaining 2 shifts up to three members.

- 2,184 hours to bring one shift up to 3 members add FICA: \$56,609
 - New Funding for remaining 6 months of year 1 \$28,304
 - Two sets turnout gear (some may have Rye turnout gear): \$4,800
- TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #4 Year 2 \$89,713
Total 2022 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$61,409

2023: We will carry over 2022 annual cost less turnout gear cost. We will then budget to bring remaining 2 shifts up to three members.

- 2,184 hours to bring one shift up to 3 members add FICA: \$56,609
 - New Funding for remaining 6 months of year 2 \$28,304
 - Two sets turnout gear (some may have Rye turnout gear): \$4,800
- TOTAL ANNUAL COST OPTION #4 Year 3 \$89,713
Total 2023 budget impact start July 1-December 31: \$61,409

Option #5: Do not fund this recommendation. This is the least favorable option. All service gaps remain in place. Environmental trending continues to influence service gaps.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

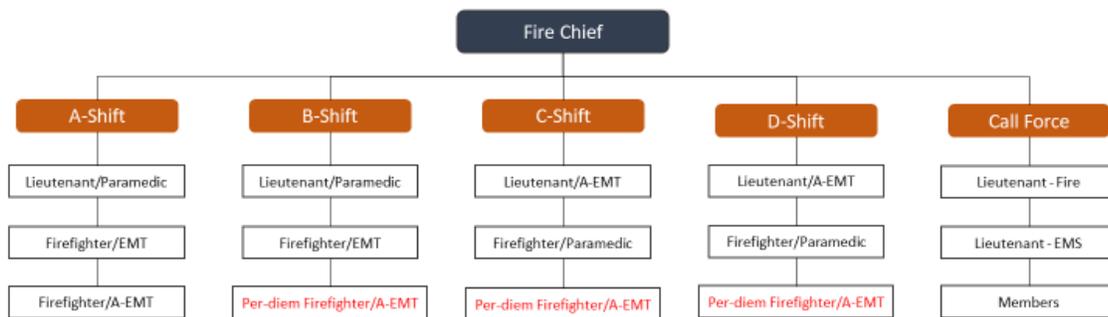
Recommended Option: Per-Diem coverage makes most sense.

The worst choice we can make here is Option 5 to do nothing. We have significant service gaps which can be vastly improved. We owe this to our residents and guests. While the optimal choice from an operational and system perspective is clearly option 1, the costs are substantially more than the other options. The best value from an economic and overall risk-benefit perspective is to fill the needed shift coverage with per-diem part-time coverage. This does not come without risk, however. As noted elsewhere in this report per-diem coverage is used to fill shift gaps in many communities surrounding Rye such as Greenland, Newcastle and Newington. Communities who have this system in place deal with per-diem members leaving more often for full-time jobs although some stay for various reasons. Recruitment and retention efforts need to be maintained. Per-diem members would however be adequately trained and certified. We must remember that we will have to monitor the success of this per-diem system and make adjustments as we go as system coverage under this model certainly is not perfect. In the beginning of this report we talked about a value-driven approach. Using this approach per-diem coverage should be tried. Sample Job Description in Appendix B.

There are 3 options for implementing the needed per-diem shifts. Option 2 takes care of the operational coverage in one year however the impact to the budget is substantial. Option 3 spreads the impact over two years. Option four is the easiest to absorb into the annual budget process being implemented over three years. We look forward to discussing what option works best given Ryes overall budget considerations. After completion of this recommendation our organizational chart will look like this:



Proposed Organizational Chart – 3 per shift



*Red fields indicate new positions

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

RECOMMENDATION #2: Improvements in the Call Force

The goal here is to improve conditions within the call force. As was noted in the Fire Chiefs introductory letter many of the identified issues confirmed through the work of Chief Landry were not a surprise. It is true that there is a national, documented, systemic issue with recruiting and retaining call force members. It is also true that the call force is an important part of Rye Fire Rescues service model. Positive, practical changes that can be reasonably made to better the call force should be pursued. The challenge we will have is the documented lack of administrative capacity in Rye Fire Rescue. There is much in the identified service gaps that can be addressed.

Recommendations:

1. Per-Diem coverage: This recommendation noted above will help call member retainage by giving qualified call force members the opportunity to work per-diem shifts here in Rye instead of taking their talent and Rye's training efforts (and monies) to other communities.
2. Rank Structure within the call force needs more direction. We propose:
 - a. One Fire LT position. New job description will be developed for this position. (7/1/21)
 - b. One EMS LT position reporting to the EMS Coordinator. This would be a new position within the call department and would recognize the portion of the call force who are EMS only. Job description would be developed for this position. (7/1/21)
3. Update call force policies and procedures. This would be an on-going participatory process. Have basic policies updated by EOY 2021. Establish an on-going policy training and review process.
4. Training: Pursue new ways to incorporate the call force training into Rye Fire rescues overall training system.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Maintain Paramedic Coverage

The goal here is to ensure we can maintain at least one paramedic on each shift. Paramedics are hard to recruit due to a local and national shortage. Paramedic school is approximately 16 months long at a cost of approximately \$13,000 and \$3,500 in needed shift coverage due to classes. It is important that we continue to recruit and train paramedic level providers wherever possible.

Recommendation: Maintain a roster of 6 paramedic level providers with the goal of ensuring one provider per shift throughout personnel changes and injuries.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Deputy Fire Chief

The Rye fire Chief is the only administrative employee of Rye Fire Rescue. There is no administrative assistant necessitating that those duties fall on the fire chief. In the past three years Rye Fire Rescue has moved ahead in many ways; implementing new programs, training, policies and procedures etc. We continue to move ahead however the workload on the fire chief makes it impossible to keep operations, fire prevention and all administrative functions efficient and effective while conducting other business usual to the chief. Documented additional duties assigned to our fire officers leaves little room for expansion. A Deputy Chief or other number two is a usual component of an effective fire EMS

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

organization. In fact, out of 21 communities were surveyed only 3, including Rye, do not have some sort of Deputy Chief position under the Fire chief. Sample Job Description in Appendix C.

