

# World Class Service: Fire-Based EMS

## History

- 1960s, 1970s: Rapid development of the U.S. Emergency Medical System
- 1970: Wedwoth-Townsend Act (CA) formalizes, legalizes paramedics
- 1972: Johnny & Roy
- 1974: Littleton Fire Rescue starts CO's 1<sup>st</sup> fire-based paramedic program
- 1990s: Littleton, Castlewood, Parker started staffing transport units in combination w/ private ambulances
- 2000s: Full, fire-based transport model

## Benefits

- Continuity through entire 911 system: dispatch to hospital
- Demonstrated positive outcomes
- Medical director continuity, open to advanced skills
- Public health & other methods to holistically address community needs
- Station & equipment deployment model built for response times, future growth
- FF/PM cross training
- Diverse funding sources
- Resource mgmt. by SMFR
- Private ambulance service used to supplement coverage, as appropriate

## Consequences

- Private service challenges
  - Contract mgmt.
  - Performance expectations
  - Contract renewal, cost unpredictability
  - Demonstrated staffing, funding challenges
  - Demonstrated deployment challenges
  - Culture, working conditions

# World Class Service: 4-Person Staffing

## History

- Research
  - NIST study: high-rise, residential, EMS
- Industry standards
  - OSHA, NFPA
- SMFR labor/mgmt. initiative
  - 2008: started w/ ladder trucks
  - 2017: strategic plan initiative
  - 2021: Local 2086 CBA
  - 2024: complete

## Benefits

- Safety
  - Injured firefighter rescue
  - Scene supervision
  - Reduce fatigue, injury
- Fireground effectiveness
  - Deploying equipment
  - Operating apparatus (ladders)
  - Task distribution, quantity
  - Aggressive victim rescue
- EMS effectiveness
  - CPR success > national ave.
    - Return of Spontaneous Circulation (44% v 25%)
    - Neurologically intact saves (17% v 7.4%)
  - Advanced procedures
    - Rapid sequence intubation
- Overall response effectiveness
  - Less units dispatched
    - Alarms, unconfirmed fires
  - Less time on scene
  - Improved district coverage
  - Specialty unit staffing
  - ISO staffing criteria strengthened

## Consequences

- Scene safety challenges
- Task delay w/ fewer to perform
- Patient handling, treatment challenges
- Initial victim rescue challenge
- ISO rating challenge
- Specialty unit staffing, response delay
- More units dispatched, out of service, and not covering other areas of district

# World Class Service: Special Hazard Response

## History

- High-risk hazards
  - 3 reservoirs w/ recreation
  - Light rail
  - Heavy rail
  - 3 interstate highways
  - 3 rivers
  - Extreme weather
  - Airport
  - Wildland urban interface
  - Businesses
    - Research & development
    - Aerospace
- Special teams
  - Wildland fire
  - Dive/water rescue
  - Technical rescue
  - Urban search & rescue
  - Hazardous materials
  - SWAT medics
  - Aircraft rescue & fire fighting
  - Emergency management

## Benefits

- Robust response
- Highly qualified personnel
- Local, regional, national resource
- Law enforcement protection, partnership
- Economic support of community, business
- Emergency preplanning
- Coordination w/ local, state, federal agencies

## Consequences

- Reliance on external agencies
- Slower response of highly technical resources
  - Increased property damage
  - Increased life safety threat
- Less capability for active shooter & high-acuity threats
- Threat to economic drivers in business, community

# World Class Service: Holistic Prevention, Mitigation, Response

## History

- National model
  - Education
  - Engineering
  - Enforcement
  - Emergency Response
  - Evaluation
- SMFR Programs
  - Community Risk Reduction
  - Fire Marshal's Office
    - Construction
    - Existing business
    - Investigation
  - Emergency Management
  - Public Health
  - Special Teams
  - EMS
  - Emergency Services
  - Safety Foundation
  - Public Information

## Benefits

- Following national models for community risk reduction
- All components involved in various programs (e.g., senior safety, wildfire)
- Examples:
  - Demonstrated reduction in the growth of false alarms
  - Increased wildfire community engagement
- Meeting needs of district through evaluation of our specific calls and risks

## Consequences

- Limited interaction with at-risk populations
- Less proactive
- Reliance on emergency response
- Less community, partner engagement
- Difficulty w/ statutory compliance
- Less innovation and alignment w/ national expectations

# World Class Service: Future Response Models

## History

- Public Health Program
  - 2023: implemented
  - Community paramedic, community clinician (licensed social worker)
  - Focus
    - Aging in place
    - Mental health/substance abuse disorders
    - Homelessness
- Alternate response
  - Pilot program
  - Respond to high-frequency, low-acuity calls
  - Specialty unit, staffing

## Benefits

- Public Health Program
  - Decrease overuse of emergency response
  - Reduce ER visits
  - Patient resource navigation assistance
  - Patient quality of life
- Alternate response
  - Appropriate resource for call types
  - Keeps other units in service
  - Less staff on specialty units
  - Flexibility to increase resource needs

## Consequences

- Not able to explore effective ways to serve outside of the traditional 911 system
- More units out of service
- No other funding source to explore these programs

# Strong Infrastructure

## History

- Significant equipment
  - Radios \$1.2M
  - SCBAs \$6M
  - Life packs \$7.4M
  - Bunker gear \$900/yr
  - Replacement equipment \$400k/yr
- Stations
  - ~75 yr lifecycle
  - Rebuilds, extensive remodels
    - Residential construction
  - New growth: 3 stations, \$12M each
  - Placement based on response times, capabilities, density
- Facilities
  - Existing fleet/training: 1990's
  - New fleet \$30M
  - New training: \$35M
- Fleet
  - 10-15 yr front-line
  - 20 yr specialty apparatus
  - \$6.5M/yr

