

ALTERNATIVE STAFFING MODELS

Alternative Staffing Models  
for the Howard Fire Department

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Abstract

When volunteers become complacent or sporadic in their response and fail to fulfill their responsibilities when responding to alarms, the result is inadequate fire ground operations. Ill-timed, inadequate staffing raises serious safety concerns for the public and the firefighters. The problem is that the HFD does not have a formalized staffing plan, system or methodology that addresses station or apparatus staffing. The purpose of this research is to identify staffing alternatives for future consideration. This descriptive research project reviewed key areas such as: what are the guidelines and practices that other fire departments have identified for their staffing models, what is the current capability of the Howard Fire Department's staffing model, what factors influence the current staffing model at the Howard Fire Department and what can be done to increase turnout for Howard Fire Department incidents.

The essential elements of this endeavor included an exhaustive literature review, a review of applicable operating guidelines, an analysis of the databases maintained by the HFD, and a questionnaire created by this author for the sworn staff at the HFD.

This research has yielded significant results. The results and recommendations identified that a staffing process should be instituted to enhance response capacity. Both financial and non-financial incentives should be considered to increase call attendance. Key indicators should be selected and monitored to determine whether progress is being made. Implementation of these recommendations will ultimately result in safer processes.

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## Alternate Staffing Models

### Introduction

The first volunteer fire company, the Union Fire Company, was organized by Benjamin Franklin in 1736. The volunteer firefighters were responsible for one another's protection. Members bought leather buckets and linen bags to the fireground to fight the fire (Ditzel, 1984).

Moving forward to 1852, there were no career firefighters in the United States; all municipal firefighters were volunteers. However, by 1880, most cities with more than 10,000 people, and many with fewer, were paid departments (Boehm & American Bibliographical Center.).

Currently there are nearly 26,354 fire departments in the country; approximately three-fourths of those are served by volunteers. This municipal function is under stress from fluctuating tax revenues and a declining number of volunteers. Increasing call volume, heightened expectations for the types and level of service, legislative requirements, litigation, and demographics combined have led to a decline in the number of people willing to volunteer their time to the fire service. As the demand for services exceeds the available volunteer pool, a predictable movement toward fully staffed career fire departments occurs (Scott et al., 2006).

Volunteer fire departments remain viable because men and women donate their time to their department. This commitment is becoming more difficult in contemporary times because Americans spend a third of their time working, a third sleeping and a third tending to their families, household activities, and recreation. Therein lies the challenge: motivating volunteers to donate their time and in some cases their own monetary resources to support a municipal duty (Buckman et al., 2006).

When volunteers become complacent or sporadic in their response and fail to fulfill their responsibilities when responding to alarms, the result is inadequate fire ground operations. National standards and community expectations are compromised when the fire department cannot guarantee the prescribed assembly of response personnel. Ultimately, ill-timed, inadequate staffing raises serious safety concerns for the public and the firefighters (Scott et al., 2006).

The problem is that the HFD does not have a formalized staffing plan, system or methodology that addresses station or apparatus staffing. The lack of a systemic organizational response to calls for service results in inconsistent, understaffed operations.

Although the Howard Fire Department is well staffed and equipped, the lack of minimum criteria or process for staffing leaves HFD Chief Officers with no clear way of knowing whether even one company will leave a station.

The purpose of this research is it to identify staffing alternatives for future consideration.

This descriptive research project attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the guidelines and practices that other fire departments have identified for their staffing models?
2. What is the current capability of the Howard Fire Department's staffing model?
3. What factors influence the current staffing model at the Howard Fire Department?
4. What can be done to increase turnout for Howard Fire Department incidents?

This research effort will analyze the need to develop a formal staffing model that recognizes consensus and regulatory standards, community-based risk, financial constraints, and human motivational factors. This endeavor will employ descriptive research methods to identify any applicable standards that may formalize the guidelines for a new or revised staffing model.

The project will also use a literature review process to identify potential consensus standards or best practices that may also apply.

### Background and Significance

Without question, each community has responsibilities to its citizens. Emergency services within those communities focus their resources and efforts strategically, first to save lives and then to save property. It follows that emergency service organizations have a responsibility to ensure the safety of their staff.

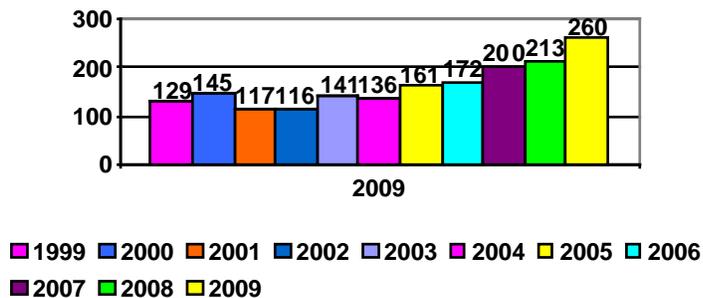
Fire behavior is predictable; it causes loss of life and property in the same manner each time a fire event occurs. The necessary fire suppression requirements are also universal. The variables are the responsibilities and the available resources the fire department has at its disposal to mitigate the fire incident. The resources necessary for firefighting are universal, while the strategies and tactics are subjective (United States Fire Administration. & National Fire Protection Association., 2002)

The HFD is a combination fire department providing fire and limited technical rescue capabilities as well as first responder medical services for the Village of Howard, Wisconsin. Located in northwest Brown County, the community covers approximately 21.5 square miles and shares approximately six continuous miles of boundary with the City of Green Bay. The Village of Howard is a vibrant community transected by several transportation and utility corridors including interstate highways; U.S. highways; state highways; and railroads, as well as major electrical and natural gas distribution networks and associated supporting structures. The community has been experiencing one of highest population growth rates in the region; there are currently over 17,500 residents according to the Wisconsin Department of Administration with a daytime population estimated at nearly 30,000.

The department utilizes two engine companies and one Ladder Company to deliver fire response with an authorized staff of 45. The Fire Chief is the only full-time member of the department, while one Assistant Chief works a 20-hour work week. Two Division Chiefs work 12 hours per week and the Training Captain works eight hours per week. Remaining members of the department are compensated based on tenure. The Department also staffs three firefighters during the day. Firefighters working during the day receive a stipend for the shift.

Although the membership of the department has remained relatively constant, the number of available staff appears to be sporadic. Overall, the department has had difficulty filling a first alarm assignment. A full-alarm assignment for the HFD is two engines and one ladder, a Chief Officer and an ambulance from a private rescue service staffed by two paramedics for a total of 15 personnel.

**Fig. 1 - Incidents by Year**

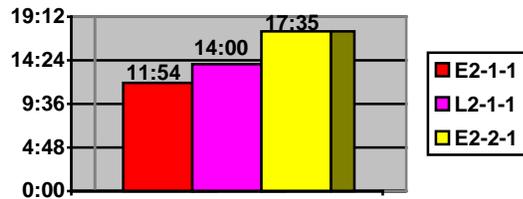


Incidents continue to trend upward (Figure 1). The HFD experienced an 18% increase in incidents requiring a response between 2008 and 2009. Over the past ten years, the department has seen a 200% increase in incidents,

while the population has risen by 140%. These increases are significant not only because the department has had difficulty assembling enough firefighters on the fire ground, but also because the response times have not been optimal.

At any given hour, firefighters respond from wherever they may be to their respective stations for alarm assignments. There is no definitive way of knowing how many firefighters

**Fig. 2 - Incident Arrival Time Aug. 1, 2008 through Aug. 1, 2009**



will be available to respond. In addition, there is currently no system in place that identifies their response companies; assignments are made as firefighters mount an apparatus. Consequently, overall response times for companies are problematic due to staggered arrival times (Figure 2.)

The HFD is currently attempting to build a tenured staff. In 2009, of the average 44 members of the department, 65% had fewer than five years' experience (Fire House Data).

To further complicate establishing strategies for tactical organization, the HFD faces nearly a 10% average yearly personnel turnover (Fire House Data). This turnover can generally be attributed to loss of members to career organizations and retirements; the consequences create myriad challenges both for the department staff and management. First and foremost, fire ground safety is affected by low situational awareness created by constant task rotation. The theories of teamwork are challenged by a continued pattern of new faces. Management practices are strained by the inability to predict apparatus response or personnel.