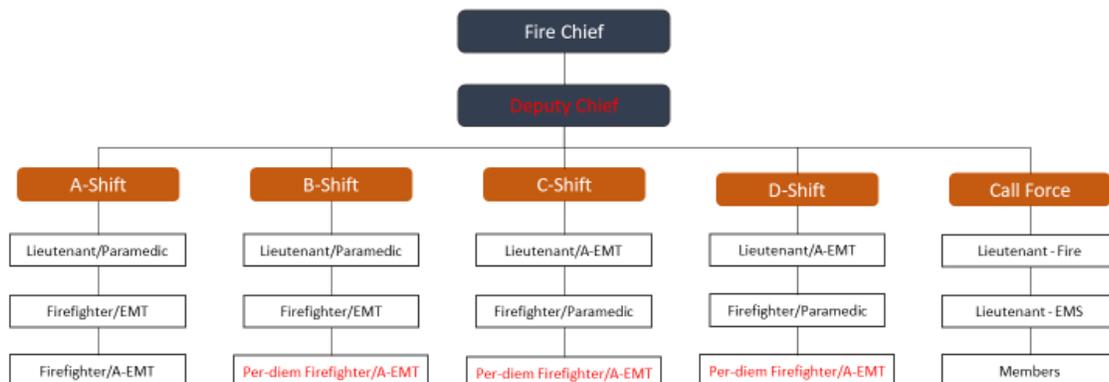
Benefits:

- Provides a possible succession plan for Rye Fire Chief.
- Provides for seamless back-up to the fire chief should the chief be away for any length of time. A good example would be if the Fire Chief becomes incapacitated by our current pandemic virus. Another example would be if the chief is on vacation.
- Provides continuity of leadership between shifts. This results in various projects moving along at a smoother pace, more cohesive training, more effective and consistent reinforcement of policies, SOG's and procedures.

Recommendation: We are recommending filling the long-vacant (1992) Rye Deputy Chief position. This position should not be filled until each Rye shift is staffed at three members (recommendation 1). After completion of this recommendation Rye Fire Rescues organizational chart will look like this:



Proposed Organizational Chart – 3 per shift with Deputy Chief



*Red fields indicate new positions

VII. OTHER EMS STRATEGIC ISSUES

Delivery of EMS in the Future:

Today more than 80 percent of fire departments perform some level of emergency medical services (EMS), making professional fire fighters the largest group of providers of pre-hospital emergency care in North America. In 1996, the 30th anniversary of the emergency medical service industry, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) looked at the status of EMS nationwide, developed a vision for the future of EMS, and published findings in “EMS Agenda for the Future” (available through the U.S. Government Printing Office). NHTSA predicts that EMS systems of the future will be community-based health management systems that are fully integrated with the overall health care system. NHTSA also states that the future EMS systems will have the capability to identify and reduce illness and injury risks through prevention, provide acute illness and injury care and follow-up, assist in the treatment of chronic conditions outside hospitals, and provide community health monitoring. It is projected that EMS will be further integrated with other health care providers, as well as public health and public safety agencies. EMS providers will improve community health and bring about more appropriate use of acute health care resources like the hospital emergency departments.

Rye Fire Rescue will play a major role in implementing this documented national EMS vision and agenda of the future. The fire department EMS based delivery system will be a customer driven EMS system. The Federal EMS Act of 1973 defined an EMS system as “an entity that provides for the arrangement of personnel, facilities, and equipment for the effective and coordinated delivery of health care services under emergency conditions in an appropriate geographic area” (EMS Act 1973, (P.L. 93-154).

Rye fire Rescue fire service-based EMS system will provide this important pivotal public safety service while also emphasizing responder safety, competent and compassionate workers, and cost-effective operations. Rye Fire rescue will implement this new customer driven EMS system by delivering time critical response and effective patient care, while emphasizing responder safety, competent and compassionate employees, and a cost effective drive mission of operations.

Rye fire Rescue will accomplish this with:

1. Appropriate cost-effective apparatus staffing and budgeting procedures.
2. Continue to strive to enhance the delivery of our basic life and advanced life support services.
3. Thorough appropriate data collection methods identifying EMS related problems that affect the community and develop appropriate prevention programs to formally address these identified issues.

Rye Fire Rescue Operational Changes

This Community Driven Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan will address the issues or problems the department may face in the fire department today, and will face in the foreseeable future. If through this dynamic process we can identify the appropriate EMS strategic issues the department will face, the appropriate strategies will be implemented correctly to address the identified operational issues.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Therefore, the Rye fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Planning process can be thought of as a process designed to identify those big-picture issues that the department is facing now and in an undefined future. Dr. John Bryson, author of *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, describes strategic planning as “organized common sense.” Strategic plans provide guidance and direction. Specific plans explaining how to solve a problem or what to do about a particular situation involve creating tactical plans or operational plans. Operational plans should be SMART. SMART is an acronym designed to suggest that operational plans are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-oriented, and Time-limited. For emergency incidents, we usually call them tactical plans. For management or nonemergency purposes, we refer to them as operational plans.

Based on the documented findings discovered in this Community Driven Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Planning process Rye fire rescue must continue the on-going process of self-assessment to identify future operational changes to ensure that it continues to meet and exceed community customer service expectations at a reasonable cost.

VIII. FUTURE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

Development of a **Five Year Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan** was the first step for the Strategic Planning Committee. The second step for Rye fire Rescue is the Strategic Management of the Five-Year Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan.

We will maintain the Strategic Plan and advance the identified documented strategic goals. We will ensure that the Strategic Plan advances forward and to ensure it remains a significant guiding organizational document for Rye Fire Rescue.

