



City of Palo Alto

City Council Staff Report

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Report Type: Informational Report

Meeting Date: 12/1/2014

Summary Title: PAFD Performance Report FY15, Q1

Title: Palo Alto Fire Department Quarterly Performance Report for First Quarter Fiscal Year 2015

From: City Manager

Lead Department: Fire

Recommendation

Staff recommends City Council review and accept the Palo Alto Fire Department Quarterly Performance Report for the First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2015.

Background and Discussion

Performance measurement and reporting was identified as one of the key initiatives for the Palo Alto Fire Department (PAFD) in Fiscal Year 2015. As part of this initiative, the Fire Department will provide a quarterly informational performance report to the City Council and make this report available to the public on **the Department's** website.

The report provides overall calls for service information, as well as more detailed information on the key service areas, including Emergency Medical Services, Fire Suppression, Rescue and Hazardous Materials Response, and Fire Prevention. The report also provides information on mutual and automatic aid with our regional public safety partners and internal workforce planning efforts.

Performance measures include the following:

- **Calls for Service:** This data provides information on the final outcome of all emergency response calls. The data is tracked in **the Fire Department's Record Management System**, and uses standardized call type codes, which are defined by the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The report includes overall call volume by primary category, and a detailed listing of call type in the service type sections.
- **Response Times:** This aspect measures the time it takes from an emergency call or request for response being created in the dispatch center to the arrival of

resources to the scene of the emergency. This information is tracked in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System, and the performance goals, or service levels, are set by Council in accordance with county and national standards.

- Ambulance Transports: The report provides the number of ambulatory transports to hospitals or other medical care facilities, and the proportion of Emergency Medical Calls that included transports. This information is tracked in the **Fire Department's Emergency Medical Record Management System**.
- Fire Containment: This measures the proportion of building and structure fires that are contained to the area or room of origin.
- Mutual and Automatic Aid: This includes the number and proportion of all incidents in which the PAFD provided aid to neighboring communities, as well as the aid received from neighboring Fire Departments. This information is tracked in the CAD System.
- Permits: This provides the count of facility, electric vehicle, and solar permits issued by the Fire Prevention Bureau. This information is currently tracked in the **Development Center's Records Management System**.
- Inspections: A count of the total number of Hazardous Materials and State Mandated inspections is provided. In addition, an estimated number of inspections to be completed for the year is also provided to assess overall workload performance to date.
- Fire and Life Safety Plans Reviewed: This provides a total count of all plans reviewed, as well as the proportion of plans that were reviewed within the time guidelines.
- Vacancies and Off-Line Employees: This section provides the total number of budgeted full-time equivalent line personnel, current vacancies, and employees that are off line from workers compensation or light duty. This information is obtained **from the Fire Department's Staffing and Scheduling System (TeleStaff), as well as the City's Personnel Management System**.
- Succession Planning Metrics: This provides the number and proportion of line personnel that are eligible to retire, or will be eligible within the next five years. This information is tracked in **the City's Personnel Management System**. This report also provides the total number of hours line personnel have spent in an acting capacity. Personnel serving in an acting capacity are a key component of **the Department's overall succession planning efforts**. Acting capacity allows junior officers to learn the responsibilities of higher ranks with guidance from senior officers. This information is tracked in TeleStaff.

- Training hours: The total number of training hours completed by all line personnel is provided, as well as the average number of hours per each line personnel on staff. This information is tracked in **the Fire Department's Record Management System**. Local, State and Federal mandates require fire personnel to train a minimum of 20 hours per month.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: FY15 Q1 Report Cover Letter Signed (PDF)
- Attachment B: FY15 Q1 Report (DOCX)

City of Palo Alto

Fire Department

Dear City Councilmembers,

I am pleased to present the inaugural Palo Alto Fire Department Quarterly Performance Report. This report is part of an overall performance measurement initiative the Department has initiated for Fiscal Year 2015. This originated during the Strategic Planning Process conducted in Fiscal Year 2014, in which community stakeholders identified a clear desire for greater communication on the activities and performance of the Department.

This information not only helps us to communicate the activities of the department; it also helps to showcase the wide variety of services we provide to the community. As you will see in the report fighting fire is only a small portion of the services provided by the crews of the Palo Alto Fire Department to ensure the safety of the community.

This breadth of service and regional support we provide is also reflected in our new mission statement:

We are a professional team of women and men dedicated to safeguarding and enriching the lives of anyone, anytime, anywhere with compassion and pride.

Professionalism is recognized as one of the core values of the PAFD. Professionalism is ensuring we provide quality service and show a commitment to excellence. Assessing our performance helps us to identify areas where we are meeting our values and those where we may need to refocus.

