

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



PORT ALBERNI FIRE DEPARTMENT



City Council



At the time of publishing this report, Council for the City of Port Alberni is formulating a new Vision and Strategic Plan for the City. The Port Alberni Fire Department’s Operational Targets set out below are subject to change, if required by Council’s strategic direction.

Operational Targets

- Prepare firehall for future male and female workforce
 - Install women’s shower facility
- Support Council in adoption of new Fire Control Bylaw
- Support Council in considering revision of Fireworks Control Bylaw to enable organized use of prohibited devices (fire crackers) for groups such as cultural societies
- Prepare internal candidates to fill future officer-level vacancies (succession planning)
- Support Council in resolving outstanding issue of fire protection service in Franklin River Road Service Area
- Work with partner fire departments in preparation to host the 2016 BC Fire Training Officers Annual Conference

Port Alberni Fire Department

Mission Statement

The Port Alberni Fire Department is a compassionate and professional organization committed to the protection of life, property and the environment, the avoidance of harm, and the elimination of suffering.

Vision Statement

A progressive and dynamic organization, committed to excellence in the delivery of services.

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FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – YEAR IN REVIEW



During 2014, a two-firefighter response model was implemented for medical incident responses. That change was not broadly supported within the fire department, which resulted at times in attention being drawn away from many other good things that occurred during the year.

The City's 49 year old firehall continued to be maintained and upgraded. In 2014 all movable vehicle exhaust extraction equipment was replaced. The City purchased equipment to replace the third of four City-owned Tsunami Warning System towers that had exceeded its 20 year life expectancy. After over 25 years of use, the last of the City's large volume fire hose was replaced.

In response to a retirement at the end of 2013, Firefighter Tony Booth was hired in January 2014. Later in the year, Firefighter Cody Hunsberger was hired to replace a fire department member who was off duty due to a long term illness. Both Firefighters Booth and Hunsberger were welcome and productive additions to the department.

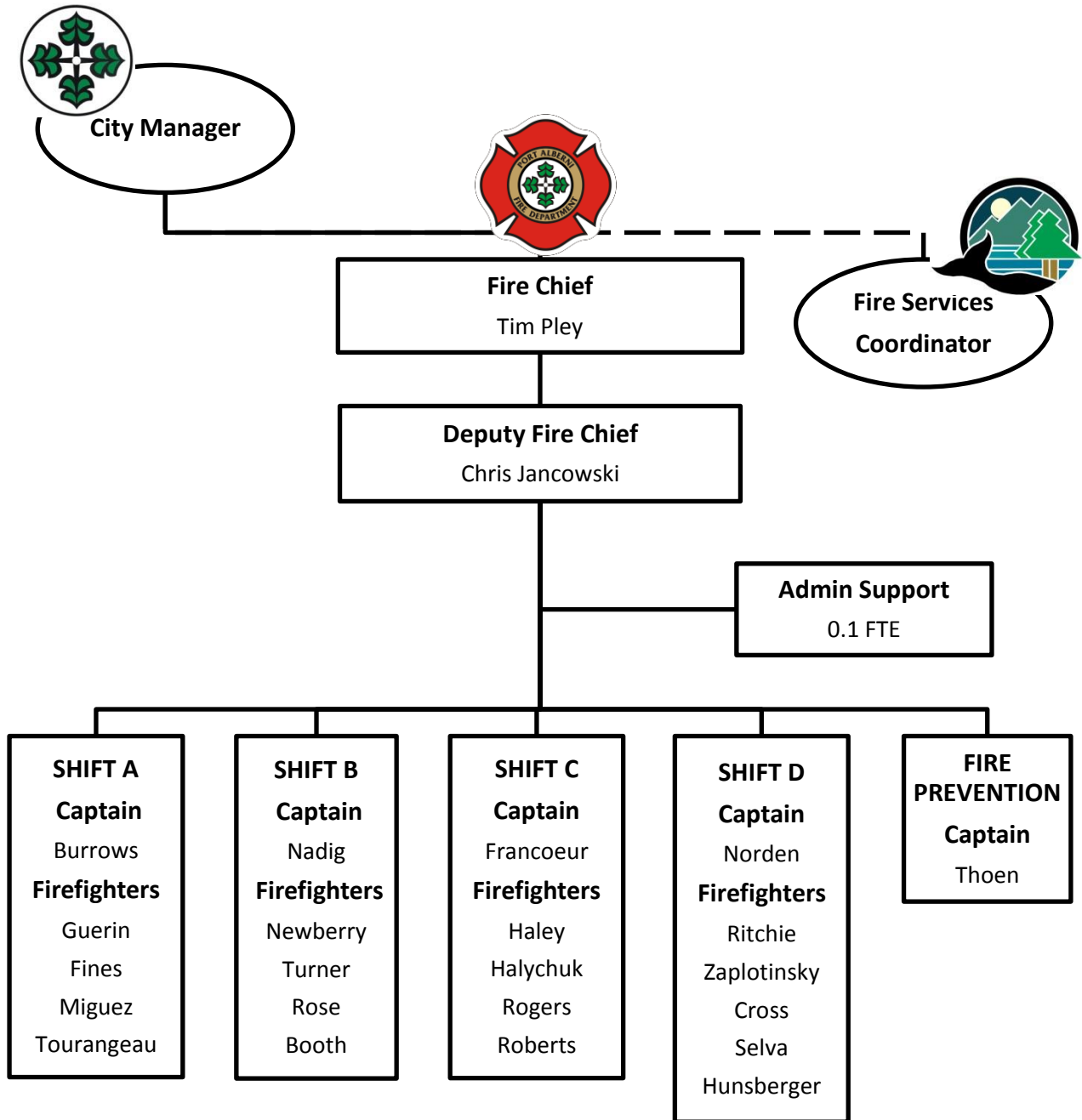
The summer of 2014 presented wildfire conditions over much of the province of BC that had not been experienced since 2003. The Province's Wildfire Management Branch reached out to Port Alberni Fire Department for assistance in providing coverage locally for wildfire Initial Attack services. The success of our partnership with the Wildfire Management Branch during the summer of 2014 demonstrated both the need for partnering between different levels of government and the potential for the City to lead locally in provision of emergency response services.

After several high profile explosions and fires in sawmill facilities in BC, two of which resulted in fatalities, the province mandated a dust mitigation program for wood dust producing facilities. This brought to light the fact that in many communities, Port Alberni included, local governments were not meeting their obligations to conduct regular inspections of sawmills. In January 2014, the Port Alberni Fire Department initiated an industrial facility fire inspection program ... without the addition of any new resources. By making this program a department priority, and by examining the workload of the City's only fire inspector, finding efficiencies and shedding some non-core workload, the fire department fully met its 2014 industrial facility fire inspection plan.

I would like to express my thanks to all fire department personnel for the professional manner in which they approached their work during 2014, seeking ways to be successful in serving our community even during times when they might not have agreed with organizational direction. My thanks also to Chief Fire Prevention Officer Randy Thoen who demonstrated in 2014 his professionalism and competence in not only taking on the new workload of industrial fire inspections, but also in the stellar manner in which he met all of the deadlines that we established for that program. And lastly to Deputy Chief Chris Jancowski for his leadership during 2014 when, more than any other year, he helped to lead our group through the challenges that we confronted together.

"The success of our partnership with the Wildfire Management Branch during the summer of 2014 demonstrated both the need for partnering between different levels of government and the potential for the City to lead locally in provision of emergency response services."

