



# **Bluffton Township Fire District**

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# 2019

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## **Annual Report of Activities**

# BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT

357 FORDING ISLAND ROAD  
BLUFFTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29909  
843-757-2800 • FAX 843-757-7305

Dear Citizens of the Bluffton Township Fire District,

2019 was another fruitful and eventful year for the Bluffton Fire District. Growth in the area continues in full force, and your fire department is working to remain ahead of the curve in providing the services you require. The organization has grown over the last year, putting into service a staffed Heavy Rescue at Headquarters station 35 (Indian Hill) and a Quint Unit at Station 33 (Moss Creek). A ninth fire station in the Hampton Lakes area is scheduled to finish construction summer 2020. The District now employs 149 persons to provide the daily response service as well as the behind the scenes support functions to keep the trucks and responders on the road for you.

The District's annual operating budget for the period ending June 30, 2019, was \$15,182,120. Growth in the area has allowed the Fire District to increase its services with little additional impact to the taxpayers. It is our intent to grow the organization responsibly to safely meet the needs of our community.

This report highlights the work the men and women of your fire department completed over the last twelve months. I believe you will find a great deal of good information as you read through our report. The Bluffton community has always been very supportive of the fire department and we truly appreciate the support. We are here to serve you and look forward to continued improvement and growth in our abilities to provide the best level of service to our citizens and visitors.

Respectfully,



John W. Thompson, Jr.  
Fire Chief

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# **Bluffton Township Fire District Guiding Documents for 2019**

## **Vision Statement**

Bluffton Township Fire District's 2023 Vision is to be widely known as an internationally accredited fire district that protects the lives and property of our community in a kind and professional manner.

**B**ecause we care, we will prove our leadership through bolstered work in community risk reduction and emergency management, reducing hazards and building protections within the district. We will always strive to show we are progressive through our enhancements in EMS and special operations for the betterment of those we serve.

**T**o personify respect and dedication, we will invest in our great assets, our members. By strengthening our workforce planning, we will be ever ready now and, in the future, to answer the call. We will communicate more effectively to ensure the continuity of our messages to unify us further. This will be rounded out by our research and investment into technology that will help us all perform more efficiently.

**F**urthering our desire to demonstrate that we value trust internally and externally, we will strive to maintain our current infrastructure, while developing strategies for growth that are performance-based and fiscally responsible.

**D**edicated to continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence organizationally and personally, we will always remember our past and embrace our futurity by holding each other accountable for fulfilling our mission, living our values, accomplishing our goals, and bringing this vision to fruition

## **Mission Statement**

The Bluffton Township Fire District's mission is to efficiently protect the lives and property of our community in a kind and professional manner.

## **Goals and Objectives**

To continuously achieve the mission of the Bluffton Township Fire District, realistic goals and objectives with timelines for completion must be established to

enhance strengths, address identified weaknesses, provide a clear direction, and address the concerns of the community. These should become a focus of the district’s efforts, as they will direct the organization to its desired future while having reduced the obstacles and distractions along the way. Leadership-established work groups should meet and manage progress toward accomplishing these goals and objectives and adjust timelines as needs and the environment change. Regular reports of progress and changes should be shared with the Bluffton Township Fire District’s leadership.