One area of study in the National Fire Academy's (NFA) Executive Leadership Course is leadership and planning. Students gain valuable insight into themselves as leaders, their impact on the culture of their organization, and how they can initiate any necessary changes. Students also recognize the importance of understanding and effectively identifying strategic issues while developing reasonable goals and objectives to solve their issues. This topic is vitally important to fire service leaders in that they learn to recognize that organizational success is dependent on highly skilled, motivated employees.

Utilizing these concepts, this research will attempt to fully define the problem by gaining information, querying current members and applying the collective information to the current problem through planning. Leadership in this matter by the management staff will bring about organizational change that will benefit the community and the department.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has five operational objectives:

1. Reduce risk at the local level through prevention and mitigation.
2. Improve local planning and preparedness.
3. Improve the fire and emergency services' capability for response to and recovery from all hazards.
4. Improve the fire and emergency services' professional status.
5. Lead the Nation's fire and emergency services by establishing and sustaining USFA as a dynamic organization

This research relates to two of these objectives: reducing the loss of life of both firefighters and civilians by addressing response times and improving preparedness by establishing alarm response parameters and implementing response guidelines. Identifying methods for maximizing human resources available to the officers of the HFD may mitigate emergencies through coordinated responses. Response capabilities are in jeopardy when inadequate, untimely resources are marshaled for an emergency incident.

In summary, the effectiveness and efficiency of the HFD appears to be negatively affected by staffing that is insufficient for response standards. The Literature Review section will provide information to establish the fire department's capacity to respond to and mitigate emergency situations through the appropriate level of planning and systems analysis.

## Literature Review

This research project began in August 2009. This researcher assembled published literature and other available sources addressing staffing for public safety agencies. The findings of others were also reviewed to extract the most relevant information.

This literature review yielded a number of important considerations for assessing the current staffing scenarios faced by the HFD. Considerations for staffing requirements at incidents and on apparatus were researched as well as strategies for meeting staffing requirements.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) addresses the organization and deployment of resources in a volunteer department. The HFD falls under the guidelines set forth in NFPA 1720. This standard identifies the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments. This standard requires that minimum staffing is identified by ensuring that a sufficient number of trained staff are available to respond to the scene. NFPA 1720 suggests that in areas with more than 1000 people per square mile, there should be 15 personnel assembled at the scene (Appendix D) within nine minutes, 90% of the time (Association, 2010).

The Insurance Services Organization (ISO), through its Grading Schedule identifies acceptable staffing levels similar to NFPA 1720. The ISO provides credit points based on the number of firefighters available for first alarm assignments (Organization, 2009).

The state of Wisconsin promulgates safety rules through Wisconsin Department of Commerce Administrative Code. Comm. 30 in part indicates that the Incident Commander must have sufficient personnel to safely conduct emergency scene operations and then limit operations to that which can be support by personnel available at the scene (Commerce, 1995).

The HFD is a member of Wisconsin MABAS Division 112 and for this reason must follow the intra divisional policies for staffing. MABAS Division 112 policy dictates that any intra divisional response requires four Firefighters on an Engine, three or four firefighters on a ladder, four firefighters on a squad, two paramedics on an ambulance, and two firefighters on a tender (Appendix B).

There has been research conducted with respect to the appropriate number of firefighters assigned to each company. Various factors influence fire ground operations. Staffing studies, however, have determined that larger companies are more effective than smaller companies (Clark, 1991).

Adequate staffing directly affects the safety of firefighters. A Seattle Fire Department study held that the severity of firefighter injuries was reduced by 35% when engine company staffing was increased from three to four. A Dallas Fire Department study determined that inadequate staffing increases the stressors on firefighters present, ultimately increasing the risks to firefighters and a reduction in the effectiveness of the operations (United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Commerce Science and Transportation., 2006).

The overall mission of the fire department is to respond to emergencies. Fire departments must always be ready to respond; a quick response will help to stabilize the incident and mitigate what could become a devastating event. Personnel decisions including availability of staff are critical to fire suppression activities (Stenberg, Austin, & International City/County Management Association., 2007).

Staffing of apparatus and fire ground operations are a critical organizational consideration since fire department operations are evolving. Where firefighting was once the sole responsibility of the fire department, emergency medical services, technical rescue, and

service calls are now the norm. The availability of the minimum number of firefighters for these responses continues to be a challenge (Windisch, Crosby, & International Association of Fire Chiefs., 2008).

The ultimate mission of most fire departments is to save lives and protect property. The ability to fulfill that mission is dependent on adequate resources. The fire department must be able to perform these activities while managing the risks. Risk management is defined as the supervision of activities, operations and processes to minimize loss and maximize safety (Wilder, 1997).

Staffing schemes are generally a local issue and are dependent upon the frequency of fires, budgetary considerations, the community risk level, and the demand for services. Other factors include the population protected, density of the population, and the type of structures protected. In the end, staffing levels may vary widely from department to department (Compton & Granito, 2002).

The level deemed appropriate to for staffing fire apparatus should be based on the appropriate staff to prevent firefighter injuries and deaths. To determine the manpower needed, simply multiply the number of firefighters required to complete a task by the number of tasks (Pegram, 2001).

Recognizing the need for a systemic approach to staffing that identifies a minimum number of firefighters to commence fireground operations allows for assessing the scope of the problem. The staffing issue becomes one of determining how to consistently establish the requisite number of firefighters on the fireground. The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has determined that the primary reason for reduced response is time management

(United States Fire Administration., United States. Federal Emergency Management Agency., & National Volunteer Fire Council (U.S.), 2007).

The USFA points out that assigning firefighters to duty shifts will allow them to plan, prepare, and be ready to respond when called. Responding from home or from the station allows firefighters to devote time to their families, careers or other obligations when they are not on call. Another option may to be to recruit duty crews from career departments or areas outside of established residency requirements (United States Fire Administration. et al., 2007).

To manage risks faced by fire departments, the organization must be willing to change. The organization's ability to change and develop directly correlates to the success of the organization. Staffing is just one, albeit a critical element for consideration in organizational change (Barr & Eversole, 2003).

The change from a purely volunteer service with little or no control over incident response to a combination volunteer/paid model that establishes individual response is marked and pronounced. The evolution begins with on-call duty shifts moving to staffing stations, then paid-per-call, and finally part-time firefighters (Scott et al., 2006).

The number of responses and call time strain a volunteer fire department. The associated support time becomes burdensome as well. This, coupled with attempts to staff during normal work hours when volunteers work in other jobs, reduces the capabilities of the volunteer organization (Windisch et al., 2008). Responding to calls is integral to realizing the mission of the fire department. Consistently failing this imperative requires movement to a combination system. Time management is critical for successfully staffing the volunteer organization (Ozog, 2007).

Developing a staffing plan from a strategic perspective, including both operational goals and objectives, will help the department fulfill its mission. Planning will give direction through goals and objectives (Snook, Buckman, & International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2006).

Staffing plans should identify who is required to turn out for an alarm considering time of the day and day of the week. Staffing plans will assist in developing perspective on funding needs and organizational capabilities that ultimately affect firefighter safety (Switala, 2006).

Both monetary and non-monetary incentives can motivate volunteers. Incentive programs are desirable for promoting volunteerism and ultimately cost less than maintaining career staff. Management issues such as feasibility assessments and written policies regarding the implementation of the incentives should be considered (Hart, 2006).

Scheduled staffing systems are both feasible and practical and have proven to be a positive outcome for the organization. Maintaining an open dialog including ongoing feedback will assist members to understand the issues regarding staffing (Lieder, 2008).

The literature review included information germane to this research project. It suggests that staffing for volunteer and quasi-volunteer fire organizations presents challenges. Assembling the requisite resources in a time frame that is acceptable to the community is a critical aspect of the mission of any fire department. This, coupled with a requirement for around-the-clock service, requires detailed planning and processes. The Procedures section will outline the scope of this research.

## Procedures

The objectives of this descriptive research project were to (1) determine the guidelines and practices that other fire departments have identified for their staffing models, (2) determine the current capability of the HFD staffing model, (3) determine the factors that influence the current staffing model at the HFD and (4) determine what can be done to increase turnout for HFD incidents. The process included establishing a research design, collecting information, and documenting the results.