ORGANIZATION PROFILE



PERSONNEL

New Members

Firefighter Tony Booth

In January 2014, Tony Booth was hired to replace a member who had retired the previous year. Tony, his wife and two children have been long term residents of the Alberni Valley. Tony had worked for the Canadian Coast Guard for 13 years, where he gained invaluable experience responding to marine emergencies. Tony’s Coast Guard experience has helped to make him a valuable addition to the Port Alberni Fire Department.



Prior to joining PAFD, Tony had been a volunteer firefighter in the Alberni Valley with the Beaver Creek Volunteer Fire Department. His fire training includes National Fire Protection Association 1001 standard qualifications from Kilgore College Fire Academy in Texas.



Firefighter Cody Hunsberger

In June 2014, Cody Hunsberger was hired to fill a temporary staffing vacancy. Cody took a six month leave of absence from his full time position as a firefighter with Salt Spring Island Fire Department in order to come to work in Port Alberni. While working with PAFD, Cody brought to us some new ideas and perspectives which made our department better. We hope that we were also able to send Cody back to Salt Spring Island Fire Department with experiences that will help him to be a better firefighter during his career.

Awards

20 Year Exemplary Service Medal

Rick Newberry

Firefighter /Acting Captain, Rick Newberry received an Exemplary Service Medal after 20 years of fire service. Firefighter Newberry began his fire service career with Cherry Creek Volunteer Fire Department in 1994. He joined the Port Alberni Fire Department in May of 2000.

Firefighter Newberry is an Acting Captain, which means that when his shift Captain is not at work, Firefighter Newberry steps up into the Acting Captain leadership role.



Two Firefighter Response Model - Medical

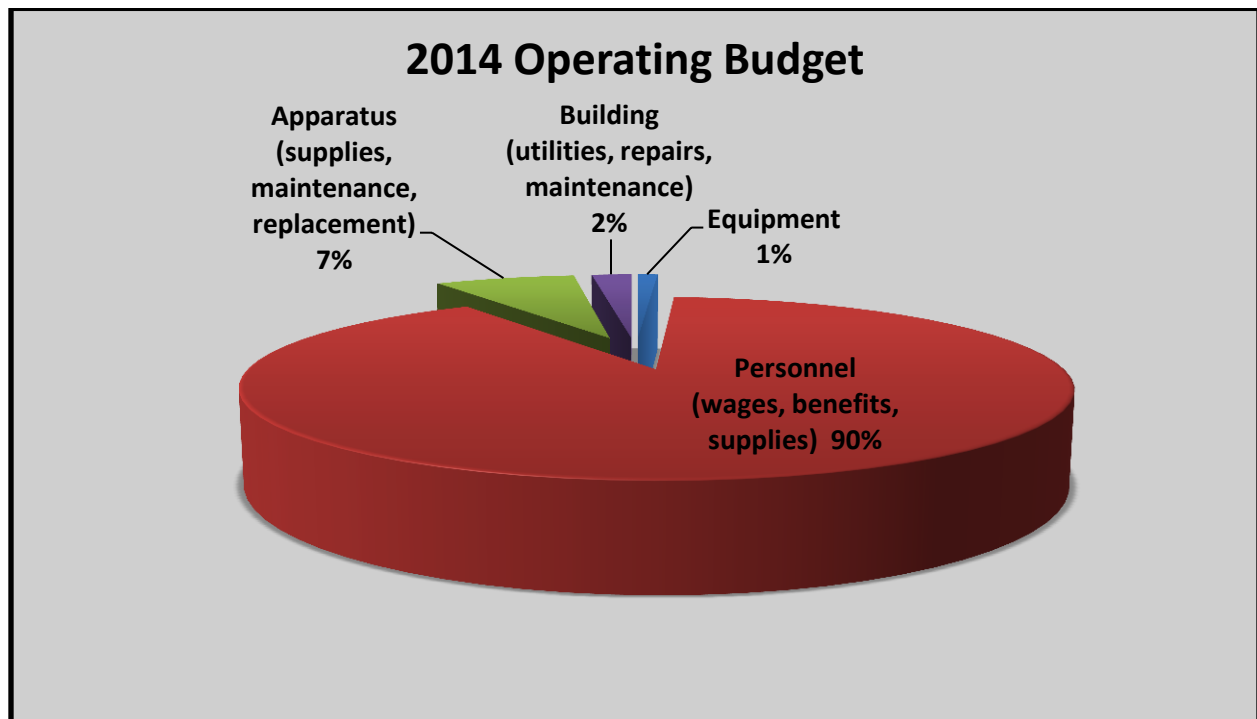
In January 2014, the Port Alberni Fire Department re-implemented a two firefighter response model for medical incidents. That response model had been used in Port Alberni prior to 1992 when the department provided ambulance services. Considerable work was done throughout the year fine tuning the renewed response model, responding to questions and concerns from firefighters, and providing training to personnel.

While implementation of the two firefighter response model created some internal challenges early in 2014, it also provided some good value to the City. Approximately 500 medical responses were completed with the department’s light rescue truck rather than with a full sized fire engine. At this rate the department’s front line fire engine will make an estimated 5,000 fewer responses over the ten years that it is front line. This represents a considerable savings on fuel, wear and tear, and supports the City’s cost saving program that extends the lives of fire apparatus from 20 to 30 years.

There were several situations during 2014 where the new response model enabled the fire department to respond to two medical emergencies at the same time, thus providing a significant improvement in level of service provision in those situations. Given the expected increase in medical emergencies in coming years, this response model is expected to enable consistent response by the fire department to those emergencies without delaying the response of a fire engine in the event that fires occur at the same time.

OPERATING BUDGET

The 2014 Port Alberni Fire Department operating budget was \$3,084,453.



Industry standards for fire departments utilizing career staff are 85 – 95% of costs being associated to personnel.

2014 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Tsunami Warning System Replacement Project

The City owns and operates a Tsunami Warning System that is utilized to provide early warning to people living within the tsunami inundation zone in the event of an impending tsunami. That system was installed in the early 1990s using grant funds from the Government of Canada. The Tsunami Warning System equipment had a 20 year life expectancy.

In 2012 the City adopted a five year plan that included planned replacement of one Tsunami Warning System station in each of the first four years, and installation of a new fifth station in the final year of the five year plan. In 2014, equipment to replace the third station was purchased.

A local firm, Alberni Communications and Electronics does regular maintenance of the Tsunami Warning System, and has been retained each year to complete work involved in replacing station equipment. Bailey Electric, another local company, has also been involved in this project.

In 2012 a third party consulting firm was retained to evaluate the poles supporting the equipment. Those poles, all Western Red Cedar, are in excellent condition and expected to remain in similar condition for at least the next seven years.



Vehicle Exhaust Extraction System

The fire station houses two separate fan systems to extract diesel exhaust from the building. Every diesel burning vehicle is connected to one of the exhaust extraction systems. Diesel exhaust is known to be carcinogenic. Employers are obligated under WorkSafe BC regulations to provide for removal of exhaust fumes from enclosed areas where firefighters are working.

In 2014 all moveable exhaust extraction system components were replaced, in all five bays that house diesel apparatus. A local firm, Alberni Valley Refrigeration, was contracted to complete the work.

Large Diameter Supply Hose

Large diameter water supply hose is used to move large volumes of water from fire hydrants to fire engines. This hose is dropped and dragged on asphalt roadways, and is exposed to significant abrasion and degradation from road grit, salt and oils.

With the exception of the hose on one fire engine, all other large diameter supply hose used by the City was over 25 years of age, and beginning to fail during annual hose testing. In 2012 we replaced the entire inventory of supply hose on Engine #5, 1200 feet. In 2014 we replaced the supply hose on the remainder of our fleet, 2 engines and one ladder truck.