As this is the initial report, we welcome your feedback and are happy to make changes to the layout, level of detail or content as you advise.

Sincerely,



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Fire Chief

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Palo Alto Fire Department Quarterly Performance Report Fiscal Year 2015, First Quarter

Calls for Service

The Palo Alto Fire Department (PAFD) responded to a total of 2,118 calls for service in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015 (July 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014). This includes responses within Palo Alto, Stanford, and neighboring cities to provide Auto and Mutual Aid. Approximately seventy-eight percent (78%) of calls are generated from Palo Alto, sixteen percent (16%) from Stanford, and the remainder from neighboring cities or requests for regional fire deployment.

The majority of calls were for Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, making up sixty-two percent (62%) of the responses. Table 1 below shows the main categories of the calls to which PAFD responded. Calls are classified based on the actual event occurred, rather than the initial call request.

Type	Number of Calls	Percent
Emergency Medical Service	1315	62.1%
Good Intent	343	16.2%
False Alarm & False Call	281	13.3%
Service Call	67	3.2%
Rescue & Hazardous Material	80	3.8%
Fire	32	1.5%
Grand Total	2118	100.0%

Good Intent and False Alarm calls make up the second largest types of responses. Most calls for service that may be a true threat of fire, gas or other emergency hazard are actually found to be something else after Firefighters investigate the situation. These calls are coded as Good Intent calls. As well, many fire alarm activations are from causes other than fire or emergency hazard. These situations are categorized as False Alarm calls.

Emergency Medical Services

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) is the primary service that the Palo Alto Fire Department provides to Palo Alto and Stanford. While this shift toward EMS is being seen across the region, the Palo Alto Fire Department is the only Fire Department in the County that provides ambulance and transport services.

This is especially valuable to our community, because the 2012 Council on Aging Silicon Valley Report indicates that Palo Alto has the highest percentage of the oldest seniors (75 and over) in the County. This population relies most on our services, with a service utilization rate more than six times greater than the rest of the population.

Of the 1,315 Emergency Medical Service calls the PAFD responded to in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015, the overwhelming majority were for medical, trauma and cardiac calls that did not involve a vehicle accident.

Table 2. EMS Performance Measures FY15 Q1

Calls for Service		
<u>NFIRS Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	
321	EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	1196
322	Vehicle accident with injuries	87
324	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries	19
323	Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident	11
381	Rescue or EMS standby	2
		Total 1315
Transports		
Number of Transports		996
Percent of EMS Calls resulting in transport		75.7%
Response Times		
Percent of first responder arriving on scene to EMS calls within 8 minutes		91.0%
Percent of paramedic responder arriving on scene to EMS calls within 12 minutes		96.2%
Median response time for first responder arriving on scene to EMS calls		05:11

Most EMS calls (76%) resulted in an ambulance transport to a local hospital or care facility. This is the primary source of revenue generated from emergency medical services, and revenue received in this quarter is on track with budget projections.

- ★ **Response Time Goal Met:** At least 90% of first responder arriving on scene to EMS calls within 8 minutes.

This quarter the PAFD first responder arrived on scene to EMS calls within 8 minutes ninety-one percent (91%) of the time.

- ★ **Response Time Goal Not Met:** At least 99% of paramedic responder arriving on scene to EMS calls within 12 minutes.

This quarter the PAFD paramedic responder arrived on scene to EMS calls within 12 minutes ninety-six percent (96%) of the time.

In January 2015, the Fire Department will have all units staffed with a paramedic as part of the deployment plan that provides 24 hour Advanced Life Support service. It is expected that the performance on this indicator will improve after these changes are implemented.


Fire Suppression

Very few of the potential fire calls coming into dispatch turn out to be a real fire once PAFD investigates the scene and cause of the concerning elements. This quarter PAFD responded to 32 calls where fire was present, and only 22 of those were in Palo Alto or Stanford.


As this quarter covers the height of fire season in California, many of the fire responses were the deployment of strike teams to assist with larger regional fires. The most notable of these was the Wilderness Lodge area Fire in Mendocino County. This fire was caused by lightning on July 30, 2014 and spread to a total of 12,536 acres. The Palo Alto Fire Department provided mutual aid to CalFIRE by sending 8 crew members on Engines 65 and 66, who were deployed for a total of 9 Days.

A total of 2,397 firefighters throughout California were deployed to fight this fire. Unfortunately eight firefighters suffered severe injuries fighting this fire, three of which were from our neighbors at Santa Clara County Fire. All crew members deployed from PAFD returned home safe and uninjured.