The essential elements of this endeavor included an exhaustive literature review, a review of applicable operating guidelines, an analysis of the databases maintained by the HFD, and a questionnaire created by this author for the sworn staff at the HFD.

The Literature Review was conducted through several media and at several venues. The learning resource center located at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland provided specific fire-related information as well as background and supporting information. This documentation consisted of books, journals, magazine articles, and executive fire officer program research papers. These articles were arranged by type and vetted for relevancy. Vigilant documentation allowed for the recall of the materials and the inclusion in this research. Research was conducted at the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) for relevant information. NWTC was instrumental in the securing other books and journals relevant to this project.

The Howard Branch of the Brown County Public Library was also valuable in the search for books and journals supporting research not related to fire. Finally, the Internet provided access to websites, guides, and policies that were utilized in this research. The internet search was executed by using the key phrase “fire department staffing.”

The literature review and a search of the current Standard Operating Guidelines (Appendix C) at the HFD were instrumental in answering questions one of this research project:

(1) What are the guidelines and practices that other fire departments have identified for their staffing models?

To assist with answering question two, extensive research was conducted of the databases maintained by the HFD. Reports were generated from the Fire House Software database, reviewing 2009 data that included Incidents by Hour (Figure 3); Incidents by Day (Figure 4); Dispatch to Arrival First Unit (Figure 5); and Incident Turnout by Hour (Figure 6). (2) What is the current capability of the Howard Fire Department's staffing model?

To answer questions three and four, the Sworn Staff Questionnaire was developed for sworn firefighters at the HFD. (3) What factors influence the current staffing model at the Howard Fire Department? (4) What can be done to increase turnout for Howard Fire Department incidents? The questionnaire was designed to elicit from all firefighters, regardless of rank, their opinions of staffing, their level of interest and perspective of staffing scenarios. This survey tool was distributed via e-mail to 31 firefighters.

The questionnaire was preceded by an e-mail identifying the author and the purpose of the questionnaire. Questions were open-ended to solicit a wide range of answers.

This research was limited by the fact that while there is a great deal of information available regarding established standards regarding staffing, dynamics vary with each organization

The procedures undertaken in support of this research followed accepted processes for conducting descriptive research. The Results section will discuss the research outcomes.

## Results

The results of this applied research project are provided as answers to the research questions. The focus of this research project was to determine a system for staffing the Howard Fire Department in such a way that the response could be both predictable and timely. The analysis of the findings included a review of the literature, a review of applicable databases, standard operating guidelines and an examination of the questionnaires.

The questionnaire was sent out to 31 Firefighters and received a 100% return rate. The questionnaire was completed between December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The results of the questionnaire are contained within Appendix E.

### Research Question #1

What are the guidelines and practices that other fire departments have identified for their staffing models?

The research yielded perspective on staffing plans as viewed by other fire departments. According to Swiatala, (2006) staffing plans should identify who is required to turn out for an alarm given the time of day and day of week. This suggests that there should be a clearly identified schedule which denotes work periods and specific personnel.

Hart (2006) felt that both non-monetary and monetary incentives should be considered to help develop incentive programs. Feasibility should be done as a matter of an organizational assessment that ultimately culminates in written policies.

Developing a staffing plan as part of a strategic plan with goals and objectives would allow departments to be successful in fulfilling their mission. Carefully thought out goals and objectives will give the direction necessary to achieve the desired outcomes (Snook et al., 2006).

USFA has documented that duty shifts allow firefighters an opportunity to plan their own lives around the fire department. Ultimately the duty crews can be enhanced from area career staff if the department cannot fill the shifts (United States Fire Administration. et al., 2007).

A systematic staffing perspective will assist department administrators and provide an opportunity to fully define the scope of the staffing problem. Without some manner of staffing requirements in place it would be a challenge to guarantee fire ground staffing levels.

Consideration for time management is critical to maximizing the response efforts from the volunteers who comprise the organization.

NFPA 1720 notes that a volunteer fire department in a suburban area should be able to assemble 15 personnel on scene within nine minutes, 90% of the time. This standard is set forth to ensure safe fire ground operations. HFD's first alarm assignment is 15 personnel that includes two engines, a ladder, a chief officer, and an ambulance (Association, 2010).

Apparatus staffing at the HFD is prescribed by the MABAS Division 112 Staffing Policy. For this reason, the HFD is bound to that policy through membership to the Division. (Appendix B)

Ultimately, staffing plans and methodologies are a local issue, dependent upon risk and budget (Compton & Granito, 2002). Those plans, however, must take into consideration consensus standards such as NFPA 1720 and administrative code to ensure there are sufficient personnel available to safely conduct incident scene operations.

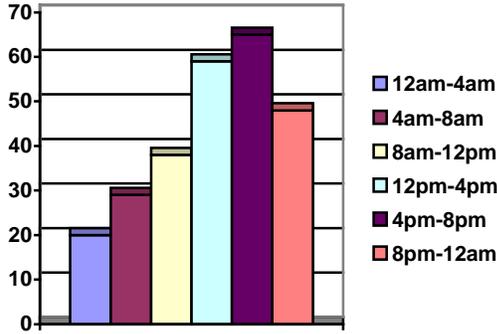
#### Research Question #2

What is the current capability of the Howard Fire Department's staffing model?

Research question two was answered by reviewing the database maintained by the HFD. Reports were generated from Fire House Software database by reviewing 2009 data that included

Incidents by Hour (Figure 3); Incidents by Day (Figure 4); Dispatch to Arrival First Unit (Figure 5); and Incident Turnout by Hour (Figure 6).

**Fig. 3 - Incidents by Hour**

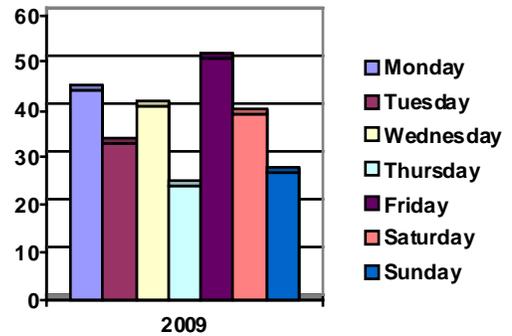


In review of the data including Incidents by Hour, (Figure 3), 25% of the calls that required a response from the fire department took place between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. The time period from 8 p.m. until midnight experienced the next highest number of incidents and accounted for approximately 18% of the incidents. Nearly half of

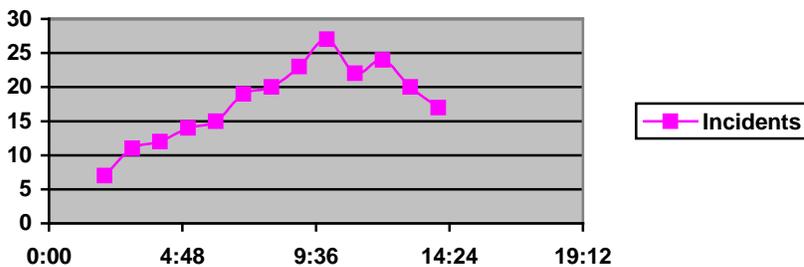
the incidents that the HFD responded to occurred between 4:00 p.m. and midnight.

When considering Incidents by Day (Figure 4), Friday was the busiest day of the week, with 20% of the calls happening at the end of the workweek. Saturday and Sunday comprised 25% of the incidents and the remaining days of the week were sporadic with only 9% of incidents occurring on Thursday.