TRAINING AND OPERATIONS



Training

The Port Alberni Fire Department was very active in training during 2014. Members of the department participated in over 2,748 hours of training in preparation to serve the community's needs. This training was a combination of daily skills maintenance and acquiring new skills such as waterfront pier rescue skills. The department continued to train with other partner agencies such as the Port Alberni Port Authority, Ministry of Forest and West Coast General Hospital.

Operations

The department responded to 1,272 incidents in 2014, an increase of 11.9% over the previous year. These calls ranged from structural fires to public assistance requests.

A notable event in 2014 was a fire in a large multi-tenant building on lower Argyle Street in January. This fire challenged the resources of the department due to the size and the extreme cold weather.

The department also experienced weather events such as August 12th that involved a lightning storm during one of the driest days in the summer. This event created six emergency responses over a half hour period ranging from power line issues to building alarms.

In the second week of December the department also assisted during the flooding events within the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District. This assistance was focused in two areas; the Hector Road area of the Tseshaht First Nations Reserve and assisting in the co-ordination of response to flooding in the Ferguson Road area of Beaver Creek.



Improvements to department operations included the addition of pre-connected supply lines to all fire apparatus equipped with fire pumps. These pre-connected lines reduce the time it takes to connect to water supplies that support a more efficient fire ground operation.

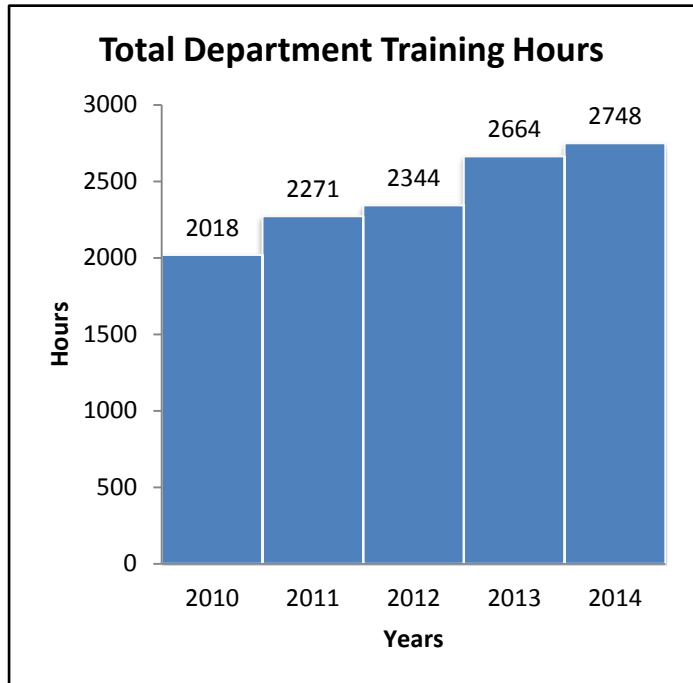
Another operational highlight during 2014 was the partnering with the Wildfire Management Branch. This partnership involved fire department members being oriented to conduct initial size up and operations, and acting on behalf of the Ministry of Forests in the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District.



Training Summary



Life jacket training at Echo Centre - thanks to Barb Wilkins and pool staff for their support



List of Training Courses / Workshops

COURSE	LOCATION	HOURS
Workplace Roles and Responsibilities	Port Alberni	4 Hours
Fire Service Instructor Level 1	Port Alberni	20 Hours
Fire Officer 1 (Company Inspections)	Correspondence	40 Hours
Fire Officer 1 (Administrators 1)	Correspondence	40 Hours
Small Vessel Operation Proficiency (SVOP)	Port Alberni, North Island College	32 Hours
Radio Operators Certificate – Marine (ROC-M)	Port Alberni, North Island College	8 Hours
Marine Emergency Duties (MED-A3)	Port Alberni, North Island College	8 Hours
Fire Chiefs Conference	Victoria, BC	40 Hours
FDM Conference	Vancouver, BC	24 Hours
Supervisor Level 1	Port Alberni	24 Hours
Car Seat Installation Workshop	Port Alberni	16 Hours
First Responder Instructor Techniques Update	Qualicum Beach	24 Hours
Rope Rescue	Maple Ridge, BC	32 Hours
Rope Rescue	Maple Ridge, BC	32 Hours
Rope Rescue	Maple Ridge, BC	32 Hours
Industrial Tower Crane Rescue	Maple Ridge, BC	24 Hours

Some of the above training was completed by more than one Fire Department member in 2014.

New Training Initiatives in 2014

In 2014, the department continued its skill development by replacing one of the Rope Rescue Instructors within our Technical High Angle Rope Rescue Program. The department also conducted training in support of the community’s growing waterfront. This waterfront training prepared members of the department to rescue people from elevated piers and structures.

The department also continued with previous years initiatives such as child car seat installation. This service is now offered to parents in the community and has been positively received.



Fire department personnel at Wildfire Management Branch Orientation - August 2014



Firefighter Tourangeau learns how to correctly install infant car seat

Regional Training

During 2014 the department continued to lead regional training initiatives. These initiatives include conducting weekly training, weekend workshops and formalized courses through our North Island College Partnership.

In addition, the Port Alberni Fire Department and North Island College assisted fire departments in the mid-island area by hosting a Basic Train the Trainer course. That course was attended by several departments from the island.

The Department’s successful partnership with the Ucluelet Fire Department has transitioned into a role of support. This support has seen the Ucluelet Firefighters co-deliver instruction to their members internally, building internal capacity.



Photo of Fire Service Instructor Level 1 training

External Training Facilitated by P.A.F.D.

DEPARTMENT	COURSE	HOURS
Ucluelet Fire Department	Weekly and Bi-Weekly Fire Training (NFPA 1001 Program)	2 Hour Sessions (20 sessions)
Coombs-Hilliers Fire Department	Bi-Weekly Fire Training (NFPA 1001 Program)	2 Hour Sessions (24 sessions)
Tofino Fire Department	Weekly and Bi-Weekly Fire Training (NFPA 1001 Program)	2 Hour Sessions (20 sessions)
	Hazardous Materials Awareness	8 Hour Session
	Emergency Scene Traffic Control	6 Hour Session
Beaver Creek Fire Department	NFPA 1001 Evaluations	Multiple 2-4 Hour Sessions
North Island College	SCBA Training	4 Hour Sessions

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS
RESPONSE TIMES**

Considerable work has been done at PAFD in recent years to decrease response times to emergencies.

Fires in structures grow in size and severity exponentially over time. Associated damage to property and threat to life also increase exponentially over time as a fire grows unchecked.

The best way to stop fire growth, and associated risk and damage, is to assemble the necessary personnel and equipment at the scene of the fire, in order to control the fire near or at the point of ignition. In other words, fires are best controlled and extinguished when firefighters enter the structure as quickly as possible, and suppress the fire where it first ignited.

Therefore, one of the best measures of the efficiency of a municipality’s fire protection services is the time elapsed between the first call to 911 and the time when a full crew arrives on scene at the fire, ready to enter the structure and control the growth of the fire.

Likewise, the potential for survival from some medical emergencies decreases significantly as the response time of emergency personnel increases. Minutes and seconds in some cases can literally make the difference between life and death.

In the case of both structure fires and medical emergencies, outcomes are closely tied to response times. PAFD continues to strive for the fastest possible response times in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for those in need of our services.

Emergency Response Standards and Performance:

Level and Timeliness of Response

The City of Port Alberni has adopted an initial response goal of four (4) firefighters with a travel time of four minutes or less, 90% of the time. This standard of care reflects recognized best practices while adhering to WorkSafe BC regulations.