We will have a responsibility to keep the Department working towards the accomplishment of its documented Fire EMS strategic goals. Rye Fire rescue members should cooperate through teamwork in the strategic management of the plan. Department leaders should remain continuously aware of the Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan, and be proactive in implementing the strategies for the next five (5) years.

We will focus on the progress towards desired end results. It will need to continually assess the environment and determine if strategic adjustments are necessary. When warranted, operational plans may need to be revised depending on the climate, budget and unforeseen circumstances that may appear as obstacles.

We will measure results and consistently asking the following questions: is operational planning and decision making achieving the desired results? Is the Department adhering to its core values, mission and strategic goals? Are the objectives of each strategic goal being achieved?

Management of the Five-Year Staffing Needs Assessment Strategic Plan should be a team effort by all the members of Rye Fire Rescue. Members of the Rye fire rescue should be encouraged to interject their innovations and creativity towards achieving quality results.

APPENDIX A:

DRAFT ONLY



RYE FIRE DEPARTMENT VITAL SIGNS REPORT

SURVEYS RECEIVED 7-1-2020 THROUGH 9-30-2020

Feedback
Innovations

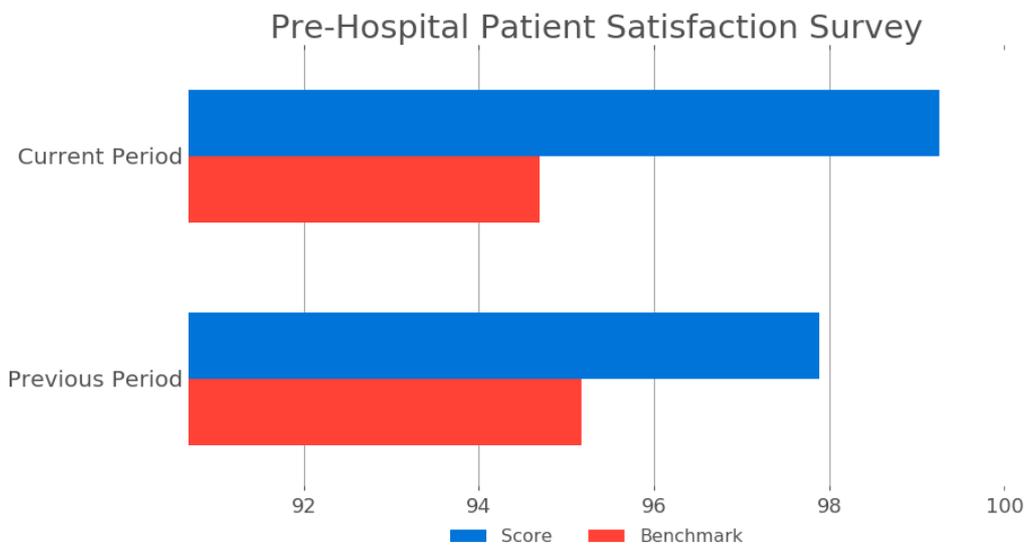
P.O. Box 100,
Andover MA 01810
(844) 340-6060
Feedback-Innovations.com

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RYE FIRE DEPARTMENT received a total of 11 responses for this period. The highest rated section was *Communication*, with a total score of 100.0. The lowest rated section was *Billing*, with a total score of 96.67.

- The Communication section had a 2.4% increase in *Ambulance staff's concern for your privacy La preocupación del personal del ambulancia en cuanto a su privacidad*.
- The Billing section had a 0.0% increase in *Responsiveness of billing personnel to billing issues Capacidad de respuesta a los problemas de facturación*. This may be a focus for further improvement.
- Percentile ranking this period is upper 5.13%.