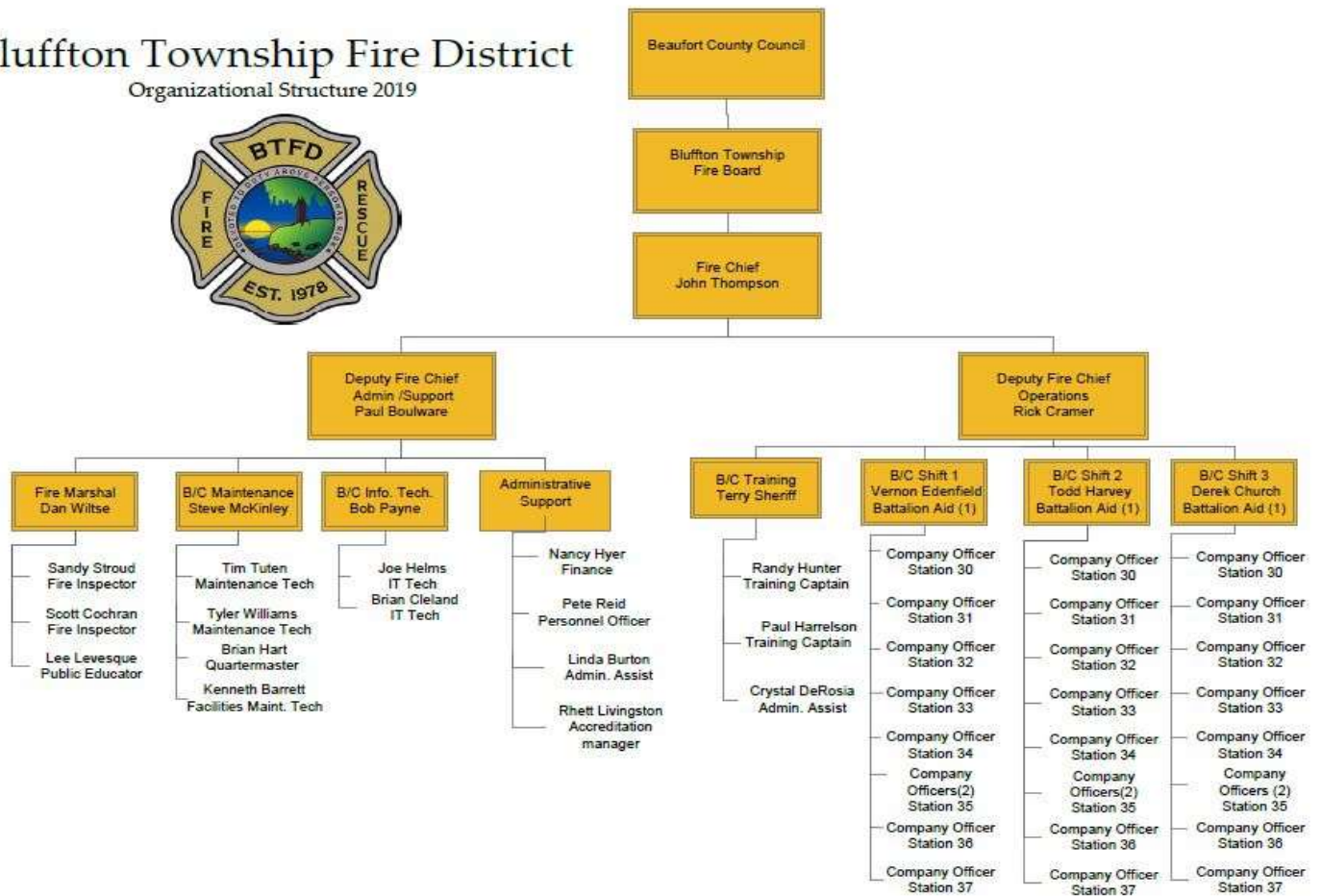
**Core Values**

<b>Respect</b>	We respect our customers and strive to protect their dignity, choice, and modesty.
<b>Cost</b>	We administer necessary fire protection and rescue services without unnecessary cost to the citizens.
<b>Continuous Improvement</b>	We strive to continuously improve by seeking feedback from our customers, providing fire prevention education, and improving our delivery system through training and professional development.
<b>Leadership</b>	We believe that we must be the leaders in guiding the community toward a fire-free environment.
<b>Service</b>	We maintain an attitude and a commitment of going “above and beyond” in serving our customers.
<b>Trust</b>	We develop a synergistic environment by fostering a climate of trust and cooperation with all team members.
<b>Loyalty</b>	We are loyal to our District and community by word and attitude.