**Fig. 4 - Incidents by Day**

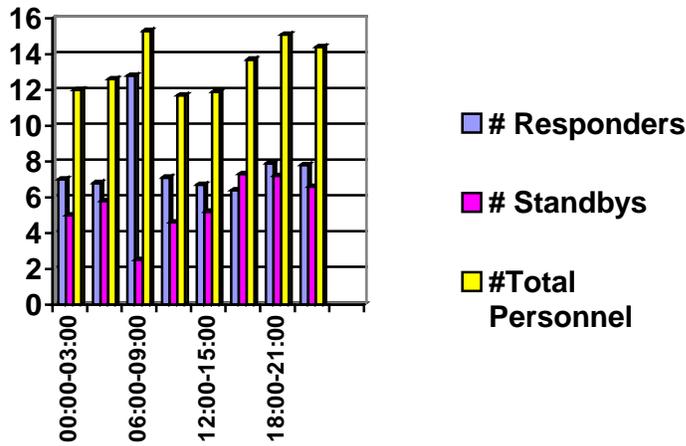


**Fig. 5 - Dispatch to Arrival First Unit**



The data for Dispatch to Arrival First Unit (Figure 5) demonstrates the period from time of dispatch to time of arrival. The first engine arrived on scene

Fig. 6 - Staff Incident Response



within 9:00 minutes 46% of the time. Interestingly, the first unit arrived on scene within 10 minutes 56% of the time and within 11 minutes 65% of the time. These response times are for first unit only and do not consider arrival times for the remaining

apparatus comprising the full alarm assignment.

The final analysis identifies the number of personnel responding to alarms by hour of the day.

Staff Incident Response (Figure 6) shows that the department is rarely filling out all the apparatus on a full-alarm assignment. Overall the average turnout per incident was 13 firefighters per call in 2009.

### Research Question #3

What factors influence the current staffing model at the Howard Fire Department?

Research question three is answered by the questionnaire. The questionnaire established a demographic profile of the department. The HFD would essentially be considered a young organization, with 77% of the members having fewer than five years of tenure with the department. All respondents are certified as firefighters. Half of the members were married with slightly less than half having children at home.

Nearly all of the respondents were employed, most of whom were employed full time, working fixed day shifts. Three fourths of the firefighters were employed more than five miles from their response station, with over half recognizing that they would not be able to leave their place of employment in the event of an alarm.

Respondents were nearly split regarding whether their commitment to the organization over time had increased, decreased or stayed the same; some felt their obligations had stayed the same while others felt they had increased. No one indicated a decrease in commitment.

When asked what motivated members when they first applied and what inspires them to remain, the answers were strikingly similar. The greatest motivation was “helping those in need”; “professional and personal growth” ranked high as well. The challenge and the excitement also ranked high. Interestingly, money ranked the lowest both as an initial motivator and a sustaining motivation.

When asked whether they had ever considered resigning, 29% stated they had indeed considered resignation. The greatest reason for considering resignation was the inability to participate in calls to the extent desired. Other reasons cited with some frequency were conflicts with work or family and too much time required.

Nearly one-third of the firefighters indicated they had frequently not responded to alarms, while nearly half indicated that they sometimes made a decision not to respond to the tones of the pager. The greatest reason cited for not answering the page was work-related, while family commitments and babysitting were also cited as reasons. Another reason cited was that the call was reported false immediately after the initial dispatch.

#### Research Question #4

What can be done to increase turnout for Howard Fire Department incidents?

Research question four is answered by elements of questionnaire. A portion of the questionnaire attempted to determine what strategies could be used to motivate members of the organization to attend more alarms.

When asked whether there was adequate turnout for alarms, 20 of the 31 respondents felt that there was insufficient turnout for alarms. When asked what might motivate members to attend more alarms, duty shifts and compensation were cited most often. Members were asked if the current methods for dispatch were adequate, 84% of the respondents indicated they were satisfied with being paged from home. When asked if the practices were changed how they would prefer alarm response, the answers were now divided; 39% wished to maintain the status quo (being paged from home); 22% wanted to be dispatched from the station; and 39% preferred a combination of dispatch from home and the station.

When asked whether duty shifts would facilitate their personal response, nearly half the department felt it would not matter; 35% indicated it would make it easier to respond; and the remaining members felt that it would make it more difficult. When asked if duty shifts were endorsed to enhance the alarm response, 58% indicated that they would want to respond from the station rather than home.

When the implementation of duty shifts was discussed, i.e., whether to have companies scheduled or a random sign-up, members were nearly evenly divided on which would be better, with random sign-up gaining a slight edge. Firefighters wished to have weekends split from a seven-day work week perspective when looking at how a schedule might unfold. Nearly half of members wished to be scheduled for days at a time with more off time in between, rather than being scheduled one day per week.

Motivators to enhance the duty shifts were assessed; members felt that overnight staffing accommodations and training provided during the shift would be beneficial. Finally, firefighters were asked whether consideration should be given to outlining a minimum threshold for hours or

shifts. The department was nearly evenly split on that question with the margin going to those who felt there should be a minimum responsibility of hours assigned.

The questionnaires provided valuable feedback regarding motivating factors and disincentives that affect volunteer response to emergency and non-emergency incidents in the Village of Howard. These results not only provided data for this research paper, but also benefited department administration by developing benchmarks for future consideration.

### Discussion

When considering the diminished response capacity that departments are facing, more specifically the HFD, innovation and change are necessary to maintain an organization with the capacity necessary to provide adequate emergency services. Hiring career personnel to provide response capability is not fiscally or politically appealing given current budget constraints. Reasonable incentives are an appealing, fiscally conservative approach to enhancing the response force.

Incentive factors are largely considered to be financial; however incentives can also be non-monetary. The research showed that time is a valuable commodity for volunteers. Wisely managing the time a volunteer contributes to an organization could be very valuable and in some respects priceless.

Scheduling through the use of staffing plans noting work periods and personnel was identified as a sound practice to motivate volunteers. The concept of scheduling approached through a strategic planning process provides a systemic opportunity to align goals and objectives which enhance an organization's capability to fulfill its mission.

The HFD does not have adequate staff response to fulfill a full-alarm assignment 24 hours per day, seven days per week. As a result, response times are affected to the extent that frequently apparatus assigned to an alarm does not leave the station due to inadequate staffing.

The standards established by the state of Wisconsin are created by Wisconsin Statute and Administrative Code through the adoption of NFPA standards and are intended to ensure that a firefighter is able to work safely at a fire scene. Inadequate staffing will not only impact the effectiveness and efficiency of the response, but also will compromise the safety of the fire ground.

The research showed that while young, the members of the department are motivated to provide emergency response to the citizens of the Village of Howard. Alarm response capability is the major factor affecting the department. Firefighters indicated with a considerable frequency that they do not respond to alarms because of work or family-related issues.

Motivating Firefighters to respond to alarms was important because many members of the department felt there was an inadequate number of personnel turning out for alarms. Statistically the department is not capable of meeting the standards set forth in NFPA 1720. Members of the department recognize that that the organization is not capable of meeting its obligation to the community in present form.

The idea of duty shifts to allow for a prescriptive resource management approach was well received by members of the department. Nearly half of respondents indicated they would also prefer to be paged from the station.

To fulfill duty shifts, a random sign-up was preferred rather than fixed company assignments. Clustered duty shift assignments were more appealing than specific days of the

week. These clustered assignments would lend themselves to allowing more time off between shifts.

This research is a result of the direction provided by the Administrator of the Village of Howard. The research has brought forth a significant amount of new information for consideration by the administrative staff and the members of the HFD.

### Recommendations

When the author discussed this research project with the chief officers of the HFD, consensus was that the Department was in a precarious position to systematically respond to incidents requiring an emergency response in the Village.

This research has yielded results that will significantly benefit the stakeholders for the HFD including taxpayers, the political entities, and members of the department. The following recommendations will provide vision for ongoing improvement and enhancements of staffing perspectives for the HFD that begin with a defined structure for staffing. The structure for the staffing should include all of the following:

An attentive review of the literature and the outcomes of the research procedures, the recommendation is to institutionalize staffing processes that consider the needs of the both the community and the Firefighters who comprise this department. The institutionalization of a staffing system will enhance the response capability.

Company Officers of the HFD should be provided the results of this research. During the evaluation process Company Officers should be tasked with having discussions with their companies to more fully investigate the implementation of a staffing system that identifies who will be responding to incidents and when. The results of this research should also be shared with all the firefighters at the HFD.

Company Officers of the HFD should then develop the staffing system or plan based on input from members of the department. They should also investigate whether other hardware or software will be necessary for implementing the system.

The plan should then be implemented on a limited basis with preliminary guidelines so the plan may be appropriately evaluated. Once the plan has been modified as necessary, full implementation should be considered provided that all members fully understand the plan.

A more thorough examination of both financial and non-financial incentives should be considered. Once the department determines what incentives are most popular among the members, those incentives should then be studied for feasibility.