## Benefits

- Proactive maintenance
- Effective, modern equipment
- Less repair costs
- Effective emergency response
- Modern health, safety standards
- Serve new populations
- Limits inflation
- Limits downtime, out of service

## Consequences

- Safety concerns
- Demonstrated negative consequences of lack of infrastructure investment in neighboring agencies
- Inadequate fleet facility, service model
- Inadequate training facilities
  - Recruit training
  - Modern props
- Inability to fund rapidly-increasing costs
  - 2021-2025
    - Engine: 64% increase
    - Tower: 45% increase

# Employer of Choice: Total Compensation

## History

- Employer of choice measures total compensation
- Staff
  - 2021: Korn Ferry, general market, 75<sup>th</sup> percentile
  - Hiring range: 50-75<sup>th</sup>
- Line
  - 2025-2027: current CBA
  - 101% of top of market
  - Previous 3-yr contract caused SMFR wages to fall below market
  - 2025 salary increase: 10%
  - 2026, 2027 increase: 4%, 3.5%
- General
  - Benefits: EE contribution increased to 20% of total premium
  - Benefits lowered to 37.5% of salaries

## Benefits

- Recruitment of highest qualified employees to serve community
- Helps to address increased competition due to lower volume of qualified candidates
  - Paramedic applicant significant decline
- Line total compensation reflects high standards
  - Punitive & higher physical standards
  - Educational, certification, training requirements
  - Advanced ALS skills
- Staff hiring range provides flexibility and cost savings
- CBA compensates for work hour disparity (56-48hr)
- Commitment to evaluate future shift schedules

## Consequences

- Less competitive in market that already has less qualified applicants
- Paramedic competition is significant challenge to our ALS model
- Threat to employee retention
- Changing demographics of this generation of workforce equates to less longevity

# Firefighter Health & Wellness

## History

- 2012: Wellness Division concept started
- Service highlights
  - Cardiac CT scans
  - Mandatory fitness test
  - Annual physicals
  - Physical rehabilitation
  - Injury/illness care
  - Strength training, injury prevention
  - Recruit training
  - Behavioral health
  - Peer support
  - Neurofeedback
  - Employee assistance program
  - Modified duty

## Benefits

- Prevent top causes of firefighter death
  - Cancer
  - Cardiac disease
  - Suicide
- Less delay to evaluation & treatment
- Holistic treatment of injured to return to work stronger, healthier
- Improved fit-for-duty and health assessment protocol
- Demonstrated success of CT scans & rapid treatment

## Consequences

- Increased delays in treatment through traditional worker's comp system
  - Increased OT costs
  - Treatment delays
  - Limited PT treatment
- Pitfalls from past experience with cancer LODDs, cardiac near-misses
- Move away from prevention model
- Mental health support is still an area to be explored and expanded in emergency services



# Sustainability

## History

- Financial reserves
  - 2022 board policy
    - 20% operating reserves
    - 3% TABOR reserves
    - 23% total reserves
    - GFOA allows >19.7%
- Long-term capital investment
  - 2022 board policy
    - \$15M transfer per yr
    - Based on a 30-yr forecast
    - Current models, costs estimate higher investment needed

## Benefits

- Financial reserves
  - Compliance with TABOR
  - Full quarter of cash flow
  - Reduces need for loans
  - GFOA best practice
  - Higher debt rating
- Long-term capital investment
  - Fulfill long-term capital needs
  - Lifecycle replacement
  - Population growth
  - Align w/ strategic plan
  - Keep up w/ rising costs

## Consequences

- Financial reserves
  - Increases need for loans
  - Threat of TABOR non-compliance
  - Lower debt rating, debt options
- Long-term capital investment
  - Aging infrastructure
  - Reduce lifecycle replacements
  - Equipment, system downtime
  - Impact on response
  - Inadequate service to new growth

# Measurable Results

## History

- ISO
  - Class 1 prior to & after consolidation
  - Class 1 applies to non-hydranted areas (rural)
- Accreditation
  - SMFR (former), PFPD, CFPD, SMFRA, SMFR since 2003
  - We are first consolidated FD's to be accredited
  - Nationwide: 119 FD's Class 1 & Accredited

## Benefits

- ISO
  - Potential fire insurance discounts
  - Demonstrates ability to deliver water supply to rural areas at highest level
  - Independent measure of equipment, apparatus, staffing, deployment, training, water supply, community risk reduction, and dispatching
  - Positive marketing
- Accreditation
  - Independent, peer evaluation
  - Best practices: assess organization, evaluate risks, define services, commit resources, strategize for future, analyze performance
  - Embrace philosophy of continuous improvement
  - Contributes to ISO evaluation

## Consequences

- ISO (lowering)
  - Potential fire insurance increases
  - Ability to meet criteria has dropped below standards
  - Indication that relationship with water purveyors has deteriorated
  - Change in messaging from reported benefits of consolidation
- Accreditation
  - Negative impact on ISO rating
  - Risk of internal best practices deteriorating when no longer evaluated externally
- General
  - ISO/Accreditation have been achieved, not as an end goal, but as a way of showing & measuring the high level of service we provide. It should be based on community input & the funding they are willing to provide.