# Organizational Structure

The Bluffton Township Fire District is divided into two Divisions, Administration/Support, and Operations. The Administration/Support Division provides internal and external services to make certain the members, equipment, and facilities of the fire department are prepared to respond to emergencies any time a call for help is received. The Operations Division provides for the daily response to emergencies and other calls for service as needed.

## Bluffton Township Fire District Organizational Structure 2019



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## Fire Board

The Fire Board is responsible for the general oversight policy of the Fire District. The Fire Board works closely with the Fire Chief. It makes recommendations to the County Council on matters such as annual operating budgets, expenditures for equipment, personnel, and facilities, and other business-related matters of the Fire District. The Fire Board consists of seven (7) members who are appointed to four (4) year terms by the County Council. There is one member for each of the five (5) County Council Districts within the protection area of the Fire District, one (1) member representing the Town of Bluffton, and one (1) member serving at large.

### Bluffton Township Fire District Board Members and Contact Information

Mr. Mike Raymond, Chairman  
Representing the Town of Bluffton  
Contact: [raymond@blufftonfd.com](mailto:raymond@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800



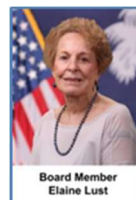
Mr. Joseph Paolo, Vice Chairman  
Representing County Council District 7  
Contact: [paolo@blufftonfd.com](mailto:paolo@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800



Mr. Thomas Mike, Secretary  
Representing County Council District 5  
Contact: [mike@blufftonfd.com](mailto:mike@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800



Ms. Elaine Lust, Treasurer  
Representing County Council District 8  
Contact: [lust@blufftonfd.com](mailto:lust@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800



Mr. Edwin Olsen, Board Member  
Representing: Entire district  
Contact: [olsen@blufftonfd.com](mailto:olsen@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800



Reverend Paul Hamilton, Board Member  
Representing County Council District 9  
Contact: [hamilton@blufftonfd.com](mailto:hamilton@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800



Mr. Louis Poindexter, Board Member  
Representing County Council District 6  
Contact: [poindexter@blufftonfd.com](mailto:poindexter@blufftonfd.com)  
Phone: 843-757-2800





## **Administrative and Operational Support Division Review**

*Deputy Fire Chief Paul Boulware*

- Finance
- Vehicle and Facility Maintenance
- Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction
- Information Technology
- Personnel Services



The Deputy Fire Chief of Administration and Support (DC Admin/Support) is Paul Boulware ([boulware@bluiftonfd.com](mailto:boulware@bluiftonfd.com)).

The DC Admin/Support provides direct coordination and support to the functions of finance, vehicle and facility maintenance, fire prevention and investigation, information technology, and employee services. These functions all support the mission of the fire department by providing ancillary services that are required to keep operations personnel, facilities, and equipment prepared to provide emergency services 24 hours a day to the citizens of the Fire District.

During 2019 the Administrative and Operational Support Division (AOSD) completed several key projects including:

- The District received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Excellence for its 2018 CAFR. This is the ninth consecutive year the District has received this honor.
- The permitting and start of construction of new Fire Station #38 on Hampton Parkway.
- Completed the process of programming the District's payroll timekeeping system to track accruals digitally. This replaced an outdated hand calculation method and increased the accuracy of records while better refining human resource and finance processes. This also provides instant data to all employees regarding their accrued time totals.
- Finalized the bid process for Fire Station #32 renovation at Callawassie. The project was awarded to Atkins Construction Company from Statesboro GA. This project has been fully permitted, and will start in January 2020.
- Increased participation of the Community Risk Reduction Officer in local neighborhoods.
- Completed a comprehensive community risk reduction analysis.
- Continued to support the community through enhanced CPR and AED programs. Worked with the non-profit Arrhythmia Alliance to place 30 public access AED's throughout the community.