As the HFD considers the staffing plan and incentives, written policies must be established to ensure the integrity and the viability of the process. In addition, a tracking mechanism must be established to ensure that hours worked are recorded.

Ongoing monitoring of key indicators, i.e., response times and subsequent apparatus response, must be monitored on a frequent basis to determine whether the department is resolving the issues that necessitated this research.

These recommendations should be implemented immediately so the HFD may assume a proactive stance. The increased effectiveness and efficiencies of staff scheduling will result in safer and more effective emergency operations within the community. Citizens of the Village of Howard will benefit from increased effectiveness and safer operations. The final outcome worth consideration is an increased service level to the community where citizens work and live.

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Appendix A

**Howard Fire Department Alarm Response Questionnaire**

This questionnaire will assist in determining how the department will address staffing issues, principally nights and weekends.

1.

**PROFESSIONAL PROFILE**

Age?

- 18 to 29 years old
- 30 to 39 years old
- 40 to 49 years old
- 50 to 59 years old
- 60 years old or greater

2.

Number of years with the Howard Fire Department?

- Recruit Firefighter (Less than 6 Months)
- Probationary Firefighter (6 Months to 1.5 years)
- 1.5 to 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- Greater than 20 years

3.

How many years do you expect to continue to be a Howard Firefighter?

- < 1
- 1 to 5 years
- 5 to 10 years
- 10+ years
- Unknown

4.  
Current certification status?

- Entry Level Firefighter
- Firefighter Certification 1
- Firefighter Certification 2
- Fire Officer
- None of the above

5.  
Current certification status?

- Driver Operator
- Driver Operator Aerial
- None of the Above

6.  
Fire Instructor?

**Yes or No**

7.  
**PERSONAL PROFILE**

Are you married?

**Yes or No**

8.  
Do you have children at home?

**Yes or No**

9.  
Employment status outside of the fire department?

- Full Time
- Part-time
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other

10.

Work schedule for your non-fire department employment?

- Rotating, swing type schedule
- Specific shifts, i.e. days, afternoons, nights
- Other

11.

If specific shifts are worked, which would apply?

- Days
- Afternoon
- Nights
- Work rotating shifts, not specific shifts

12.

Does your non fire department employer allow you to answer alarms when you are at work?

- No
- Single Unit Alarms
- Full Alarms

13.

Distance from work location to assigned station?

- < 1 Mile
- 1 to 5 Miles
- 5+ Miles

14.

Career goals as a firefighter?

- Continue with the Howard Fire Department
- Move to another organization similar to the Howard Fire Dept
- Become a career firefighter in another organization
- Discontinue being a firefighter
- Other

15.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

How many hour per week do you spend on Fire Department activities including alarms, training, duty shifts, vehicle checks and community events?

- < 5 hours
- 6 to 10 hours
- Greater than 10

16.

Since you started with the Howard Fire Department, the time commitment required has:

- Increased
- Decreased
- Stayed about the same

17.

Do you volunteer with other organizations?

**Yes or No**

18.

Do your volunteer efforts outside of the Howard Fire Department compete with those activities at the fire department?

Yes or No

19.

What was the motivation which inspired you to apply as a Firefighter at the HFD (check all that apply)?

- Helping those in need
- Excitement of emergency response and activities at the scene
- Recognition and achievement
- Social aspects, new friends
- Professional development, career ladder
- Peer or family pressure
- Professional and personal growth
- Monetary
- Challenging

- Resume enhancement
- Life long dream
- Status within the community
- Other (please describe)

20.

What is the motivation that inspires you to remain a Firefighter at the Howard Fire Department (check all that apply)?

- Helping those in need
- Excitement of emergency response and activities at the scene
- Recognition and achievement
- Social aspects, new friends
- Professional development, career ladder
- Peer or family pressure
- Professional and personal growth
- Monetary
- Challenging
- Resume enhancement
- Life long dream
- Status within the community
- Other (please describe)

21.

Have you considered resigning as a Firefighter with the Howard Fire Department?

**Yes or No**

22.

If you considered resigning from the fire department, please describe why (check all that apply)?

- Have never considered resigning
- If yes, please give reason: (check all that apply)
- Lost interest in fire fighting

- Too much time required
- Too much effort required
- Conflict with family / work
- Inadequate organizational communications
- No recognition for efforts
- Lack of reciprocal respect
- Lack of trust in management
- Lack of trust in fellow Firefighters
- Compensation not adequate for efforts
- Not enough calls
- Cannot participate on calls to the extent desired
- Cannot meet training obligations
- Do not agree with management strategies / organization direction
- Advancement opportunities are limited
- Poor leadership
- No organizational input
- Personality conflicts with others on department
- Lack of feedback regarding my performance
- Not treated fairly
- Changes are forced without feedback
- Did not feel part of the organization
- No longer exciting
- Not what I thought it would be
- Other (please describe)

23.

When available to do so, how often do you not respond to alarms?

- Frequently

- Sometimes
- Never

24.

If you answered frequently or sometimes, what are the reasons for you not responding?  
(check all that apply)

- The call does not excite me
- I can't arrive in time to make the truck
- I sleep through the page
- I have family commitments
- I only respond to real alarms
- I have to leave for work
- I don't want my sleep interrupted
- I have to babysit the kids
- I don't go to minor calls
- I'm too tired, or sleeping
- The call was reported false right after dispatch
- Other (please describe)

25.

Do you believe that there is adequate turnout for alarms?  
Yes or No

26.

What items would be a motivator to attend more alarms (check all that apply)?

- More money
- Recognition
- Gifts
- Not having to respond to all non-emergency calls
- Duty shifts to handle single apparatus response
- Other

27.

Does the current method of alarm response, i.e. responding to the station when paged allow you to fulfill your commitment to the HFD?

**Yes or No**

28.

If the department changed its practices for staffing, how would you want to respond to alarms?

- From home when paged
- From the station on scheduled shifts
- Combination of scheduled shifts and response from home

29.

Duty shifts defined as one engine company scheduled to respond to non-emergency calls.

Scheduled duty shifts:

- Would make it harder for me to respond to alarms
- Would make it easier to respond to alarms
- Would not matter to me

30.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response would you want to respond:

- From home
- From the station

31.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to see it implemented?

- Assigned to companies working with the same scheduled group
- Sign up at random with different Firefighters

32.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to be scheduled?

- Weekends and weekdays treated separately, i.e. Mon thru Fri and Weekends
- Monday thru Sunday rotation of shifts

- Other

33.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to be scheduled?

- Scheduled one shift per week
- Scheduled several shifts in a row with more time off in between scheduled days
- Other

34.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to be scheduled to be on call for nights?

- 12 hour shifts, i.e. 6 pm to 6 am
- Two 6 hour shifts, i.e. 6 am to 12 am and 12 am to 6 am
- Other

35.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response what would motivate you to fulfill your scheduled shifts from home or the station (check all that apply)?

- Food stipend offered to the company
- A multi-media lounge area
- Overnight staffing accommodations
- Training provided during the shift
- Other

36.

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response do you feel that firefighters should have a minimum number of hours/shifts that they are responsible to fulfill each month?

**Yes or No**

37.

What comments would you like to include regarding duty shifts?

38.

What comments would you like to include overall regarding staffing at the Fire Department?



## Appendix B

## **Brown County – MABAS Division 112 Unit Staffing Policy**

### **Section 1: Scope**

Units deployed under a Division 112 MABAS Box Alarm level or greater shall comply with the unit staffing defined herein.

### **Section 2: Responsibilities**

#### *A. Department.*

The Chief of each department operating within MABAS Division 112 shall ensure that units are staffed per this policy when deployed to a MABAS Box Alarm level or greater incident.

### **Section 3: Unit Staffing**

#### A. Engines: 4 personnel

##### i. Minimum Qualifications:

1. Officers: Wisconsin Fire Officer Entry Level or 10 years firefighting experience
2. Engineers: Wisconsin Driver/Operator-Pumper Entry Level
3. Firefighters: Wisconsin Entry Level Firefighter

#### B. Ladders: 3 or 4 Personnel

##### i. Minimum Qualifications:

1. Officers: Wisconsin Fire Officer Entry Level or 10 years firefighting experience
2. Engineers: Wisconsin Driver/Operator-Aerial Entry Level
3. Firefighters: Wisconsin Entry Level Firefighter

#### C. Ambulance: 2 or 3 Personnel

##### i. Minimum Qualifications:

1. BLS: EMT-Basic
2. ALS: 2 Paramedics
3. Paramedic: 1 Paramedic, 1 EMT

#### D. Support Units: 2 Personnel

- i. This includes command units, air units and any other special purpose vehicle.