While WorkSafe BC does not set regulations for level of service, it does require that before firefighters can enter into a building or other enclosed space for the purposes of suppressing a fire, there must first be assembled at that incident a minimum of four (4) firefighters. See excerpt from WorkSafe BC regulations below;

WorkSafe BC Regulation excerpt

31.23 Entry into buildings

(1) When self-contained breathing apparatus must be used to enter a building, or similar enclosed location, the entry must be made by a team of at least 2 firefighters.

(2) Effective voice communication must be maintained between firefighters inside and outside the enclosed location.

(3) During the initial attack stages of an incident at least one firefighter must remain outside.

(4) A suitably equipped rescue team of at least 2 firefighters must be established on the scene before sending in a second entry team and not more than 10 minutes after the initial attack.

(5) The rescue team required by subsection (4) must not engage in any duties that limit their ability to make a prompt response to rescue an endangered firefighter while interior structural firefighting is being conducted.

NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments

Fire Department **Total Response Time** to incidents is made up of several components broken down below;

- Alarm Handling which includes,
 - Call Answering (Public Service Answering Point) (PSAP)
 - PSAP Call Handling
 - Alarm Processing Time (Fire Dispatch Center)
- Turnout Time (PAFD)
- Travel Time (PAFD)

Of the above components that make up Total Response Time, PAFD controls only Turn Out Time and Travel Time. Other components of Total Response Time are controlled by the 911 call answering and dispatch service providers.

Turnout Time

The time interval that begins when the emergency response facility's and emergency response units' notification process begins by either audible alarm or visual annunciation, or both, and ends at the beginning point of travel time.

Over recent years PAFD personnel have made considerable effort to improve turnout times. Performance has improved significantly, especially when compared to performance 10 or more years ago.

Turnout times are often not reported in the fire service, largely because many fire departments do not perform at a level that meets the NFPA 1710 Standard, and because many fire departments do not share the same level of commitment to excellence and commitment to transparent reporting as does the City of Port Alberni.

Established standards (NFPA 1710) for Turnout Time are;

Medical Incidents 60 seconds 90% of the times
 Fire and Special Operations 80 seconds 90% of the times

Based on 1272 emergency responses to such calls in 2014, PAFD met the above-noted standards for Turnout Time;

Medical Incidents 80 % of times
 Fire and Special Operations 80 % of times

Average Turnout Times for PAFD in 2014 were;

Medical Incidents 45 seconds (44 seconds in 2013)
 Fire and Special Operations 61 seconds (62 seconds in 2013)

Travel Time

Travel Time is defined as the time interval that begins when a unit is enroute to the emergency incident and ends when the unit arrives at scene.

Established standards (NFPA 1710) for Travel Time are;

Medical Incidents arrival of a first responder unit 240 seconds (4 minutes) 90% of the times
 Fire Incidents first arriving unit 240 seconds (4 minutes) 90% of the times
 Fire Incidents full alarm assignment (15 firefighters) 480 seconds (8 minutes) 90% of the times

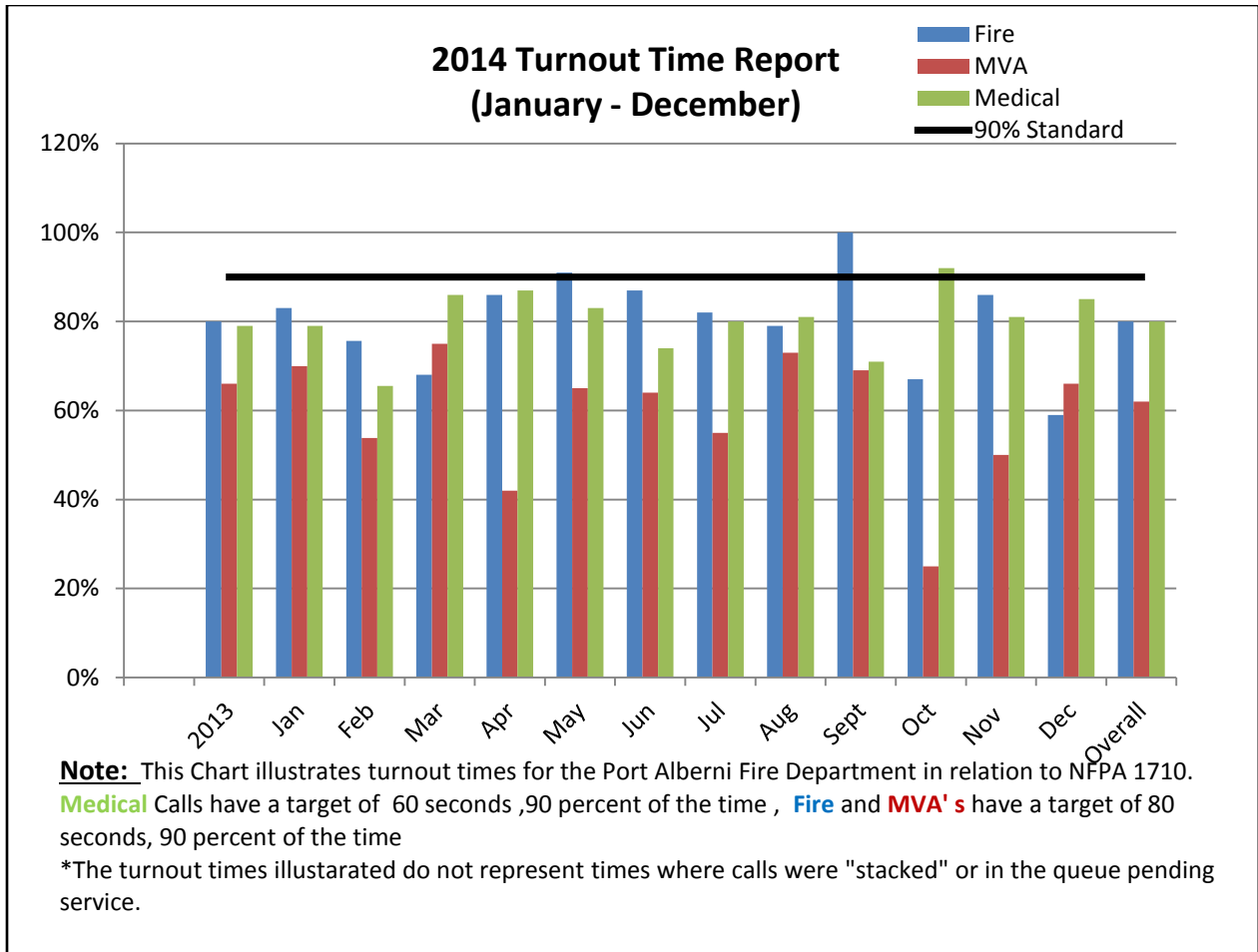
Based on 2014 emergency responses to calls, PAFD met the above-noted standards for Travel Time;