- Continued to develop further training for all personnel that meets local, state, and national requirements especially providing emphasis on medical training and the re-certification process.
- Upgraded the Fire Districts video conferencing system from the outdated poly-com system to the new “Zoom” system that allows fire personnel to attend training sessions and department meetings via web video.
- Finalized the bid process for the relocation build of Fire Station #31 to the New River Side area. The award was issued to Fraser Construction of Bluffton SC.
- Supported program development and data delivery services for the District’s ongoing work to complete the international accreditation process through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE).
- Completed and implemented the findings of a comprehensive compensation, benefits, and position description study for 2019.

## Operations Division Review

*Deputy Fire Chief Richard Cramer*

- Battalion Chief 35, Shift 1
- Battalion Chief 35, Shift 2
- Battalion Chief 35, Shift 3



The primary function of the Operations Division is to carry out the mission of the fire district by delivering outstanding customer service to our citizens in a cost-effective and professional manner. This process is systematically executed with a staff of 130 highly trained firefighting professionals. The Operations Division is managed by one Deputy Chief and six-line Battalion Chiefs. The Battalion Chiefs are assigned to one of three shifts, which operate on a 24-hour basis. The shift's schedule follows a 24 hour on and 48 hours off rotation. There are numerous tasks carried out each day by the Operations Division members. Still, some of the primary responsibilities are: responding to normal emergencies, responding to special operation incidents (Haz-mat, Technical Rescue), handling non-emergent situations, conducting training, and attending community events. When the operations staff isn't mitigating emergency calls, they are carrying out required administrative duties, as well as performing general maintenance and upkeep on the district's expansive list of equipment.

**Call Volume by Station** (see Appendix A for more information)

During 2019 the Operations Division was kept extremely busy responding to emergency calls.

As a whole, the fire district responded to 6615 calls for service. Fire Station 34 (Sun City) was the most active of all stations running 1961 or 29.64% of the calls. Fire Station 30 (Old

Station and Location	Total Responses in 2019
30 – Old Town Bluffton	1576
31 – Pritchardville	750
32 – Callawassie	252
33 – Moss Creek	484
34 – Sun City	1961
35 – Indian Hill	1232
36 – Colleton River	177
37 – Palmetto Bluff	157

Town Bluffton) was close behind responding to 1,576 or 23.82% of the calls. Though these two stations responded as the first due to just over 52% of the calls for service, their reliability percentage, which is an indicator of the availability of each unit to be available as the first due apparatus in their district, did not drop below 90% for the year. When the reliability factor of a station drops below 75%, the District considers placing a second unit in service to handle the additional call volume.

**Analysis by Incident Type** (see Appendix B for more information)

The District tracks the incidents it responds to by call type. There are nine call types represented by the incident responses in 2019. Rescue and emergency medical service responses make up the largest percentage of the District's

<b>Incident Type</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Total Responses</b>
Rescue and EMS	3934	59.47%
Good Intent	1200	18.14%
Service Calls	708	10.70%
False Alarms	502	7.59%
Fires (all types)	150	2.27%
Hazardous Conditions	94	1.42%
Overpressure, Ruptures	7	0.11%
Severe Weather	20	0.30%

responses at 59.47% (3934 calls). This is common in most fire and rescue response agencies in the country. In Beaufort County, the fire district serves as the first line of medical response in support of the County's EMS transport agency. There are considerably more fire stations and units placed strategically around the County. This allows trained personnel to quickly reach a patient in need and begin treatment while awaiting an EMS unit.