#### E. Tenders: 1 or 2 Personnel

##### i. Minimum Qualifications

1. Firefighters: Wisconsin Driver/Operator-Entry Level

- F. Rapid Intervention Teams: 4 Personnel
  - i. Any personnel deployed under a MABAS Box Alarm or greater must have a developed rapid intervention program that includes training.
  
- G. Chief Officers: 1 person
  - i. Minimum Qualifications:
    1. Wisconsin Fire Officer I or 15 years experience – or -
    2. Associate Degree in Fire Science –or-
    3. Bachelor Degree in a related fieldAND
    4. IS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800
  
- H. Inter-Divisional Task Force: 4 Personnel per unit
  - i. All personnel must be Wisconsin Certified Firefighter I on any Inter-Divisional request, per Wisconsin MABAS.

**Section 4: Variance**

There shall be no variance from this policy with regard to staffing levels or minimum qualifications

## Appendix C

**HOWARD FIRE DEPARTMENT****Standard Operating Guidelines**

**HOWARD FIRE DEPARTMENT  
OPERATIONS MANUAL  
 VOLUME 2  
 INDEX**

<u>Section</u>	<u>Topic – Standard Operating Guideline (SOG)</u>	<u>Revision Date</u>
<b>201.00</b>	<b>COMMAND PROCEDURES</b>	
201.00A	<u>Personal Safety</u>	01/01/08
201.01	<u>Incident Command System (ICS) Procedures</u>	01/01/08
201.03	<u>Incident Personnel and Resource Accountability</u>	01/01/08
201.04	<u>Rescue-Lost Firefighters—Command Responsibilities</u>	01/01/08
201.04A	<u>Immediate and Rapid Intervention Team(s) – IRIT &amp; RIT</u>	01/01/08
201.05	<u>Additional Resources</u>	01/01/08
201.05A	<u>When to Summon Additional Resources</u>	01/01/08
<b>201.06</b>	<b>Basic Divisions</b>	01/01/06
201.06A	<u>Safety Division</u>	01/01/08
201.06F	<u>Public Information Division - PIO</u>	01/01/08
201.06I	<u>Police Liaison</u>	01/01/08
201.06F	<u>Scene Photography</u>	01/01/08
<b>202.00</b>	<b>FIRE OPERATIONS</b>	
202.01	<u>Standard Company Responsibilities</u>	01/01/08
202.01A	<u>Standard Tactical <a href="#">Teams</a></u>	01/01/08
202.01B	<u>Basic Response Team – Task Force</u>	01/01/08
202.02	<u>Fireground Factors</u>	01/01/08
202.02A	<u>Incident Tactical Priorities</u>	01/01/08
202.02B	<u>Fireground Strategy</u>	01/01/08
202.02C	<u>Rescue</u>	01/01/08
202.02D	<u>Safety and Risk Management Profiles</u>	01/01/08
202.03	<u>Lost-Trapped Firefighter – Basic Self-Survival</u>	01/01/08
202.03A	<u>“May-Day” and “Emergency Traffic” Communications</u>	01/01/08
202.04	<u>Basic Fire Control</u>	01/01/08

202.05	<u>Fireground Safety</u>	01/01/08
202.05A	<u>Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC) Deployment</u>	01/01/08
202.05B	<u>Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)</u>	01/01/08
202.06	<u>Common Geographic Designation</u>	01/01/07
202.06C	<u>Roof Division</u>	01/01/07
202.08	<u>Rehabilitation Division</u>	01/01/07
202.09	<u>Tactical Support Activities</u>	01/01/07
202.12	<u>Loss Control</u>	01/01/07
202.12A	<u>Salvage</u>	01/01/07
202.12B	<u>Overhaul</u>	01/01/07
202.12D	<u>Positive-Pressure Ventilation (PPV)</u>	01/01/07
202.12E	<u>Water Supply and Stream Management</u>	01/01/07
202.16	<u>Mobile Conveyance Fires</u>	01/01/07
<b>203.00</b>	<b>MEDICAL OPERATIONS</b>	
203.03	<u>Extrication Division</u>	01/01/07
<b>204.00</b>	<b>TECHNICAL OPERATIONS</b>	
204.05	<u>Natural Gas Emergencies</u>	01/01/07
204.06A	<u>Carbon Monoxide (CO) Response Considerations</u>	01/01/07
<b>205.00</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS, DEPLOYMENT &amp; RESPONSE</b>	
205.01	<u>Communications Procedures</u>	01/01/07
205.01A	<u>Portable Radios</u>	01/01/07
205.01B	<u>Riding Positions</u>	01/01/07
205.05	<u>Severe Weather - Emergency Deployment</u>	01/01/07
205.06	<u>Staging - Level I and Level II</u>	01/01/07
205.06A	<u>Staging Division</u>	01/01/07
205.07	<u>Apparatus Placement</u>	01/01/07
205.07A	<u>Safe Positioning While Operating in or Near Traffic</u>	01/01/07
205.08	<u>Driver Safety</u>	01/01/07
205.08A	<u>Standard Signals for Backing of Fire Department Apparatus</u>	01/01/07
205.10	<u>Ladder (Truck) Company Operations</u>	01/01/07
205.10A	<u>Ladder Operational Procedures</u>	01/01/07
205.11	<u>Water Tanker (Tender) Response</u>	01/01/07
205.17	<u>Mutual-Aid Response</u>	01/01/07
205.18	<u>Assisting Other Agencies</u>	01/01/07
205.21	<u>Response to Power Lines and Energized Electrical Equipment</u>	01/01/07

<b>206.00</b>	<b>SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
206.01	<u>Protecting our People</u>	01/01/07
206.01A	<u>Supervising Less Experience Personnel</u>	01/01/07
206.02	<u>Fire Hose Care, Maintenance, and Testing</u>	11/18/07
206.04	<u>Operating Power Saws</u>	01/01/07
206.05	<u>Operating Hydraulic Rescue Tools</u>	01/01/07
206.06	<u>Protective Clothing Inspection Program</u>	01/01/07
206.19	<u>Heat Stress Management</u>	01/01/07

Revised 01/01/08

## Appendix D

Table 4.3.2 Staffing and Response Time

Demand Zone	Demographics	Staffing and Response Time	Percentage
Special risks	AHJ	AHJ	90
Urban	1000 people/1 sq. mi.	15/9	90
Suburban	500-1000 people/1 sq. mi.	10/10	80
Rural	< 500 people/1 sq. mi.	6/14	80
Remote*	Travel Dist $\geq$ 8 miles	4	90

\*Upon assembling the necessary resources at the emergency scene, the fire department should have the capability to safely commence an initial attack within 2 minutes 90 percent of the time.

## Appendix E

**Howard Fire Department Alarm Response Questionnaire**

This questionnaire will assist in determining how the department will address staffing issues, principally nights and weekends.

## Question 1

## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Age?

18 to 29 years old	12	39%
30 to 39 years old	13	42%
40 to 49 years old	4	13%
50 to 59 years old	1	3%
60 years old or greater	1	3%

## Question 2\*

Number of years with the Howard Fire Department?

Recruit Firefighter (Less than 6 Months)	5	16%
Probationary Firefighter (6 Months to 1.5 years)	4	13%
1.5 to 5 years	15	48%
5-10 years	5	16%
10-15 years	0	0%
15-20 years	2	6%
Greater than 20 years	0	0%

## Question 3\*

How many years do you expect to continue to be a Howard Firefighter?

< 1	1	3%
1 to 5 years	4	13%
5 to 10 years	2	6%
10+ years	16	52%
Unknown	8	26%

Question 4  
Current certification status?

Entry Level Firefighter	0	0%
Firefighter Certification 1	11	35%
Firefighter Certification 2	16	52%
Fire Officer	4	13%
None of the above	0	0%

Question 5\*  
Current certification status?