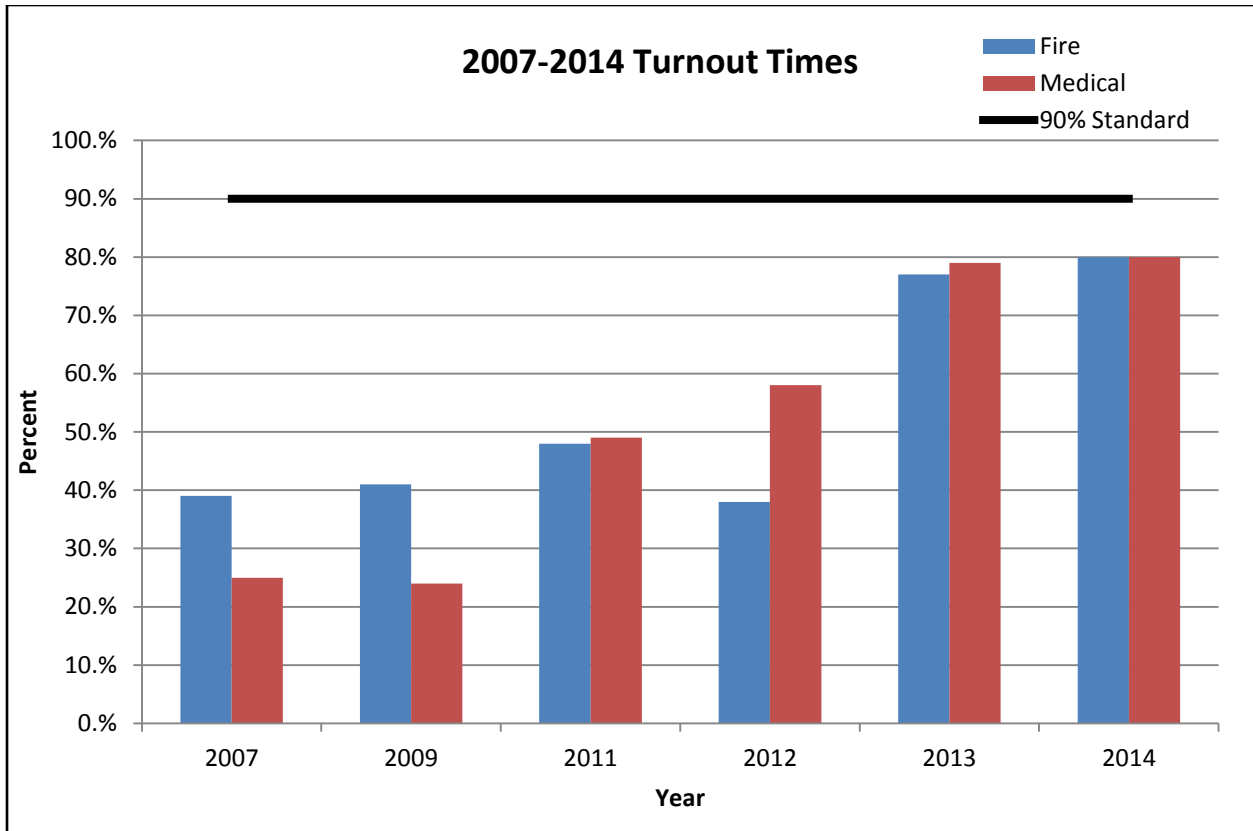
Medical Incidents 65 % of times
 Fire Incidents first arriving unit 54 % of times
 Fire Incidents full alarm assignment 0 % of times

TURNOUT TIME AND TRAVEL TIME - 2014		
ITEM	STANDARD	PAFD PERFORMANCE
Turn out time – Medical Calls	60 seconds 90% of the times	60 seconds 80% of times
Turn out time – Fire Calls	80 seconds 90% of the times	80 seconds 80% of times
Travel Times – Medical Calls	240 seconds 90% of the times	240 seconds 65% of times
Travel Times – Fire Calls	240 seconds 90% of the times	240 seconds 54% of times
Full Assignment – Fire Calls	480 seconds 90% of the times	480 seconds 0% of the times

Notes:

1. Average turnout time for medical calls in 2014 was 45 seconds, better than the 60 second standard. The threshold of 60 seconds was met 80% of the times, just below the standard.
2. PAFD does not meet the standard for turnout time for fire and special operations calls (80 seconds 90% of the times) having achieved that mark 80% of the time.
3. Where PAFD does not meet travel time standards (240 seconds) options for improvement are external to fire department operations.
4. PAFD does not meet the standard for full assignment arrival (15 firefighters in 8 minutes). This standard is generally satisfied by fire departments in larger urban areas by allocating resources from multiple fire stations, and/or multiple fire apparatus from one station. PAFD responds with one crew of 4 firefighters from one station, and simultaneously dispatches two apparatus (4 firefighters each) from neighbouring fire departments, plus paging out of off duty PAFD personnel.



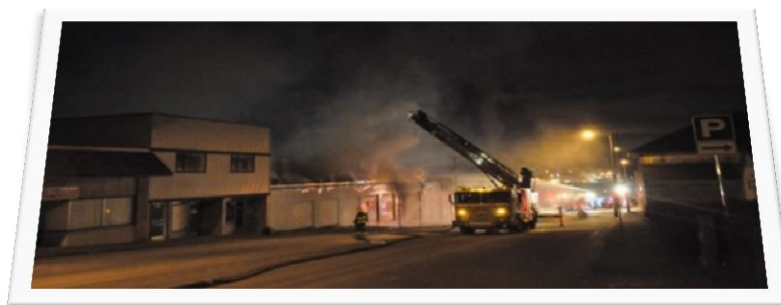


One ongoing goal is to maintain, and if possible, improve turnout time performance. Fire department personnel have engaged fully in pursuit of this goal, and have demonstrated commendable commitment and ownership of the issue.

Turnout time performance meeting the standard time threshold 80% of the time for fire calls and 80% of the time for medical calls falls short of the 90% standard.

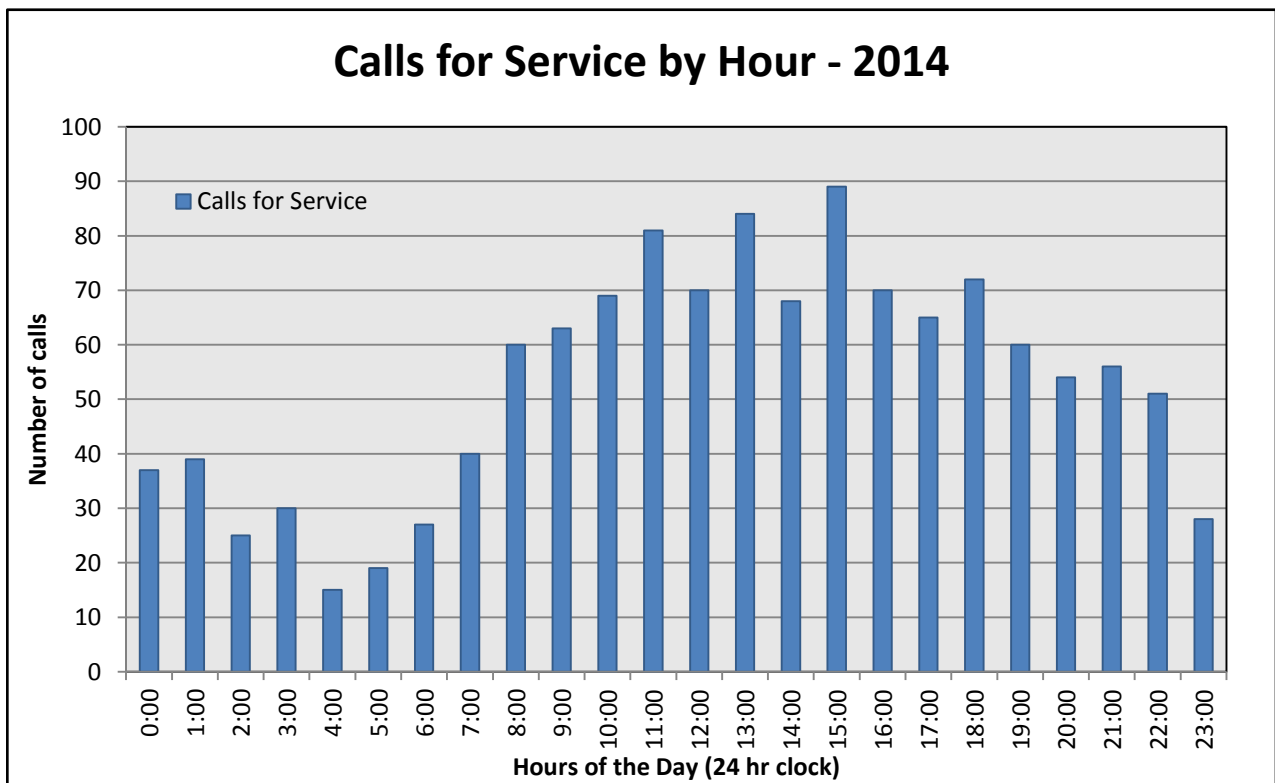
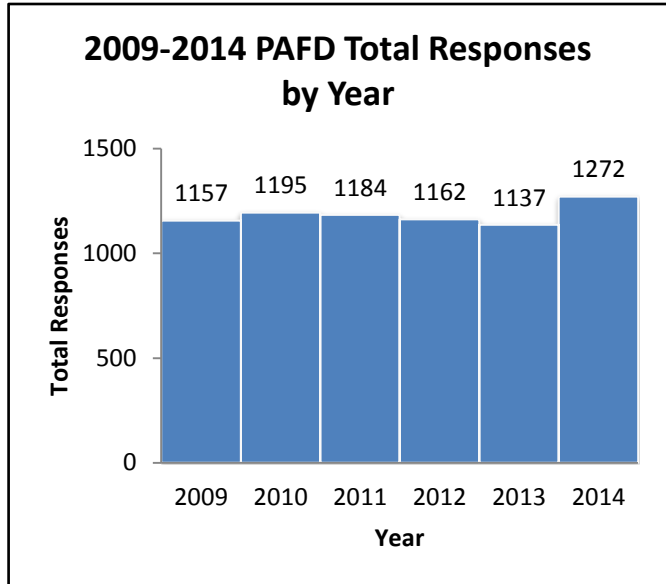
Given the inherent challenges presented by the firehall configuration and multi-disciplinary aspect of PAFD operations, turnout time performance is now considered to be fully maximized.