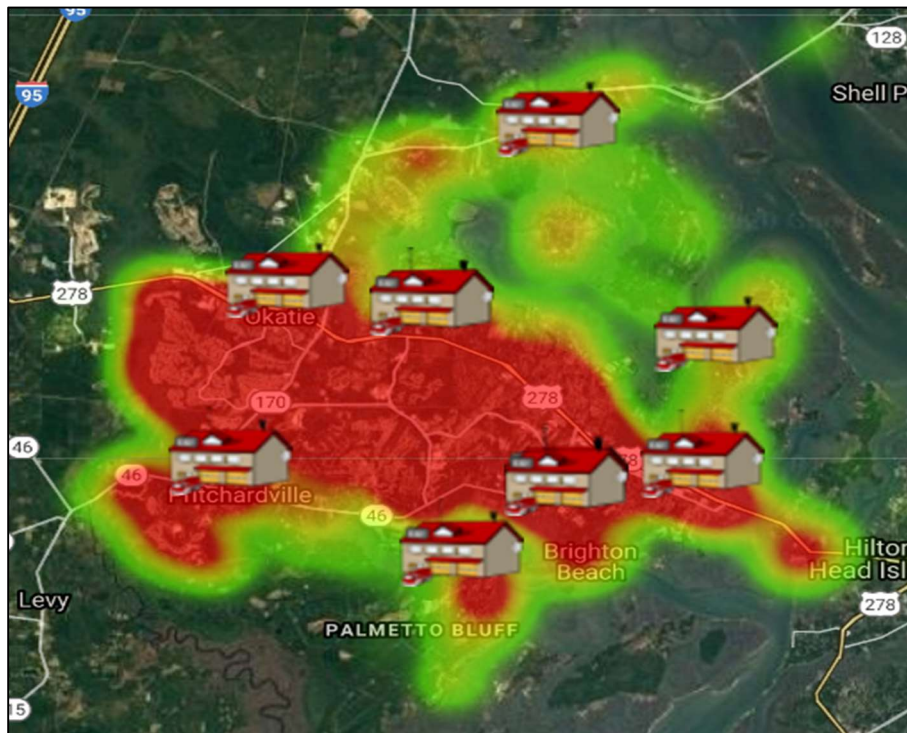
Good intent calls make up the second-largest group of responses at 18.14% (1200 calls) followed by service calls at 10.70% (708 calls) and false alarms at 7.56% (502 calls). Good intent calls include such things as units being dispatched but canceled before they arrive, reports of smoke in the area and no incident found, and steam or fog that is mistaken for smoke. Service calls include situations where a citizen needs some type of assistance such as lift and assists, containing a serious pipe leak that is damaging property, animal problems or rescues, smoke or odor removal, and assisting other agencies such as the police. False alarms are those instances when a fire or medical alarm system activates, and crews respond to find no fire or emergency. On rare occasions, a false alarm also occurs when someone calls in an emergency when one does not exist.

Appendices B.1 through B.5 located at the end of the report provides a deeper look into what the District is running. For example, one of the questions we often receive is how many motor vehicle collisions are there on our local roads. In 2019 the District ran 227 (5.77% of all rescue and EMS responses) motor vehicle accidents in which there were no injuries reported. The District also ran 197 (5.01% of all rescue and EMS responses) collisions in which someone was injured in the accident.