Table 3. Fire Performance Measures FY15 Q1		
Calls for Service		
<u>NFIRS Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	
111	Building fire	5
150	Outside rubbish fire, other	5
154	Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire	5
100	Fire, other	4
113	Cooking fire, confined to container	4
141	Forest, woods or wildland fire	4
131	Passenger vehicle fire	2
118	Trash or rubbish fire, contained	1
143	Grass fire	1
170	Cultivated vegetation, crop fire, other	1
	Total	32
Response Times		
	Percent of first responder arriving on scene to Fire calls within 8 minutes	82.3%
	Median response time for first responder arriving on scene to Fire calls	05:53
Fire Containment		
	Percent of building and structure fires contained to the room or area of origin	100%

 **Response Time Goal Not Met:** At least 90% of first responder arriving on scene to Fire calls within 8 minutes.

This quarter the PAFD first responder arrived on scene to Fire calls within 8 minutes eighty-two percent (82%) of the time. This is on target with historical performance on this measure, which typically is eighty-one percent (81%) to eighty-two percent (82%). The Fire Department is in the process of conducting a Community Focused Integrated Risk Management Assessment, which is expected to help management identify data informed ways to improve performance in this area.

 **Fire Containment Goal Met:** At least 90% of building and structure fires contained to the room or area of origin.

This quarter the PAFD contained one hundred percent (100%) of building and structure fires to the room or area of origin.

Since the frequency of these calls and incidents is rare, the performance measures are based on a very small number of data points causing the performance to fluctuate frequently based on the outcome of single events.

There was only one building or structure fire within Palo Alto this quarter. The remaining four that PAFD responded to were for mutual aid to other cities; in those cases the final confined to area information is unavailable. The building fire occurred at 505 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, CA on July 16, 2014. There was fire present on the roof, and when crews arrived on scene the fire had been extinguished by construction crews.

Rescue and Hazardous Materials

The Fire Department responded to a total of 80 rescue and hazardous material calls. The most common rescue call is for the removal of victims from a stalled elevator, which accounts for twenty-three percent (23%) of these call types. Followed by that, are gas leak calls. When combining utilities related and other gas leak calls, this accounts for another twenty-three percent (23%) of rescue and hazardous material calls.

Table 4. Rescue and Hazardous Materials Measures FY15 Q1		
Calls for Service		
NFIRS Code	Description	
353	Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator	18
412U	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG) - PA Utilities Related	14
400	Hazardous condition, other	7
331	Lock-in (if lock out , use 511)	6
411	Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill	5
412	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	4
413	Oil or other combustible liquid spill	4
442	Overheated motor	3
445	Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	3
381	Rescue or EMS standby	2
440	Electrical wiring/equipment problem, other	2
444	Power line down	2
444U	Power line down - PA Utilities Related	2
451	Biological hazard, confirmed or suspected	2
463	Vehicle accident, general cleanup	2
351	Extrication of victim(s) from building/structure	1
410	Flammable gas or liquid condition, other	1
423	Refrigeration leak	1
443	Light ballast breakdown	1
Total		80
Response Times		
Median response time for first responder arriving on scene to Rescue & Hazardous Materials calls		06:41

Mutual and Automatic Aid

The Fire Department has automatic aid agreements with five regional Fire Departments, including Mountain View, Menlo Park, Woodside, Los Altos, and Santa Clara County Fire. The Department implemented a virtual consolidation effort with the cities of Mountain View and Los Altos. This included an expanded and enhanced CAD system, a dedicated radio channel for the three cities, and multi-band radios that can communicate with other public safety agencies. All resources from the three cities are now able to be dispatched directly based on Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), so the closest resource is dispatched no matter the city designation.

We have been closely monitoring the impact of this, and preliminary data shows an increase in the number of automatic aid calls Palo Alto has responded to in Mountain View. The Department is working closely with Mountain View to increase coordination efforts and ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources.

In this quarter, the PAFD provided mutual or automatic aid to nine other jurisdictions on a total of 116 incidents. Four agencies provided mutual or automatic aid for calls within Palo Alto or Stanford on a total of 110 incidents.

Table 5. Mutual and Automatic Aid Performance Measures FY15 Q1

Mutual and Auto Aid Provided			
<u>Agency</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
Mountain View Fire	78	67.2%	
Santa Clara County Fire	4	3.4%	
Los Altos and Los Altos Hills	19	16.4%	
Menlo Park Fire	7	6.0%	
East Palo Alto	4	3.4%	
San Jose Fire	2	1.7%	
San Mateo Fire	1	0.9%	
Cal Fire	1	0.9%	
<i>All Mutual and Auto Aid Provided</i>		116	100.0%
Mutual and Auto Aid Received			
<u>Agency</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
Mountain View Fire	51	46.4%	
Menlo Park Fire	37	33.6%	
Santa Clara County Fire	16	14.5%	
Woodside Fire	6	5.5%	
<i>All Mutual and Auto Aid Received</i>		110	100.0%

Fire Prevention

The Fire Prevention Bureau ensures compliance with the Fire Code for the safety of occupants and protection of property. Fire Inspectors perform fire sprinkler and fire alarm plan checks, permitting, and field inspections with the goal of ensuring all construction complies with local and national codes.