2014 PAFD turnout time is presented above in contrast to several previous years to demonstrate the considerable improvement that has been made in this regard.

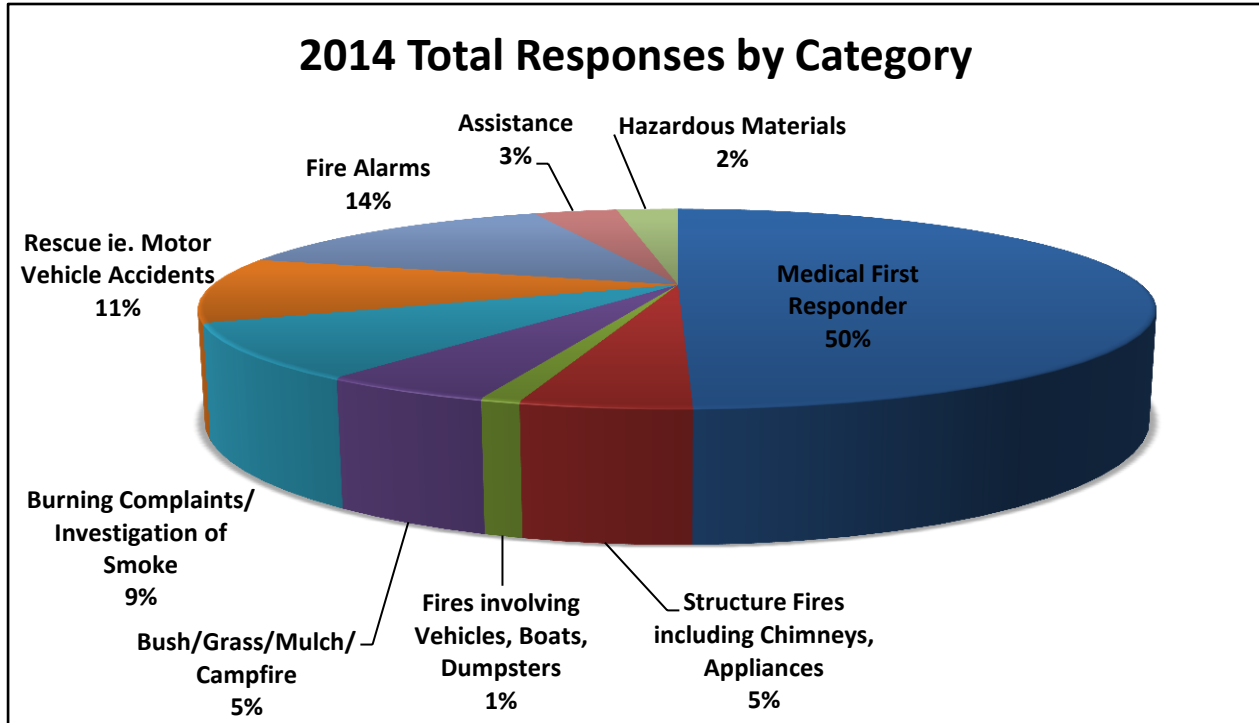




Structure fire upper Argyle Street – fire confined to kitchen



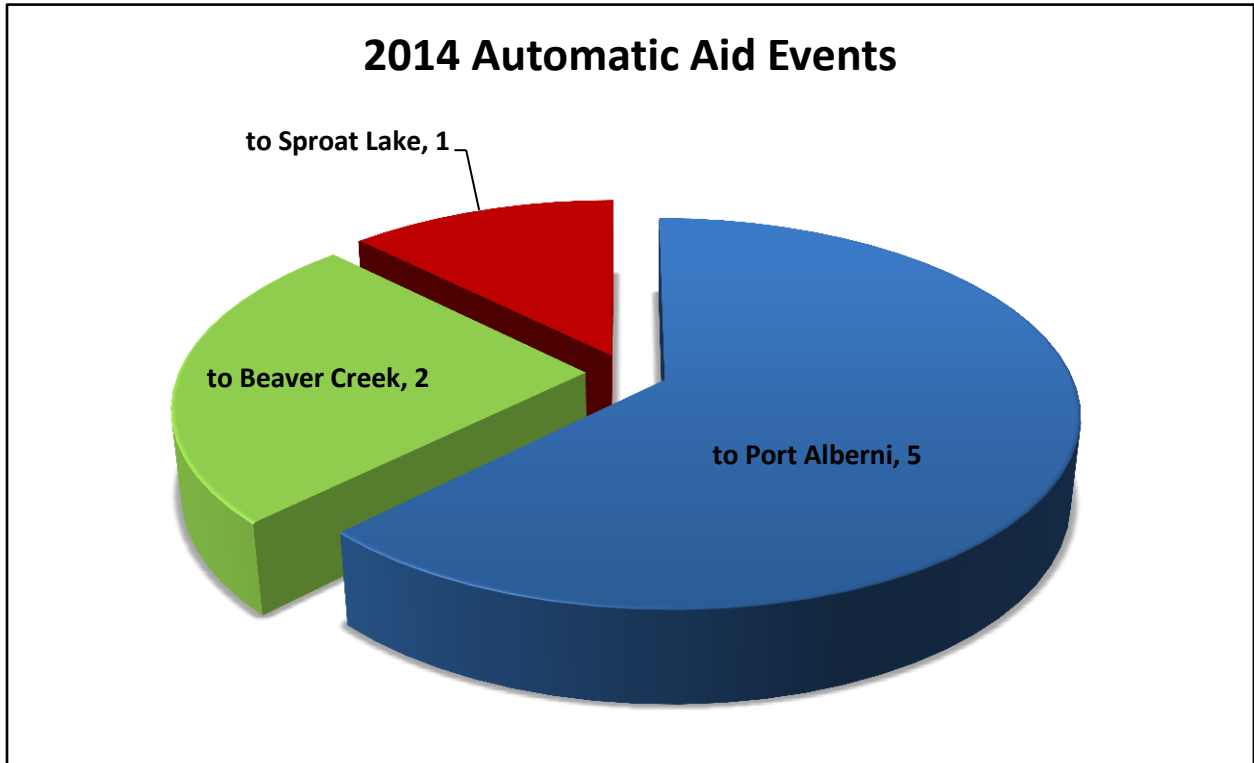
This graphic demonstrates the total number of incidents occurring in each hour of the day. Most incidents occur in the afternoon and evening. The fewest incidents occur in early morning hours.