Driver Operator	10	32%
Driver Operator Aerial	6	19%
None of the Above	15	48%

Question 6\*  
Fire Instructor?

Yes	2	6%
No	29	94%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 7\*  
PERSONAL PROFILE  
Are you married?

Yes	15	48%
No	16	52%
No Answer	0	0%

Bottom of Form  
Question 8\*  
Do you have children at home?

Yes	14	45%
No	17	55%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 9\*

Employment status outside of the fire department?

Full Time	26	84%
Part-time	4	13%
Unemployed	1	3%
Retired	0	0%

Question 10\*

Work schedule for your non-fire department employment?

Rotating swing type schedule	3	7%
Specific shifts i.e. days afternoons nights	22	54%
Other	16	39%

Flexible schedule during the week but lots of meeting and project that need to be completed. Required to be at work Friday and Saturday nights - get done at 4-5 am each morning
Nights 1400-2200, Every other weekend
10+hrs per day
Varying days and times
m-f anywhere between 5am-5pm
Monday - fir- days
Weekend Days
Days, with some travel outside the area
10 days a month
Some weekends, currently on active duty military status

Question 11\*

If specific shifts are worked, which would apply?

Days	20		65%
Afternoon	0		0%
Nights	4		13%
Work rotating shifts not specific shifts	7		23%

Question 12\*

Does your non fire department employer allow you to answer alarms when you are at work?

No	18		58%
Single Unit Alarms	3		10%
Full Alarms	10		32%

Question 13\*

Distance from work location to assigned station?

< 1 Mile	2		6%
1 to 5 Miles	6		19%
5+ Miles	23		74%

Career goals as a firefighter?

Continue with the Howard Fire Department	27		82%
Move to another organization similar to the Howard Fire Dept	0		0%
Become a career firefighter in another organization	0		0%

Discontinue being a firefighter	1	3%
Other	5	15%

Career firefighter with different department, but would prefer Howard to go Full-Time
If the opportunity was available I would like to move to career fire/ems

Question 15\*

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

How many hour per week do you spend on Fire Department activities including alarms, training, duty shifts, vehicle checks and community events?

< 5 hours	14	45%
6 to 10 hours	9	29%
Greater than 10	8	26%

Question 16\*

Since you started with the Howard Fire Department, the time commitment required has:

Increased	17	55%
Decreased	0	0%
Stayed about the same	14	45%

Question 17\*

Do you volunteer with other organizations?

Yes	12	39%
No	19	61%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 18\*

Do your volunteer efforts outside of the Howard Fire Department compete with those activities at the fire department?

Yes	4	13%
-----	---	-----

No	27	87%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 19\*

What was the motivation which inspired you to apply as a Firefighter at the HFD (check all that apply)?

Helping those in need	28	17%
Excitement of emergency response and activities at the scene	18	11%
Recognition and achievement	9	6%
Social aspects new friends	13	8%
Professional development career ladder	11	7%
Peer or family pressure	3	2%
Professional and personal growth	24	15%
Monetary	1	1%
Challenging	19	12%
Resume enhancement	6	4%
Life long dream	14	9%
Status within the community	10	6%
Other (please describe)	5	3%

Give back to the community
Serve my community
Give back to the Community

Question 20\*

What is the motivation that inspires you to remain a Firefighter at the Howard Fire Department (check all that apply)?

Helping those in need	30	20%
-----------------------	----	-----

Excitement of emergency response and activities at the scene	17	11%
Recognition and achievement	9	6%
Social aspects new friends	15	10%
Professional development career ladder	6	4%
Peer or family pressure	1	1%
Professional and personal growth	23	15%
Monetary	1	1%
Challenging	17	11%
Resume enhancement	8	5%
Life long dream	9	6%
Status within the community	10	7%
Other (please describe)	7	5%

Its like a gang - when your out - your out. I value the work ethic, camaraderie, friendships and HFD as a whole - however time constraints have made me a slacker and my fellow firefighters see that. I don't like being a poor example of ANYTHING ESPECIALLY a Firefighter.
Want to be with HFD when we become a full time department.
Giving back to the community
The leadership

Question 21\*

Have you considered resigning as a Firefighter with the Howard Fire Department?

Yes	9	29%
No	22	71%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 22\*

If you considered resigning from the fire department, please describe why (check all that apply)?

Have never considered resigning	22	33%
If yes please give reason: (check all that apply)	1	2%
Lost interest in fire fighting	1	2%
Too much time required	3	5%
Too much effort required	1	2%
Conflict with family / work	4	6%
Inadequate organizational communications	0	0%
No recognition for efforts	0	0%
Lack of reciprocal respect	0	0%
Lack of trust in management	2	3%
Lack of trust in fellow Firefighters	1	2%
Compensation not adequate for efforts	2	3%
Not enough calls	1	2%
Cannot participate on calls to the extent desired	7	11%
Cannot meet training obligations	2	3%
Do not agree with management strategies / organization direction	1	2%
Advancement opportunities are limited	1	2%
Poor leadership	1	2%
No organizational input	1	2%
Personality conflicts with others on department	2	3%
Lack of feedback regarding my performance	1	2%
Not treated fairly	2	3%
Changes are forced without feedback	1	2%
Did not feel part of the organization	2	3%
No longer exciting	1	2%
Not what I thought it would be	0	0%

Other (please describe)	6	10%
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Its NOT necessarily the TIME required for me but rather having it always hanging over my head and in the back of my mind that haven't been making enough calls (when I do I NEVER make a truck) and I have station cleaning and truck checks always in the back of my mind and that's additional pressure and just a FEW more things that need to get done.

None

Haven't been available. Not making a truck. Promoting people who have never been in a fire.

Question 23

When available to do so, how often do you not respond to alarms?

Frequently	9	29%
Sometimes	14	45%
Never	8	26%

Question 24\*

If you answered frequently or sometimes, what are the reasons for you not responding? (check all that apply)

The call does not excite me	0	0%
I can't arrive in time to make the truck	3	4%
I sleep through the page	3	4%
I have family commitments	8	11%
I only respond to real alarms	0	0%
I have to leave for work	17	24%
I don't want my sleep interrupted	1	1%
I have to babysit the kids	7	10%
I don't go to minor calls	0	0%
I'm too tired or sleeping	3	4%

The call was reported false right after dispatch	5	7%
Other (please describe)	23	33%

Getting my time cut severely with my kids due to divorce makes running to the station only to wait or wash a truck completely non productive.
I respond to all calls for which I am available.
Answered Never
I answered never to the question above
health/ spouses health
I'm at work or at school
Not within area
Outside area
I have o be "on my game" at work RE: overnight calls
length of drive

Question 25\*

Do you believe that there is adequate turnout for alarms?

Yes	11	35%
No	20	65%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 26\*

What items would be a motivator to attend more alarms (check all that apply)?

More money	10	17%
Recognition	2	3%
Gifts	4	7%
Not having to respond to all non-emergency calls	6	10%
Duty shifts to handle single apparatus response	15	26%
Other	21	38%

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Hopefully in May I will have my kids every other week - which will free me up every other week to take calls. I would LOVE to be a part of a group called the HFD FF Reserves...made up of OTHER guys like me who come for manpower calls and structure fire calls (I DONT view this as cherry picking calls I see this as being there when REALLY needed) . I don't want to quit - but my life is not in the right spot for this job right now. Down the road I can see myself being a valuable member again but in the meantime - theres no option such as the reserves that allows me to stay on the department but take a steep back. Reserves drills would be once a month and get a shortened version of the other two drills that month. I would be willing to take a reduction in pay to be able to do something like this.

Some seem to be put off by the fact that they can never make a truck. Money would initially be a motivator, but long-term it will not get someone out of a warm bed at 0200 for a CO call when it is 10 below zero outside.

For me, I don't need a motivator, for others maybe duty shifts would make them respond more.

Nothing

I already attend all alarms that I can

I respond to any call when available.

I need more time

Intrinsic Motivation

Need more free time... Life is busy with work and kids.

I will still attend alums without the above.

Question 27\*

Does the current method of alarm response, i.e. responding to the station when paged allow you to fulfill your commitment to the HFD?