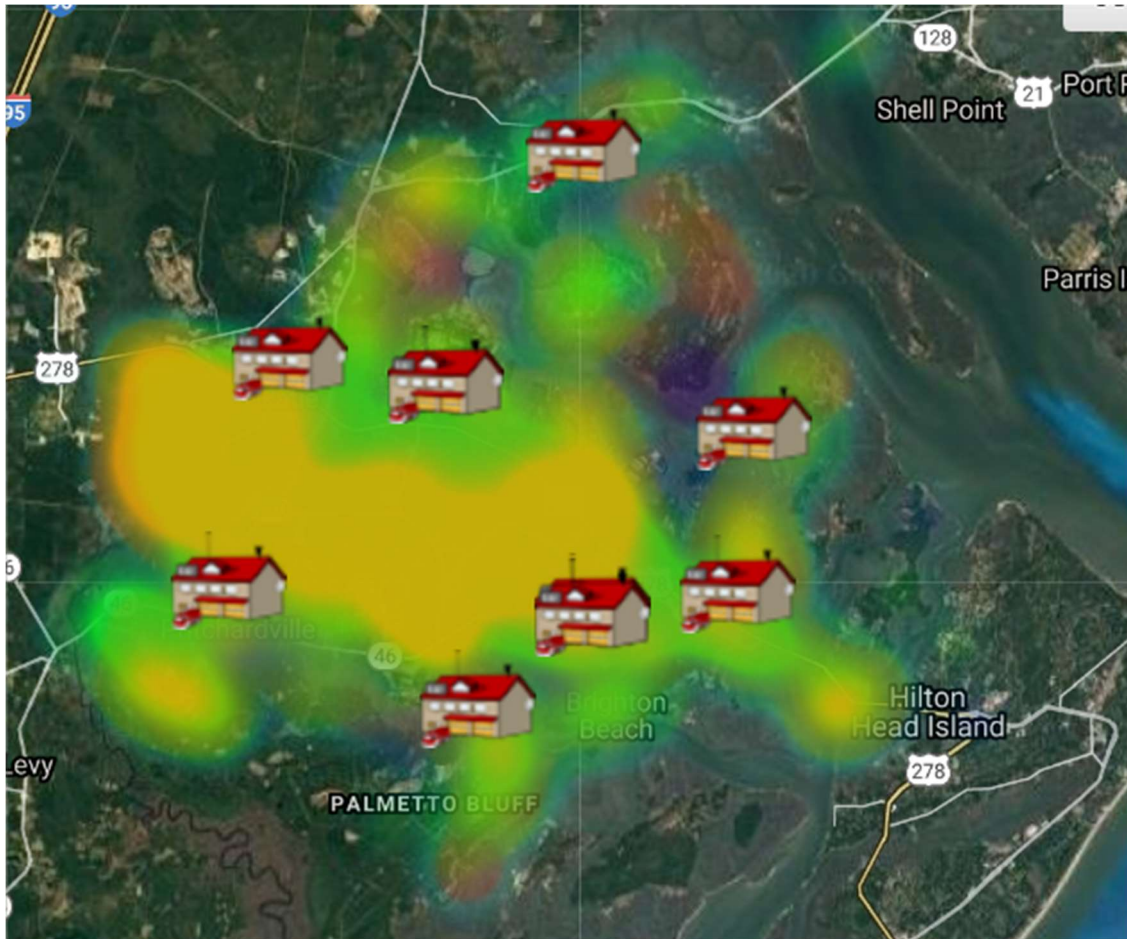
As for fires, brush and, grass fires were the most prevalent in the District at 37 occurrences or 24.67% of all fires encountered. Building fires were close behind at 32 (21.33% of the total fires), followed by vehicle fires at 19 (12.67%), cooking fires at 9 (6%), and outside trash and rubbish fires at 8 (5.33%).

### **Calls for Service Location Analysis**

The District utilizes GIS mapping technology to plot all of its responses. This information is then compiled and provides us a graphic interpretation of where emergencies are occurring. The technology can also plot the responses by incident type and total response time for the fire department to arrive on the scene. We refer to these maps as “heat” maps. Utilizing color on the maps we can see the concentration of incidents or the amount of time to arrive. The color red is utilized to indicate more incidents or longer times. The color green or no color at all indicates few if any calls or faster response times. This information is very valuable as it allows us to better plan for future stations and the number of personnel that may someday be required to alleviate the hazards around the District. Information from these analyses is utilized in the District’s medium and long-range plans to assist us in staying ahead of the growth curve.



**Call Volume Heat Map:** Deep red indicates the highest call volumes, yellow and green indicate lower call volumes respectively. Areas not colored indicate no calls occurred in those locations.



**Response Time Heat Map:** Deep red indicates response times greater than 11:40, yellow indicates response times between 8:20 and 11:40, green indicates response times between 5:00 and 8:20 and blue, indicates response times less than 5:00.

