

Memorandum



DATE January 19, 2018

TO Honorable Members of the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee

SUBJECT **DFR Strategic Priorities**

Background/History

On Monday, January 22, 2018, you will be briefed on DFRs strategic priorities for 2018 by Fire Chief David Coatney, Dallas Fire-Rescue Department. Dallas Fire-Rescue (DFR) has worked diligently to identify department gaps, needs, and challenges over the course of the last 18 months. In Fiscal Year 2016/2017, DFR held an Executive Staff retreat where the following top priorities were outlined:

1. Improving Firefighter Safety
2. Implementation of Priority Dispatch
3. Enhancement to Officer Development training and Succession Planning
4. Full implementation of Firehouse software
5. Conduct an in-depth overtime analysis of the department
6. Improve overall EMS response across the City of Dallas.

I am happy to report that DFR made significant progress on all the priorities, but there is more work to do.

Safety programs and officer development training will remain our highest focus, thus ensuring that all newly promoted officers have the training and necessary skills to perform their roles and further our ultimate goal of keeping our personnel safe in the unforgiving environment in which firefighters work.

Priority Dispatch has been implemented and is being monitored to determine what adjustments are necessary in our response standards. The program helps to prioritize which unit(s) to send to various calls and at what level of response. In November 2017, DFR began a soft launch of the program and has been evaluating the software and adjusting as needed. We anticipate full implementation of the system in March 2018.

Firehouse software, which is used to schedule and track fire prevention and inspection activities, has not been fully implemented yet, but we are optimistic that it will be implemented in the first quarter of CY2018.

DFR has been conducting an overtime analysis and reviewing various staffing procedures to more closely monitor and efficiently use budgeted overtime funds. We will be working closely with the Office of Budget to determine what efficiencies can be found, while remaining focused on staffing appropriately to ensure the safety of our personnel and the citizens.

DFR has considered several different EMS delivery models and have met with many department members to obtain feedback on the various models. Our EMS Council considered more than ten different programs and contacted several other EMS providers. After the analysis, three models stood out for consideration. The EMS Council is evaluating strengths and weaknesses of the final three models along with current gaps within our existing system. We are close to finalizing a direction and presenting a recommendation to the City Manager's Office for consideration.

Trending Concerns

Looking forward, DFR has identified several trends occurring either within DFR or happening within the U.S. Fire Service, which will likely impact our department soon. These areas will be incorporated in our 2018 Strategic Priorities, which include:

1. Continued attention on safety
2. Increasing cancer trends in the U.S. Fire Service and DFR
3. Physical and mental well-being of DFR personnel
4. Customer service enhancement
5. Department vehicle accidents
6. The continuing rise in EMS call volume

This year DFR's new Safety Division will begin conducting trend analysis related to injuries and accidents that occur on-duty. The information gathered will be used to develop new training programs, or enhance existing programs, targeted at reducing these trends.

The physical and mental well-being of our members is an on-going concern. Cardiac related issues caused by physical exertion continue to be one of the leading causes of firefighter death in the U.S. Additionally, the U.S. Fire Administration has noted increases in issues related to Post Traumatic Stress, suicide, substance abuse, and depression across the country.

Although customer service has always been an important aspect of DFR, we are actively exploring ways to make it even better through adoption of the City Manager's "Service First" philosophy. We believe that we can take our customer service to the next level by fully communicating the council members vision as well as outline how each member can become an ambassador for the City of Dallas.

Vehicle accidents continue to be a concern in DFR. Because of the size, unique operating characteristics of our vehicles, and expense related to almost any vehicle accident, DFR has increased accountability, developed a new driver/operator program, and increased our focus on preventative maintenance training.

Ongoing action items that have transitioned from 2017 to 2018 include DFR's recruitment strategy, implementing the RIGHT Care program, and the full implementation of Priority Dispatch.

Recruitment enhancements were necessary because of the anticipation of higher than normal attrition rates. DFR has instituted many changes to our recruitment methods, civil service testing, and applicant processing. These changes have resulted in significant improvements to our application numbers. In FY 2015/2016 DFR had a total of 1,403 applicants, with a total of 98 people hired; FY 2016/2017 DFR received only 898 applicants, with a total of 88 people hired. However, after implementing changes to our process in August 2017, DFR has received a total of 2,167 applicants to date, an approximate 240% increase from the previous fiscal year.

The RIGHT Care program is a collaborative response model by DFR, DPD, and UTSW to various mental health needs in the City. The pilot program is grant funded by the Caruth Foundation and will begin operations in the South Central Police District in January 2018.

Future Action Items

Finally, future items that DFR will be working on throughout the biennial budget includes:

1. Continued enhancements to various DFR training programs
2. Improvements to our Fleet Maintenance program
3. Enhancements to DFR messaging
4. Enhancements to our fireworks education and enforcement program
5. Assessing and improvements to our clothing and supply program
6. Digital Radio System Upgrade
7. Consideration of accreditation programs from Fire and EMS systems
8. Continue to leverage technology to become more efficient

DFR training enhancements will include modifications to our cadet training, implementation of a driver training program, and continued enhancements to our officer development training and mentoring programs.

DFR will continue to look at various improvements to our Fleet Maintenance program. These improvements will include the continued implementation of audit findings, continued evaluation of work flow, and consideration of outsourcing select preventative maintenance items. We will be working with the Office of Budget for review of best practices.