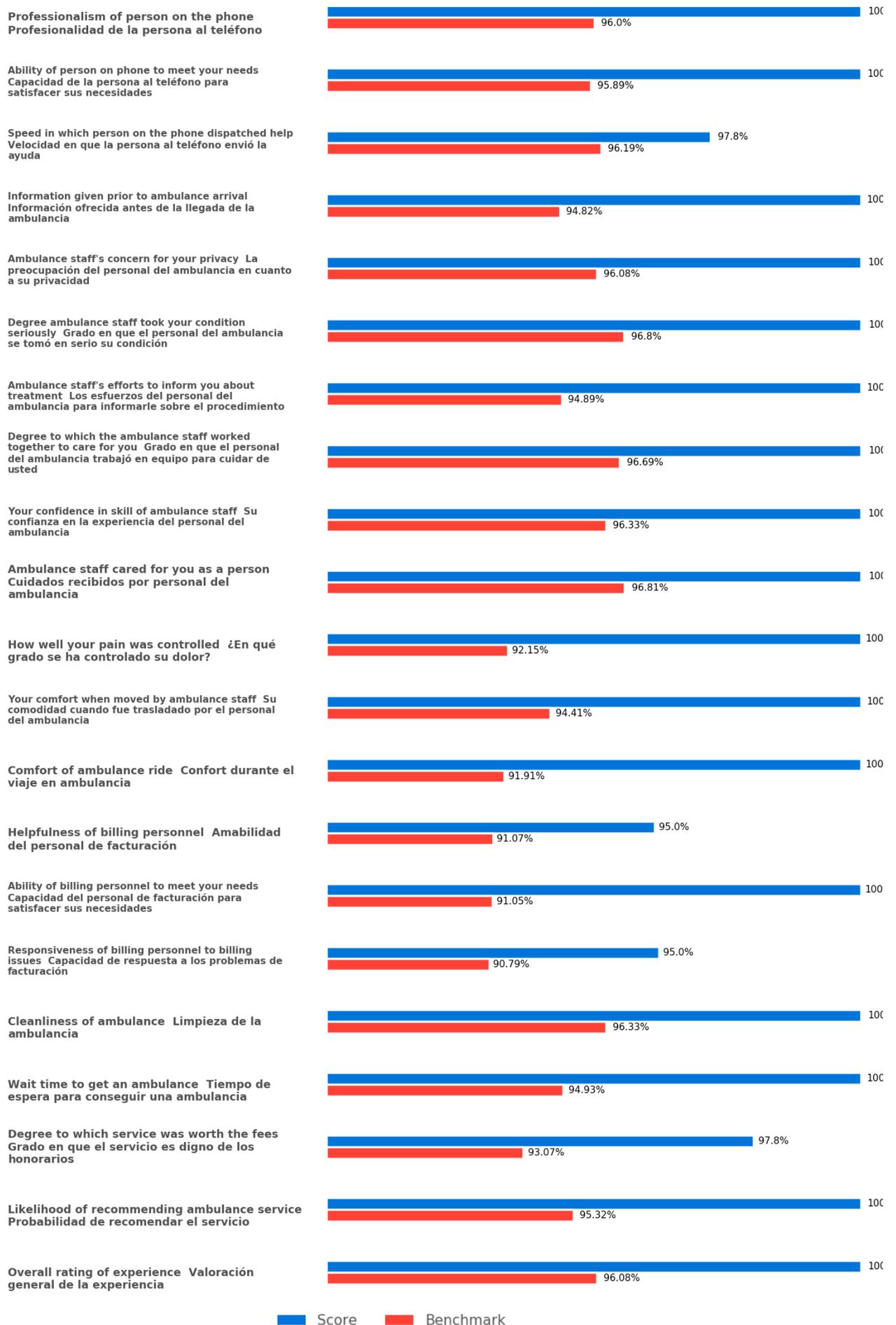
Cumulative Score: **99.26**



	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	97.89	99.26
Benchmark	95.17	94.69

The benchmark is the mean average of all responses for all services in the Feedback Innovations database.

VITAL SIGNS PATIENT SATISFACTION REPORT



Score Benchmark

2.0 IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY RANKING

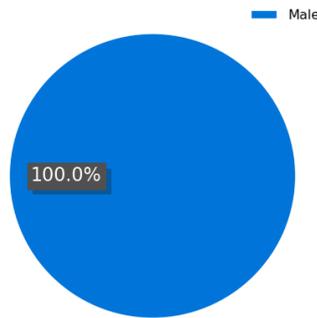
Rank	Question
1	Professionalism of person on the phone Profesionalidad de la persona al teléfono
2	Ability of person on phone to meet your needs Capacidad de la persona al teléfono para satisfacer sus necesidades
3	Speed in which person on the phone dispatched help Velocidad en que la persona al teléfono envió la ayuda
4	Information given prior to ambulance arrival Información ofrecida antes de la llegada de la ambulancia
5	Helpfulness of billing personnel Amabilidad del personal de facturación
6	Ability of billing personnel to meet your needs Capacidad del personal de facturación para satisfacer sus necesidades
7	Responsiveness of billing personnel to billing issues Capacidad de respuesta a los problemas de facturación
8	Cleanliness of ambulance Limpieza de la ambulancia
9	Wait time to get an ambulance Tiempo de espera para conseguir una ambulancia
10	Degree to which service was worth the fees Grado en que el servicio es digno de los honorarios
11	Likelihood of recommending ambulance service Probabilidad de recomendar el servicio
12	Ambulance staff's concern for your privacy La preocupación del personal del ambulancia en cuanto a su privacidad
13	Degree ambulance staff took your condition seriously Grado en que el personal del ambulancia se tomó en serio su condición
14	Ambulance staff's efforts to inform you about treatment Los esfuerzos del personal del ambulancia para informarle sobre el procedimiento
15	Degree to which the ambulance staff worked together to care for you Grado en que el personal del ambulancia trabajó en equipo para cuidar de usted
16	Comfort of ambulance ride Confort durante el viaje en ambulancia
17	Your confidence in skill of ambulance staff Su confianza en la experiencia del personal del ambulancia
18	Ambulance staff cared for you as a person Cuidados recibidos por personal del ambulancia
19	How well your pain was controlled ¿En qué grado se ha controlado su dolor?
20	Your comfort when moved by ambulance staff Su comodidad cuando fue trasladado por el personal del ambulancia
21	Ability of person on phone to meet your needs
22	Wait time to get an ambulance
23	Professionalism of person on the phone
24	Staff respected patient privacy
25	Staff's ability to understand patient's medical condition

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3.0 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Respondents (2 Total)



Respondents (2 Total)