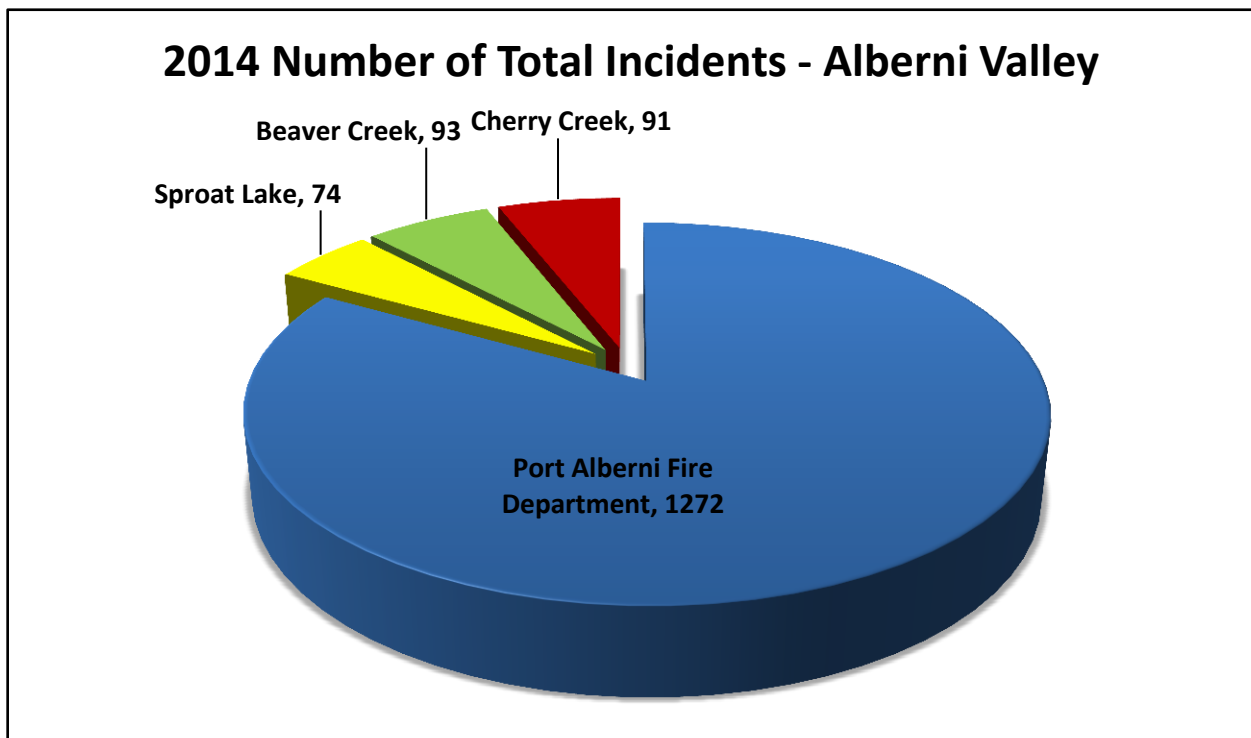
2014 TOTAL RESPONSES BY CATEGORY				
TYPE OF RESPONSE	2013	2014	PERCENT	
Medical First Responder	544	631	49.7	
Structure Fires including Chimneys, Appliances	55	59	4.6	
Fires involving Vehicles, Boats, Dumpsters	17	14	1.1	
Bush/Grass/Mulch/Campfire	47	61	4.8	
Burning Complaints/Investigation of Smoke	101	112	8.8	
Rescue i.e. Motor Vehicle Accidents	117	135	10.6	
Fire Alarms	167	182	14.3	
Assistance	60	45	3.5	
Hazardous Materials	29	33	2.6	
Total Responses	1137	1272	100	



Automatic Aid Events



Number of Total Incidents – Alberni Valley



Community Activities



The Port Alberni Fire Department supported the Port Alberni RCMP Detachment during their time of loss of the members of Moncton.



Fire Chief Pley was challenged to support the 2014 ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. This challenge was met with members of the department eagerly assisting.

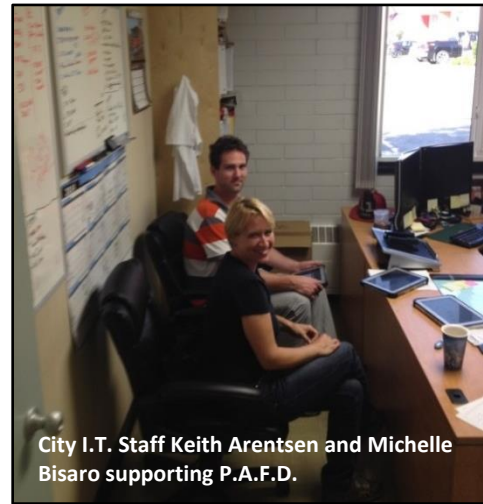
Hiring Process photos - November 1 & 2, 2014



Communications and Technology

Mobile Computers

The department has seen a dramatic increase in technology and communication over recent years. Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) was added to the department in 2009 on several fire apparatus. In 2014 the department upgraded to a common Panasonic tablet device. With the assistance of the City Information Technologies (IT) department this project has standardized all fire apparatus. These terminals will allow an accurate benchmarking of response times. In addition, these computers will allow members to access information such as pre-incident plans, maps and hazardous material information from the emergency scene.



City I.T. Staff Keith Arentsen and Michelle Bisaro supporting P.A.F.D.

This innovative project could not have been completed without the support of the IT department and the department’s mechanic. As the department moves forward into 2015, other technologies will be explored to provide advanced notice of emergencies while members are in station that will reduce emergency response timelines.



Radio Communications

The department fire apparatus radios have started to experience problems due to age. During 2014, these radios were repaired or replaced as needed. As the department moves forward the apparatus radios will be replaced with current technology that will enable additional functions such as man down alarms, GPS capabilities and digital formatting capability. As the department moves closer to replacement of the firefighter portable radios and radio room consoles, the department will be in the position take full advantage of these features in the near future.

Note: The department’s portable radios had been scheduled for replacement in 2015. That purchase has been postponed until 2016.

Social Media

During 2014 PAFD developed a social media presence on Twitter and Facebook. The Port Alberni Fire Department Facebook page has garnered 390 “Likes” to date. It provides a platform where the fire department can interact in real time with the community, sharing information regarding emergency events, dispelling social media myths, especially during moments of uncertainty, and providing fire safety information.



The PAFD Facebook page and Twitter account are managed internally by CFPO Thoen. Information can be posted there by several City management staff, enabling us to communicate during emergencies even when all PAFD personnel are tasked with other assignments.

FIRE PREVENTION



Industrial fire inspections and large demolition projects were priorities from 2013 that continued into 2014. The focus was to complete Fire Safety Planning and update pre-fire planning for industrial facilities based on their current operations and needs. Smaller combustible dust operations played a part with inspections and site reviews required for academic occupancies in the community. A fire incident at a Quebec Extended Care Facility early in the year brought about the request for Fire Safety Planning reviews, fire drills and training at local facilities.