The Bureau has 6.0 FTE Fire and Hazardous Material Inspector positions approved by Council, and one additional Line Personnel has been specially assigned to assist with the growing workload over the last quarter. These positions are budgeted in the Development Center Department, but report to the Fire Marshall and Fire Chief. A total of 147 permits were issued, 115 sites were inspected, and all 160 plans reviewed were on time. A third of all State Mandated inspections were completed in the first quarter this Fiscal Year. This is primarily because all school inspections are completed prior to the start of the school year.

This quarter the Bureau worked to develop code updates for smoke detectors and system reporting. It is expected that these updates will be brought forward for Council approval in early 2015.

The Fire Marshall has been working closely with Accela to complete the platform design and functionality requirements for the robust electronic fire permitting system. This is planned for full deployment by the end of next quarter. The new system will increase efficiency with information sharing between departments and allow developers and the public to view project status in real time.

Table 6. Prevention Bureau Performance Measures FY15 Q1	
Permits	
Facility Permits Issued	99
Electric Vehicle Permits Issued	11
Solar Permits Issued	37
Inspections	
Hazardous Material Inspections Completed	83
Number of Hazardous Material Inspections for FY15	270
Percent of Hazardous Material Facilities Inspections Complete	30.7%
State Mandated Inspections Completed	32
Number of State Mandated Inspections for FY15	96
Percent of State Mandated Facilities Inspections Complete	33.3%
Fire and Life Safety Plan Review	
Plans Reviewed	160
Percent of Reviews Completed On-Time	100%

Workforce Planning

The Department operates daily emergency response operations with a total of 96.00 FTE line personnel. This includes three battalions of crews that staff six stations in the City and Stanford 24 hours each day, and a seventh fire station in Foothills Park seasonally. Over the last quarter, the department has operated with 8.0 positions vacant and 4.0 employees off-line creating a total of 12.00 FTE positions that require backfilling.

The permanent vacancies are primarily within the Battalion Chief and Fire Captain Classifications. The Department is focusing on completing promotional processes this Fiscal Year, and is not planning an entry level hiring process until FY16. In the First Quarter, the PAFD completed the planning and test formulation for the Battalion Chief’s promotional process. Final interviews are currently underway, and it is expected these positions will be filled internally before the end of November. This will include the appointment to the newly created Training Battalion Chief, which was added by Council in the FY15 Operating Budget.

The Training Battalion Chief will be vital to ramping up succession planning and training efforts. This focus toward succession planning is becoming increasingly important as 39.8% of all line personnel will be eligible to retire within the next five years. One of the most common practices for less senior personnel to gain additional experience is to spend time in an Acting capacity. This allows personnel to gain direct experience in a higher level role, under close guidance of more senior personnel. In the First Quarter of this year personnel completed a total of 9,048 Acting hours.

Table 7. Workforce Planning Measures FY15 Q1

Vacancies and Off-Line Employees					
<u>Classification</u>	<u>Budgeted FTE</u>	<u>Vacancies</u>	<u>Off-Line Employees (Workers Comp/Light Duty)</u>	<u>Personnel On Line</u>	<u>Percent of Personnel On Line</u>
Battalion Chief	4.00	3.00	0.00	1.00	25%
Fire Captain	22.00	4.00	0.00	18.00	82%
Fire Apparatus Operator & Fire Fighters	70.00	1.00	4.00	65.00	93%
TOTAL	96.00	8.00	4.00	84.00	88%
Succession Planning					
Number of Line Personnel Currently Eligible to Retire					11
Number of Line Personnel Eligible to Retire in Five Years					24
Percent of all Line Personnel Eligible to Retire within Five Years					39.8%
Number of Acting Battalion Chief Hours					1,296
Number of Acting Captain Hours					4,398
Number of Acting Apparatus Operator Hours					3,346
Training					
Hours of Training Completed					8,051
Average Hours per Line Personnel					92.54

Training is crucial component of succession planning and to preparing personnel to most effectively respond to emergency incidents. In this quarter, fire personnel completed a total of 8,051 hours of training. This amounts to an average of 92 hours per line employee. The common training topics are Fire Fighting Strategy, Apparatus Operation, and Paramedic and Emergency Medical techniques and tools.

Apparatus Operation training hours were particularly high this quarter, making up twenty-nine percent (29%) of all training. This is primarily from training hours required for driver certification on the Tiller Truck that the Department secured in June 2014.