The analysis of the 2019 data indicates there are high call volumes along the Highway 278 corridor, in the Old Town Bluffton area and the Sun City area. Response times are elongated in the Buckwalter area and West Bluffton Parkway (Hampton Lake) areas. The new station designated for the Hampton Parkway at River Ridge Academy should alleviate the elongating response time issues. Volume is expected to continue to increase as the District grows, and new facilities are designed to accommodate additional units and personnel should they be needed into the future.

Within the two major Divisions of the fire department, there are also specialized departments and services. Under the Administration and Operational Support Division falls the Maintenance Department, the Information Technology Department, and the Community Risk Reduction Department. Under the Operations Division falls the Special and Technical Rescue Department, the Hazardous Materials Response Service, and the Wildfire Response Service.

## Specialized Services and Departments



### **Derek Franks**

Battalion Chief shift 2  
Truck 375 Special Operations TRT  
SCERTF-Rescue Manager SCTF-1  
SCERTF Team Leader Bluffton RRT-4

### **Rescue Services**

- Rescue 335 was delivered, equipped and put into service at Station 35 and responded to 178 calls for service.
- South Carolina Task Force 4 (SCTF-4) members logged 572 hours of monthly training to include topics from Tower rescue to Trench rescue
- 12 BTFD members took a swift water rescue class logging 240 of water rescue training
- \$8000.00 worth of water rescue equipment purchased and placed into service. Equipment included dry-suits, PFD's, boots
- SCTF-4 participated in the state held operational response exercise (ORE) in Colleton County to test deployment and response and technical ability and were rated excellent by the state



### **Richard Dollahan**

Captain Station 35/HQ  
BTFD Haz-Mat Team Coordinator  
SCHM4 Haz-Mat Team Coordinator

### **Hazardous Materials Response Services**

- 15 BTFD personnel, along with HHIF&R personnel, participated in an ORE in February 2019. The combined personnel responded to Walterboro SC as South Carolina Hazmat Regional Team 4 (SCHM4) and participated in a readiness exercise put on by SLED.
- The ORE is an evaluation of the team's ability to deploy, set up, and operate as a regional response team outside the team's immediate area. The evaluation of the team ensures that the team is capable of responding and that the money given by SLED is being used appropriately.

## Maintenance Department



**Steve McKinley**  
Battalion Chief Maintenance



This past year was a robust one for the Maintenance Department. Besides keeping the Districts fleet & facilities in good running order and top shape, they have added new apparatus, and our enterprise account, BTFD Vehicle Services experienced growth as well.

In May, 2019, we added the City of Beaufort's fleet of vehicles to our client list of the entities which we provide maintenance services for, including: The Town of Bluffton – 164 assets (both Police and Town fleets), Technical College of the Low Country – 6 assets, and the University of South Carolina - New River Campus – 13 assets, bringing the total number of maintenance assets under our care to almost 500, including BTFD. This includes everything from weed eaters to 18 wheel tractor-trailer combinations.

### **2019 Highlights**

- New 2019 Pierce "Quint" aerial placed in service at Station 33
- New 2019 Pierce HD Rescue placed in service at Station 35
- Beaufort City Fire Department fleet added to BTFD Vehicle Services
- Purchased & installed new standby generator for Station 36
- Purchased new standby generator for Station 30
- From the SC Forestry Commission, acquired a 4 person ATV for use during major incidents or events.
- From the SC Forestry Commission, acquired a 5 ton military vehicle for use during major incidents or events



## 2020 Initiatives

- Install automatic gate control at the Station 30 (Old Town Bluffton) gate for entering the maintenance facility.
- Install new generator at Station 30 (Old Town Bluffton)
- Refurbish generator from Station 32 (Callawassie) and repurpose at old Station 31 (Pritchardville).
- Relocate current, newer generator from Station 31 and install at Station 37 (Palmetto Bluff)
- Implement a purchase procurement document to have all station generators equipped with an ATS, Automatic Transfer Switch.
- Continue to market and grow our BTFD Vehicle Services enterprise fund.