The demolition of the old high school continued throughout the year due to delays brought on by the need for mitigation of hazards such as asbestos. The project was expanded to include two smaller buildings on the property that were originally intended to be left standing. The former Somass Hotel project changed directions and the decision was made to demolish the building after seismic concerns and structural

issues were identified.

There were some positives to note with the construction of a new retail building on 3rd Avenue at the former ICG property and the renovation and occupancy of the former Woodward's garage with PY Marine moving in. One extended care facility underwent significant upgrades to their existing water-based fire protection system in the fall requiring the need for Fire Safety Planning specific to the project.

While there was no solid fuel burner exchange program this year, the revised bylaw brought about the requirement to have non-emissions certified solid fuel burning devices removed from the property prior to the sale of the property. There were a number of inspections conducted under the provisions of the solid fuel bylaw regarding burning practice and proper fuel.

Public education remained a part of this division's work. This year, a number of training sessions were delivered in partnership with trades training programs at NIC including Joinery, Cooking, Construction Labourer and Care Aide Programs. Training sessions were developed and presented at ADSS through an alternative Grade 11 Science program; the topics included fire inspection, fire investigation, basic fire science and portable fire extinguishers. The Fire Prevention Week theme was "Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives – Test Yours Every Month" with presentations given to local grade three students using an eBook provided by NFPA and a fire investigation slide show from the Office of the Fire Commissioner. There were two "Fire Chiefs for a Day" that participated in activities at the Fire Hall at the end of October.

Professional development was limited to attending certified training in Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention at the beginning of the year. A significant amount of time was spent training and then updating/maintaining our main software program used to manage Fire Department data.

Further implementation of the industrial inspection program and demands on time for core-business related work, will require a review of the "value-added" work that has been occurring previously. Some of the non-fire inspection related work may have to be given a lesser priority in order to accommodate this workload. Examples of the value added work are WETT (wood stove) inspections and liquor license and occupant load reviews.

The coming year is expected to bring many challenges and changes.

Public Education

Each year the Port Alberni Fire Department celebrates Fire Prevention Week by selecting two school children as “Fire Chiefs for a Day”. This is a highly sought-after honour among school children. Fire Chief for a Day includes breakfast with fire fighters at McDonald’s, several opportunities to explore firefighting tasks, a ride on the City’s fireboat, a visit with the Mayor, lunch with the fire fighters, and finally being dropped off at school in a fire engine.

Fire Chiefs for a Day 2014 –

Jade Guilderson from Wood Elementary and Rowan Rice from Maquinna Elementary



“HOW TO IN 45 FEST” – Port Alberni Parks, Recreation & Heritage – April, 2014



Inspections

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Assembly	30	68	34	37	25
Institutional	13	19	39	25	19
Residential	77	64	89	36	48
Mercantile	22	16	36	29	29
Business	52	44	46	56	34
Industrial	8	16	22	31	34
Special Properties	40	94	107	58	33
Commercial Kitchens	37	19	23	32	36
Investigations/Public Concerns	12	35	31	36	17
Solid Fuel (Wood and pellet stoves)	49	141	185	113	121
Oil Fuel	7	30	6	11	0
Permits Issued	53	90	92	80	51
Total CFPO Inspections	400	636	710	544	447
Fire Crew Inspections	300	328	356	384	320
Third Party Inspections	81	218	198	208	279

WHAT OTHERS HAD TO SAY

Job Shadowing

“Thank you all so much for providing me with this amazing opportunity. I have learned so much through this experience and I am so grateful that I got to interact with such an amazing group of people. All the best.”

Julia Manhas, ADSS Student

Letter of Thanks – Auto Aid

Dear Fire Chief Hepp, Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Department, Beaver Creek Volunteer Fire Department, and Port Alberni Fire Department: “It is with a deep sense of gratitude and respect that I write this letter of appreciation and thanks. I can only begin to express my feelings as I watched thirty-two mostly volunteer, firefighters work to save my burning home on Jan. 13th.

Not only did I feel extremely grateful but I was also very impressed by the courage, extreme effort, determination, and expertise demonstrated by the firefighters. It seemed, from my viewpoint, that you all worked like a well-oiled machine, well-coordinated, trained and most importantly in a safe manner.

To put yourselves at potential risk for your neighbor is a selfless act of kindness and courage. I am truly humbled. Thank you all.”

Sue Comeau and family

Regional Training

“I just wanted to thank you for the time you spend with our fire group. You are really good at teaching people and making them feel comfortable with the mistakes they make. Sometimes I feel a bit overwhelmed and out of place with the drills we run, I really do appreciate your support,”

Laura Lundy, Tofino Parks and Recreation

Fire Safety Plan

“FYI – The APD Fire Safety Plan has been approved by the Port Alberni Fire Safety Officer – Good work by the internal reps and awesome support and advice from the Port Alberni Fire Department. We will implement the Communication of the Plan internally and make it available to anyone in the company who is interested.”

Joe Holmes

Regional Training

“Hi Chief, Thank you for all your help last night.”

David Fisher, Deputy Chief Coombs-Hilliers VFD

Regional Training

“Hi Chris – Thanks very much for making the arrangements for today’s course (and providing excellent goodies!). It was a great group to work with.

Judy Dryden

Automobile Accident

“On the 21st of August an automobile accident occurred on Highway 4 near Port Alberni. Please forward our thanks to firefighter Chris and his firefighter brothers present that day. On behalf of our family we thank you for your help and compassion. Chris, thank you for the loan of your flashlight. We wish all of you and your families the best now and for always.”

Suzanne

Fire Officer Training Program - Provincial

“Chris and Ken, thank you so much for meeting with me yesterday and offering me your amazing knowledge and experience. I left feeling that we are well on our way and feeling very confident that we have assembled an amazing team of speakers – the Dream Team as Elizabeth and I refer to you all!

Allison

Regional Training

“Great weekend I learned a lot thank you very much. Some pretty important principles to have in place for sure ...,”

Alan Anderson, LT. Ucluelet FD

Celebration of Life

“Randy, thanks so much for all your help in coordinating Dad’s celebration. It was a relief to know that we were in good hands. I know dad thought a lot of you and he would have been pleased to have you be part of the organization of his celebration. Many thanks!”

Valerie Hansen

Dryer Fire

“I just wanted to say thank you again for coming out to my house in the middle of the night last night! I feel very appreciative! Thanks guys!”

Rhonda Ursel

“Thank you all for prompt and efficient response to our home on Argyle Street. Much appreciated!”

Myia and Ashok Sharma

Regional Training

“Hi Dan and Chris, Happy New Year, Fire went well, hit it with truck tank, I was engineer, hit it hard with monitor, had ram being placed, two man crew pulled 4” high vol to hydrant, then they pulled the 1 ¾ pre connect it was nice run of the various training and techniques that you and Chris have taught us. It was awesome.”

Cpt Billy McGinnis, Tofino Fire Department

Temporary Hire - Firefighter

“...working with the Port Alberni Fire Department was a great chance for me to experience a city fire department. Larger population, fully staffed 24/7 fire hall, larger call volume. My time spent with the PAFD was an excellent experience in which I learned a great deal. Awesome crews and team, very nice hall and equipment, and a fun and beautiful region to be in. I wish to thank the City of Port Alberni and the PAFD membership and leaders for hosting me, showing and teaching me excellent skills and experiences which I’ll hold on to for my career.”

Cody Hunsberger, Temporary PAFD Firefighter



Dan Jones (credit)