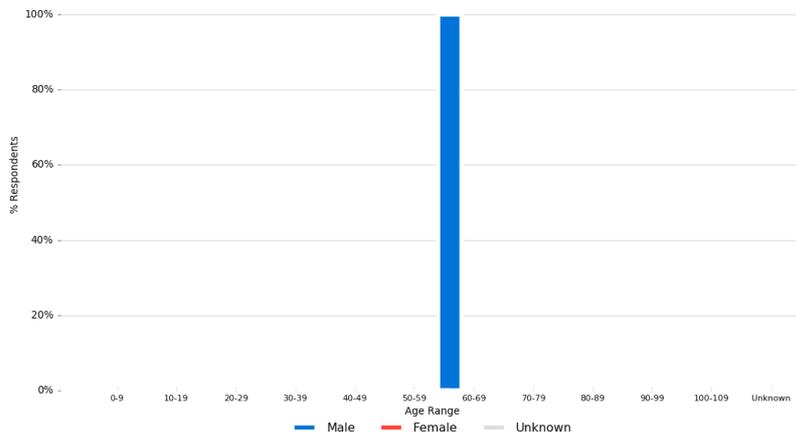


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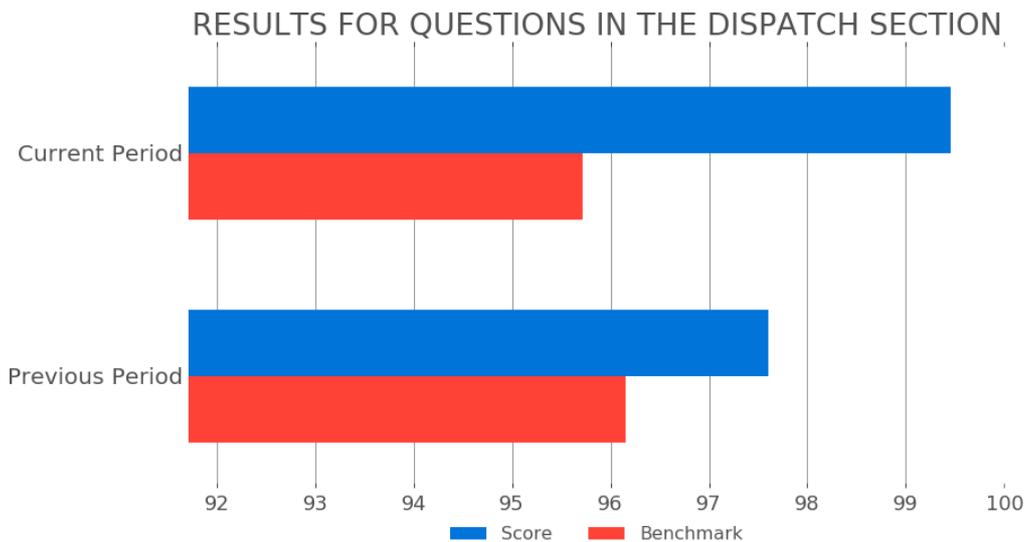
4.0 SECTIONS

4.1 Dispatch

Percentile ranking this period is upper 3.95%.

The Dispatch section showed a 1.85% increase overall from Previous Period to Current Period, with a total score of **99.45**. Drilling down by question for the Dispatch section:

- There was a 2.4% increase for *Professionalism of person on the phone Profesionalidad de la persona al teléfono*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Ability of person on phone to meet your needs Capacidad de la persona al teléfono para satisfacer sus necesidades*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 0.2% increase for *Speed in which person on the phone dispatched help Velocidad en que la persona al teléfono envió la ayuda*, with a score of 97.8.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Information given prior to ambulance arrival Información ofrecida antes de la llegada de la ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.



	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	97.6	99.45
Benchmark	96.15	95.72

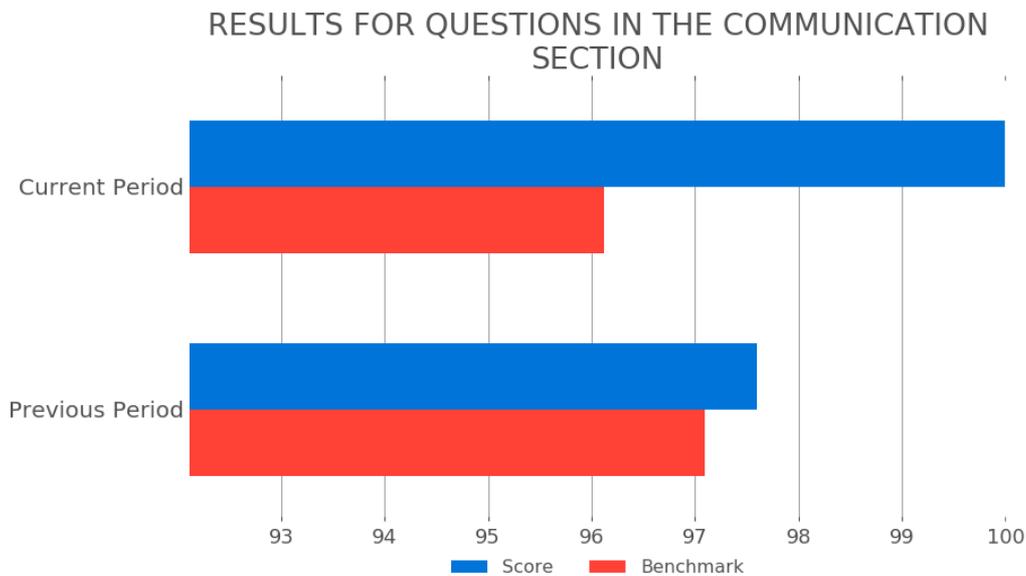
4.2 Communication

Percentile ranking this period is upper 3.85%.

The Communication section showed a 2.4% increase overall from Previous Period to Current Period, with a total score of **100.0**

. Drilling down by question for the Communication section:

- There was a 2.4% increase for *Ambulance staff's concern for your privacy* *La preocupación del personal del ambulancia en cuanto a su privacidad*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Degree ambulance staff took your condition seriously* *Grado en que el personal del ambulancia se tomó en serio su condición*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Ambulance staff's efforts to inform you about treatment* *Los esfuerzos del personal del ambulancia para informarle sobre el procedimiento*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Degree to which the ambulance staff worked together to care for you* *Grado en que el personal del ambulancia trabajó en equipo para cuidar de usted*, with a score of 100.0.