Regarding messaging, DFR will work to improve our communication with both our internal and external stakeholders. This will include regular messaging of department activities, as well as improvements in our various social media platforms.

The fireworks education and enforcement program will be expanded through better collaboration with DPD and improvements in messaging to the citizens of Dallas. DFR will also conduct an analysis of our Clothing and Supply Division. The focus of the analysis will be to evaluate our various delivery systems and look for ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the existing system.

In addition, DFR will perform the following:

- Work closely with CIS and DPD to properly implement a new Digital Radio System,
- Evaluate the need and value of both Fire and EMS Accreditation programs, and
- Continue to consider leveraging technology to improve delivery of services to the city.

The briefing materials are attached for your review. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.



Fire Chief David Coatney
Dallas Fire-Rescue Department



Thru: Jon Fortune
Assistant City Manager

[Attachment]

cc: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Larry Casto, City Attorney
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary (Interim)
Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager

Jo M. (Jody) Puckett, Assistant City Manager (Interim)
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Nadia Chandler Hardy, Chief of Community Services
Raquel Favela, Chief of Economic Development & Neighborhood Services
Theresa O'Donnell, Chief of Resilience
Directors and Assistant Directors

DFR Strategic Priorities

Public Safety and Criminal Justice

January 22, 2018

**David Coatney, Fire Chief
Dallas Fire-Rescue Department**



Presentation Overview

- Background/History
- Purpose
- Trending Concerns
- Proposed Action
- Next Steps



Background/History

Top & High Priority Projects 2016/2017:

- Improve Firefighter Safety
- Implement Priority Dispatch
- Improve Officer Development/Succession Planning



Background/History

Top & High Priority Projects 2016/2017 (cont.):

- Fully Implement Firehouse Software (NFIRS)
- Conduct In-depth Overtime Analysis
- Department reorganization
- Evaluate different EMS delivery models



Purpose

- To give PSCJ an overview of DFR's proposed Strategic Priorities for FY2018 and FY2019



Trending Concerns

1. Safety of Personnel/Cancer in the Fire Service
2. Behavioral Health
3. Customer Service
4. Vehicle accidents and general care of equipment
5. Continued increase in EMS call volume



Proposed Action (Trending Concerns)

1. Continue implementation of DFR Safety program
2. Working with a joint labor/management group to determine best practices to address various behavioral health concerns
3. Better outline department expectations towards customer service and adopt a “Service First” attitude – improve community outreach
4. Enhanced attention and training programs
5. Ongoing evaluation of workload and Rescue locations

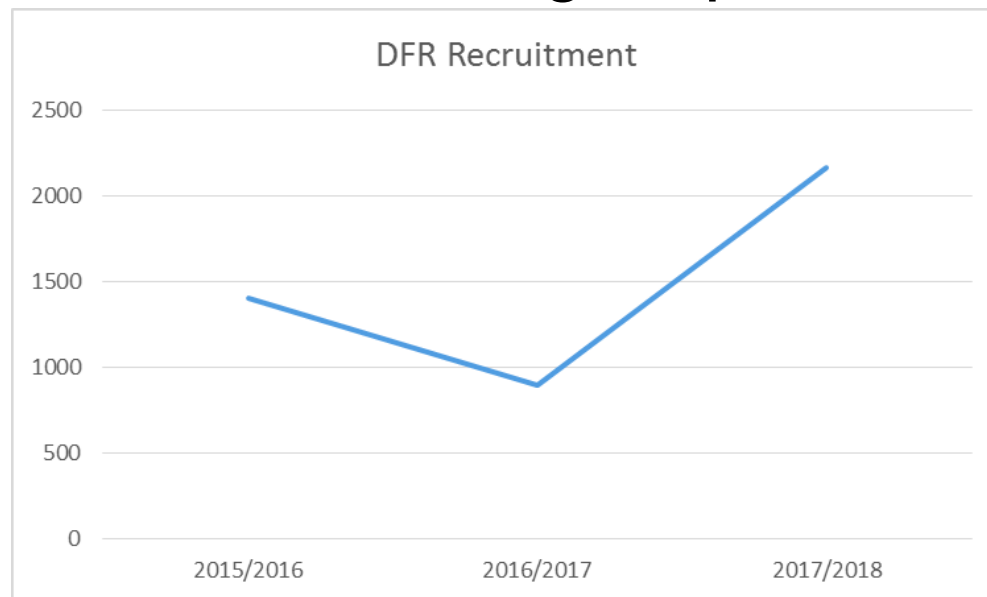
Ongoing Action Items

- Recruitment Strategy Enhancements
- Implement Right Care Program (Jan. '18)
- Full implementation of Priority Dispatch (Mar. '18)



Recruiting Trends

- 2016/2017 had very high attrition and a low applicant pool
- Changes made in recruitment strategy, application process, and testing helped increase recruitment



Future Action Items

- Conduct Fleet Management and Clothing & Supply efficiency assessment
- Enhance fireworks education and enforcement program
- Digital Radio System Upgrade
- Increase public education and targeted fire fatality reduction programs



Future Action Items

- Expand internal DFR training programs
- Improve DFR Messaging
- Consider Accreditation Programs (Fire – Center for Public Safety Excellence & EMS – Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services)
- Continue to leverage technology to become more efficient



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Dallas Fire-Rescue Department**