Yes	26		84%
No	5		16%
No Answer	0		0%

Question 28\*

If the department changed its practices for staffing, how would you want to respond to alarms?

From home when paged	12		39%
From the station on scheduled shifts	7		23%
Combination of scheduled shifts and response from home	12		39%

Question 29\*

Duty shifts defined as one engine company scheduled to respond to non-emergency calls.

Scheduled duty shifts:

Would make it harder for me to respond to alarms	5	16%
Would make it easier to respond to alarms	11	35%
Would not matter to me	15	48%

Question 30\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response would you want to respond:

From home	13	42%
From the station	18	58%

Question 31\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to see it implemented?

Assigned to companies working with the same scheduled group	15	48%
Sign up at random with different Firefighters	16	52%

Question 32\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to be scheduled?

Weekends and weekdays treated separately i.e. Mon thru Fri and Weekends	16	46%
Monday thru Sunday rotation of shifts	8	23%
Other	11	31%

I don't currently have a block of time available like that.  
 Since I work nights and every other weekend, I would prefer to be "on duty" during morning hours so I would not have to find a backup or replacement every night from 1800-2300.

Sign up for shifts. My schedule does not permit me to be scheduled for another "job". I do not want to go through the hassle of having to call people to switch.

As available... Full time job comes first.

Question 33\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to be scheduled?

Scheduled one shift per week	6	15%
Scheduled several shifts in a row with more time off in between scheduled days	15	38%
Other	18	47%

I don't currently have a block of time available like that.
whenever
No preference, I do not mind responding to all calls, even if they are non-emergency
2-3 times per week
Either option works, whatever is best for the fire department
See above
2-3 shifts per week depending on family.
scheduled opposite current full time schedule

Question 34\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response how would you like to be scheduled to be on call for nights?

12 hour shifts i.e. 6 pm to 6 am	23	64%
Two 6 hour shifts i.e. 6 am to 12 am and 12 am to 6 am	4	11%
Other	9	25%

I don't currently have a block of time available like that.
if there was a sleeping quarters I wouldn't mind spending the night
I like the idea of 12 hour shifts the most, but 1800-0600 does not work for me because I work 2nd Shift. I would be interested in Midnight - Noon though.
Would be difficult with my work schedule

See above

Question 35\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response what would motivate you to fulfill your scheduled shifts from home or the station (check all that apply)?

Food stipend offered to the company	1	2%
A multi-media lounge area	3	6%
Overnight staffing accommodations	7	15%
Training provided during the shift	5	11%
Other	31	66%

all of the above
all of the above
both overnight accommodations and a lounge area
commitment to the department
all of the above
These questions seem to indicate that duty shifts are already planned. If you want a full time fire department then become a full time fire department.
All of the above
Being able to make the truck and working with a group of individuals that I trusted.
All of the above
At station not an option for me

Question 36\*

If the department determined that duty shifts would enhance alarm response do you feel that firefighters should have a minimum number of hours/shifts that they are responsible to fulfill each month?

Yes	17	55%
No	14	45%
No Answer	0	0%

Question 37

What comments would you like to include regarding duty shifts?

Text Answers
<p>My preference would be to continue to respond from home, given my proximity to the station. If the duty shift will truly be confined to only non-emergency calls, I do not see there being any value in putting resources against creating a physical department staffing plan; we do not need instantaneous responses to house lockouts or CO calls. If duty shifts were expanded to supporting all calls, then establishing a physical department staffing plan would be a good idea. I am very much in support of establishing permanent company assignments and creating a staffing plan around those companies. We should also create company level training opportunities to support such staffing. With permanent companies, officers would better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their subordinates and could tailor training to address those needs. Company fire scene responsibilities could be established and practiced until a high degree of skill is obtained. The challenge is putting together companies that can respond together; having officers and firefighters that work the same civilian job shifts and can thus work the same FD shift.</p>
<p>I like the idea of duty shifts, but do not think it will work for everyone's schedule. It sounds like there would require a lot of "swapping" and difficult to manage who is in fact on duty. If one or two members do not show for some reason, you are not going to get others to respond so you could end up in a situation where even less firefighters are available.</p>
<p>We would be able to better serve the community.</p>
<p>None</p>
<p>Duty shifts, whether responding from home or the station, would allow those not living close to the station the opportunity to get experience from making the truck/going on the call. The more firefighters that get live experience, the more well rounded the department will be. If only a select portion of the firefighters make calls all the time, you end up having an unbalanced department of experienced/trained firefighters and trained but inexperienced firefighters, if the experienced firefighters are unavailable due to vacation, sickness, injury or a family crisis then the village may see a drop in the level of service they have come to expect from our department.</p>
<p>Real commitment can stress families. Good to respond from home, scheduled shift</p>
<p>I think if the department goes to duty shifts, I feel many firefighters will resign because they do not wish to give up their limited time off.</p>
<p>If implemented at station 2 additional staffing would be required. One problem with duty shifts at station 2 would be that other than a handful of personal that live relatively near station 2, the rest of the personal live a considerable distance from the station and if those people</p>

<p>where on duty, response times would increase considerably. Currently if any of the few personal that live close to station 2 are unavailable, response times to get a truck out is usually in the 10+ minutes range.</p>
<p>Duty shifts would probably limit my ability to answer calls and could possibly affect my status with the department.</p>
<p>The shifts need to be attainable for people with full time jobs, kids and a spouse that works full time.</p>
<p>I think that firefighters on shift should be able to sleep at station if they want during there shifts ....sorry about this being late....long week at work...thank you</p>
<p>Last time I checked volunteering meant committing your own time when available. Duty shifts is not volunteering. I am not doing this for the money. I do it because I enjoy firefighting. I do it when I am available. I try to attend more calls if I have the chance, but I don't want to be "forced" to. I do not want to be forced to schedule time away from my family for 6 or 12 hours for 0-2 calls. If I can sign up for duty shifts then I would have consider scheduling one or two a month.</p>
<p>I think paid duty shifts are the way to go. I also think that having our own Fire/EMS would be our best option. 2 Paramedics and 2 Firefighters on a 24 hour rotation.</p>
<p>If Firefighters are required/expected to remain in the Village during their assigned shift, they should be getting paid or compensated for those hours. Scheduling will become a problem with having proper coverage and people not responding when they are on duty or coving their shift. A committee should be created to look at different scenarios for shift work, and let the Firefighters vote on the best one.</p>
<p>I believe duty shifts would enhance call response times and the number of individuals responding to the calls. I think that full time coverage would be a great thing for the department and for the community. It would also help the firefighters to be more efficient w/ the trucks and all of its equipment as well as being successful with driving the apparatus and knowing where you're going and doing a great job on scene.</p>
<p>I would like to see truck assignments designated, and no more than one probationary firefighters per/assignment.</p>
<p>If duty shifts are required and the shift requires me to be at the station then my time on HFD is probably done.</p>

Question 38

What comments would you like to include overall regarding staffing at the Fire Department?

<p>Text Answers</p>
<p>I think Howard Fire should work towards running its own EMS.</p>

I love it!
I believe something needs to be done for staffing and this survey is a good step. The Village is growing and call volume will continually grow. I understand the logic of why the Department changed the number of Firefighters assigned to a company. However, this change has made it hard for Firefighters to stay motivated when the only thing they do on a call is get out of bed and drive to the station just to sign in.
Let's go full-time
I think the day time staffing is adequate. I am planning on picking up some shifts in the future.
I can see the need - Everyone's situation is different, can help both the department and families if done right. Not everyone can do this. Look into each case. Don't need to lose FF's for the big one.
I think staffing wise, things are good, I am honored to work with this great group of individuals and learn from the more experienced firefighters and senior leadership.
None
One thing that I notice is the lack of urgency from some firefighters. If we would treat all alarms the same we would have a better turnout. Just my opinion.
N/A
My recent observations are that our day staff slots are more often being filled with less experienced firefighters. Often, neither of the firefighters are qualified engineers, which is concerning if we have emergency calls that must be answered. At least one person working day staff should be signed off as an engineer on E211. It complicates the staffing plan because HFD relies on volunteers to fill the slots, but many of the firefighters that are filling the slots have the prerequisites to become engineers, they have just chosen not to put in the time to complete the process.