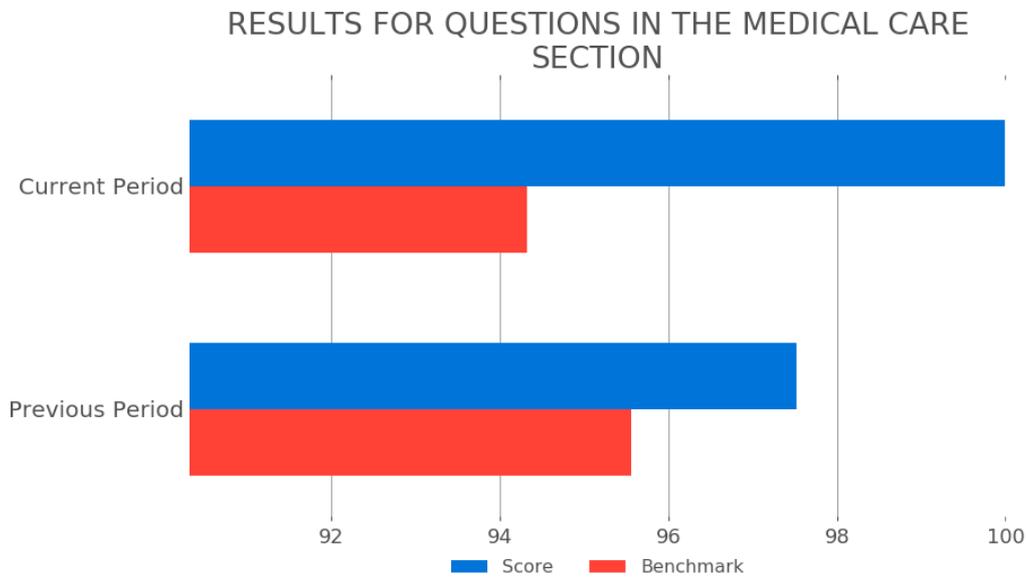
	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	97.6	100.0
Benchmark	97.1	96.12

4.3 Medical Care

Percentile ranking this period is upper 3.85%.

The Medical Care section showed a 2.48% increase overall from Previous Period to Current Period, with a total score of **100.0**. Drilling down by question for the Medical Care section:

- There was a 2.4% increase for *Your confidence in skill of ambulance staff Su confianza en la experiencia del personal del ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Ambulance staff cared for you as a person Cuidados recibidos por personal del ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.8% increase for *How well your pain was controlled ¿En qué grado se ha controlado su dolor?*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Your comfort when moved by ambulance staff Su comodidad cuando fue trasladado por el personal del ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 2.4% increase for *Comfort of ambulance ride Confort durante el viaje en ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.



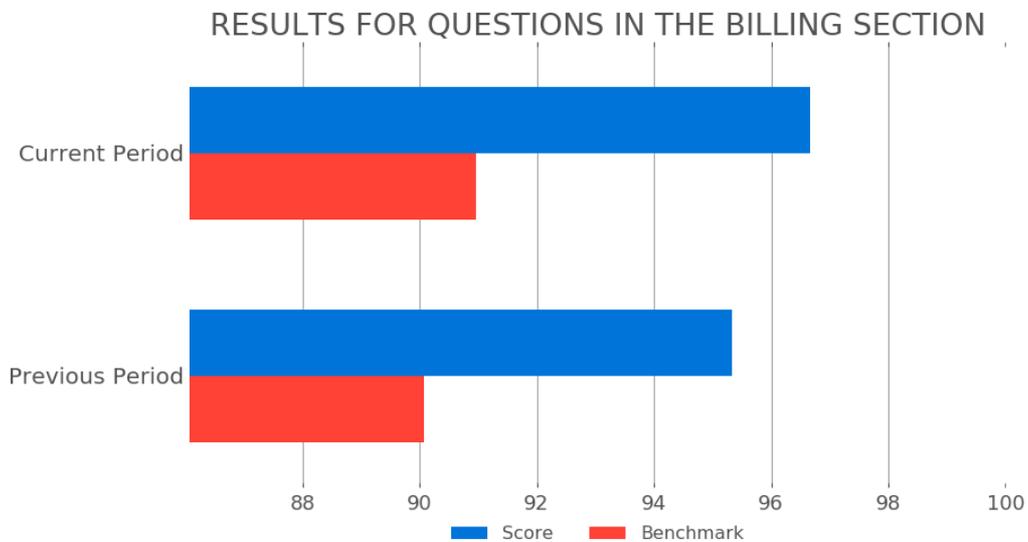
	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	97.52	100.0
Benchmark	95.56	94.32

4.4 Billing

Percentile ranking this period is upper 8.97%.

The Billing section showed a 1.33% increase overall from Previous Period to Current Period, with a total score of **96.67**. Drilling down by question for the Billing section:

- There was a 1.0% decrease for *Helpfulness of billing personnel Amabilidad del personal de facturación*, with a score of 95.0.
- There was a 5.0% increase for *Ability of billing personnel to meet your needs Capacidad del personal de facturación para satisfacer sus necesidades*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 0.0% increase for *Responsiveness of billing personnel to billing issues Capacidad de respuesta a los problemas de facturación*, with a score of 95.0.



	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	95.33	96.67
Benchmark	90.08	90.97

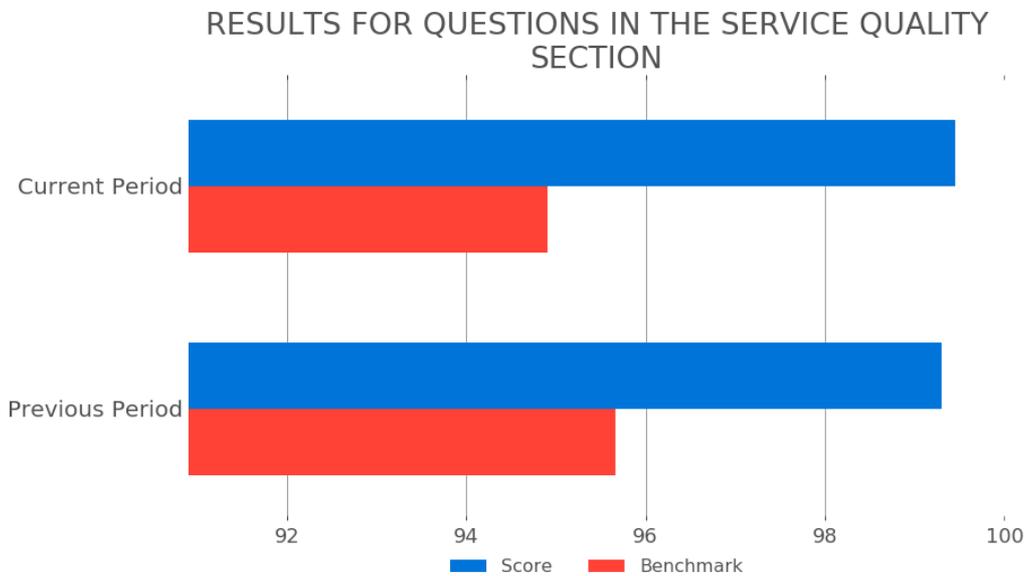
4.5 Service Quality

Percentile ranking this period is upper 5.13%.

The Service Quality section showed a 0.15% increase overall from Previous Period to Current Period, with a total score of **99.45**

. Drilling down by question for the Service Quality section:

- There was a 0.0% increase for *Cleanliness of ambulance Limpieza de la ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 0.0% increase for *Wait time to get an ambulance Tiempo de espera para conseguir una ambulancia*, with a score of 100.0.
- There was a 0.6% increase for *Degree to which service was worth the fees Grado en que el servicio es digno de los honorarios*, with a score of 97.8.
- There was a 0.0% increase for *Likelihood of recommending ambulance service Probabilidad de recomendar el servicio*, with a score of 100.0.



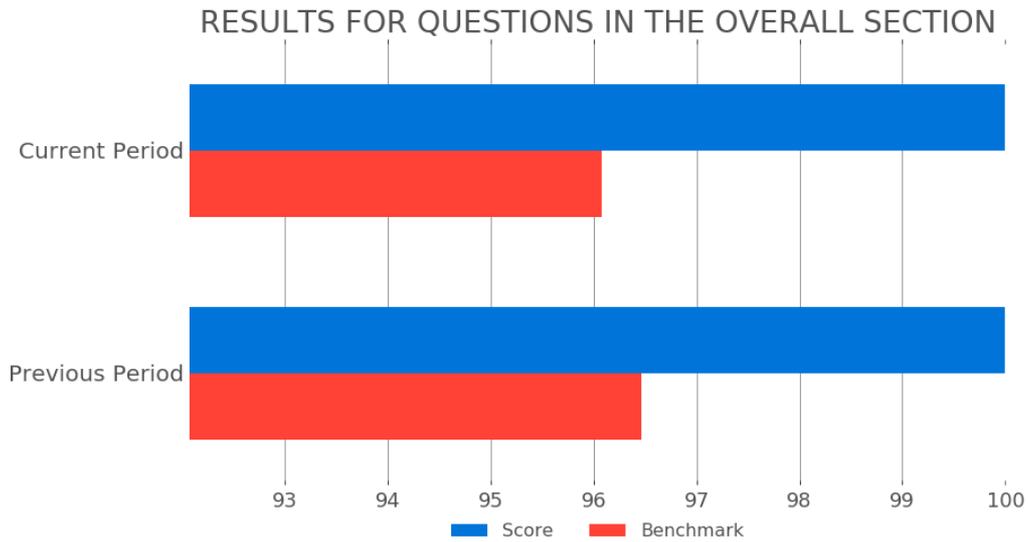
	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	99.3	99.45
Benchmark	95.67	94.91

4.6 Overall

Percentile ranking this period is upper 5.13%.

The Overall section showed a 0.0% increase overall from Previous Period to Current Period, with a total score of **100.0**. Drilling down by question for the Overall section:

- There was a 0.0% increase for *Overall rating of experience Valoración general de la experiencia*, with a score of 100.0.



	Previous Period	Current Period
Score	100.0	100.0
Benchmark	96.47	96.08

APPENDIX B

Job Description

Per-Diem Shift Employee

Purpose

The purpose of this position is to protect life and property by performing firefighting, emergency aid, hazardous materials, and fire prevention duties for the Stow Fire Department and other related work as required. The Per-Diem Firefighter is responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control.

Supervision Scope

Performs highly responsible duties; makes decisions which involve choices of action within limits defined by standard practices and instructions.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Supervision Received: Works under the general direction of the Fire Chief or the On-Duty Call Lieutenant in conformance with departmental regulations and professional standards including the incident command system. Employee refers all unusual cases to supervisor.

Supervision Given: May supervise other department members as a team leader

Duties & Responsibilities

- Responds to fire and medical and other types of emergency conditions as directed. to assist in combating and extinguishing fires; performs firefighting activities utilizing fire hose, heavy stream appliances and extinguishers, and ladders; ventilates burning buildings, using forcible entry tools, if necessary; enters burning buildings to evacuate and rescue persons in danger and control fire. Protects fire-damaged property by deploying salvage covers, removing excess water and debris, and securing buildings against inclement weather and trespassers.
- Conducts rescue operations including technical rescue situations utilizing department equipment and tools as necessary. Administers emergency medical care whenever indicated or requested. Assists in packaging patients that are going to be transported by ambulance to a hospital.
- Responds to and assists in the control and mitigation of hazardous materials emergencies. Responds to and assists in controlling the effects of environmental emergencies, i.e. earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, etc., including performing rescues and evacuations.
- Is capable of administering emergency medical care as per the department SOG's. Performs emergency rescue operations and extrication work at emergency accident scenes.
- Assists under the direction of a senior officer and/or Arson investigator in investigating the cause and origin of fires and explosions.
- Cleans, maintains, repairs and tests fire apparatus and equipment, and fire hose; maintains clean and orderly condition of fire station and performs minor maintenance, repairs, housekeeping and grounds keeping duties around the station.
- Attends drills and training classes in firefighting, rescue, emergency medical work, operation of fire apparatus and other related subjects

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- Assists in preparing and updating pre-incident plans for use by dispatch and other emergency services as requested by a senior member in charge of that operation.
- Performs public relations for the department including representing the department at local functions, local schools, and giving station tours.
- Regular attendance and punctuality at the workplace is required.
- Performs similar or related work as required, directed or as situation dictates.

Minimum Qualifications

- Internal or external Firefighter I/II training
- Nationally Registered Emergency Medical Technician
- Attendance to the Structural Firefighting Practice
- Completion of the XXX Fire Apparatus Operator & Shift Sign Off Manual

Recommended Qualifications

- Firefighter I/II Certification
- Recruit Training
- ICS & NIMS certifications

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and the employee. It is used as a guide for personnel and is subject to change by the employer as needed.

APPENDIX C

Deputy Fire Chief

Department: Fire
Reports To: Fire Chief
Appointed by: Select Board

Salary Grade:
Salary Range:

GENERAL SUMMARY:

- ◆ Under the general direction of the Fire Chief, assists with managing the delivery of Fire and EMS services for the Town of Rye; serves as the head of the Fire Department in the absence of the Fire Chief, and as such commands, controls, and manages the entire Department. Performs highly responsible work assisting the Fire Chief in leading and managing the delivery of Fire Suppression, Fire Prevention, Rescue, EMS, Hazardous Materials, Emergency and Disaster management services.
- ◆ The Deputy Fire Chief exhibits a strong, continuing commitment to the community of Rye and the Fire Department's mission, philosophy, goals, and objectives. Deputy Fire Chief assists the Fire Chief in keeping all losses of life and property due to fire to a minimum through fire prevention and fire suppression programs and activities. Deputy Fire Chief is responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control. Performs varied and responsible duties requiring a thorough knowledge of departmental operations and the exercise
- ◆ of judgment and initiative in completing tasks, particularly in situations not clearly defined by precedent or established procedures. Incumbent is called upon to handle a significant amount of detail, each varying from the other in substance and content, requiring incumbent to approach workload with flexibility.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- ◆ Responsible for the daily operations of the department including supervision of Lieutenants, and Firefighters.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Manages, administers, and leads prevention, inspection activities, and coordination of department programs.

Formulates departmental policies, rules, regulations, general orders, and directives, subject to the final authorization of the Fire Chief in conformance with Federal, State, County, Town Bylaws and ordinances when required.

Responsible for the implementation of new and on-going policies, procedures, regulations, and practices, including ongoing training of department staff.

Assists the Fire Chief in managing the Fire Department; assists with planning, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating fire operations; assists with establishing policies and procedures for the Fire Department..

DRAFT ONLY

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

- ◆ Assists with the planning and implementation of fire programs for the Town in order to better carry out the policies and goals; assists with reviewing departmental performance and effectiveness; formulates programs or policies to alleviate deficiencies.
- ◆ Responds to alarms and may direct and participate in activities at the scene of emergencies. Manages emergency scenes as necessary.
- ◆ Assists the Fire Chief with production of annual budgets and managing budgets; assists with preparation and presentation to the Select Board/Budget Committee of a proposed annual budget for the department and assists with directing the implementation of the department's adopted budgets; plans and reviews specifications for new or replaced equipment.
- ◆ Acts as Fire Chief in his/her absence as needed.
- ◆ Prepares and submits periodic reports and roll call updates to the Fire Chief regarding the Department's activities and operations.
- ◆ May inspect and/or supervise the inspection of buildings and other properties for fire hazards and enforces fire prevention ordinances.
- ◆ Assigns personnel to such duties as the service requires; may evaluate the need for and recommend the purchase of new equipment and supplies.
- ◆ Meets with Town officials and other fire officials, community and business representatives and the public on all aspects of the department's activities.
- ◆ Performs the duties of command personnel as needed.
- ◆ Attends trainings and meetings to keep abreast of current trends in the field; may represent the Town in a variety of local, county, State, and other meetings; serves as a member of various employee committees.
- ◆ Performs special projects and related responsibilities as initiated and requested.
- ◆ Performs other related duties as required, directed or as the situation dictates.
- ◆ Regular attendance at the workplace is required.
- ◆ **SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY:**
- ◆ Supervises the activities and performance of the department operations and provides functional oversight to Lieutenants, Firefighters, and Call Force members. Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with policies and applicable laws. Responsibilities include assisting in recruitment, interviewing, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; addressing complaints and resolving problems.

Rye Fire Rescue Staffing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE & SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ Seven to ten years of progressively responsible experience in fire or emergency medicine, including three years of supervisory experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- ◆ Valid NH CDL Driver's License required.
- ◆ Certification in Incident Command System (ICS) required.
- ◆ NH State EMT Advanced License.

◆ **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:**

Excellent interpersonal skills; ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing; ability to effectively deal with all members of the public in a courteous and tactful manner; ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with coworkers.

- ◆ Thorough knowledge of modern fire suppression and prevention and emergency medical services principles, procedures, techniques, and equipment; knowledge of first aid and resuscitation techniques and their application.
- ◆ Ability to work with a high level of detail; ability to manage time and meet deadlines, ability to prioritize multiple tasks and deal effectively with interruptions; ability to identify and analyze complex issues and to develop appropriate recommendations.

◆ **WORKING CONDITIONS & PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

Frequent and extended periods of outside work, subject to all weather conditions and extremes. Continuous walking, standing, climbing, frequent periods requiring sustained uncomfortable physical positions. Operates equipment which causes loud noises and high levels of vibrations. Exercises caution when operating heavy equipment or handling toxic chemicals or other materials. Occasionally works near moving mechanical parts and in high, precarious places and is exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, and risk of electric shock.

Operates computer, printer, video display terminal, typewriter, calculator, telephone, copier, facsimile machine, and all other standard office equipment requiring eye-hand coordination and finger dexterity. Balancing, crouching, grasping, pulling, reaching, and stooping may also be required.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to do this job. The above is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities and duties required. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

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