<b>2019 Work Orders Percentage Makeup</b>		
<b>Entity</b>	<b>Work Order Quantity</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Bluffton Fire District</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Town of Bluffton</b>		
Town Vehicles	<b>47</b>	<b>4%</b>
Police Vehicles	<b>191</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Town of Bluffton Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Technical College of the Lowcountry</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>University of South Carolina, New River</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Beaufort City Fire Department</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total Work Orders</b>	<b>1117</b>	<b>100%</b>

As we enter 2020, we continue to look for and develop ways to deliver better services and products all the while using cost effective measures without compromising quality and safety. We also look forward to fostering and enhancing the relationships we have with our enterprise clients. The staff at the BTFD Maintenance Department is of high

quality and ensures that the Districts fleet is maintained in a high state of readiness and that our buildings are sound, to insure that the service we provide our citizens is second to none.

## Information and Technology Department



**Robert Payne**

Battalion Chief Information Technology

The Information Technology Division is primarily responsible for the design, procurement, implementation, troubleshooting and maintenance of information-based technological and communications resources within the Bluffton Township Fire District. This includes:

- Providing hardware and software support, configuration, maintenance, programming, & troubleshooting services for 75 department desktop and laptop computers, 30 printers, 2 copy machines, 15 scanners, 7 servers, 10 local area networks, 1 wide area network, and 14 WiFi access points that provides informational services to over 300 individual users in real time - all spread out over 9 different locations.
- Maintaining 21 different major hardware/software application packages or functions which support district operations, including FireWorks Software (Incident & district resource inventory and maintenance reporting), FleetPro (Maintenance reporting & tracking), InCode (Finance), Domain services (Computer & Network access/control), File storage and retrieval services, file archival and storage functions, eDispatch (Emergency Notification), ThinkGIS (Mapping), NovaTime functions (time reporting), Email services, Internet access, firewalling and filtering, Webpage services, 11 Video Conferencing systems, 4 video security/monitoring/distribution systems, anti-virus/anti-malware services, photographic/video recording/processing services, ID card services, 9 security door access systems, IP telephony & web-based FAX services, and 7 hard-wired public address systems.

- Design and maintenance of a Ham radio-based emergency communications system consisting of 32 vehicular mounted radios, 10 base station radios, and 38 handheld radios along with ancillary equipment. There are 34 licensed ham radio operators in the Bluffton Township Fire District.
- Maintaining a vehicular mounted Mobile Video Recording System (for evidentiary and accident investigation purposes) mounted in 15 district apparatus.
- Providing FOIA-based information reporting services to external requestors.

In addition to the above, in the last few calendar years the IT Division has done work on the following major projects:

- Designed, procured, implemented, installed, and maintained a new video district-wide Zoom teleconferencing system in order to replace the old PolyCom video conferencing system.
- Installed all new IT, video, communications, telephony, and security systems as necessary to bring two new fire stations (Stations 36 in Colleton River Plantation & Station 37 in Palmetto Bluff) up and running.
- Participated in twelve district emergency communications exercises, the purpose of which was to test emergency communications response to various types of disaster scenarios.
- Completed switch-over of the district Records Management System (RMS) from FireHouse to FireWorks. FireWorks is a new cloud-based RMS system capable of handling both NFIRS 5.0 (fire) and NEMSIS 3.4 (Medical) information systems with enhanced data analysis and reporting toolkits.
- Designed, procured, implemented, and trained district personnel on the use of an aerial drone surveillance system which will allow district personnel to provide aerial monitoring and investigation of major events (such as structure, brush fires, and hazmat scenes) and to provide limited delivery services of essential life-preserving instruments, medications, and materials to persons who are trapped in remote/hazardous locations that fire department personnel cannot immediately access or enter.

## 2020 Initiatives

1. Provide design, procurement, installation, implementation, and programming and maintenance services for all IT and communication related services to a brand-new fire station (Station 38) and a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located off Raider Drive near River Ridge Academy in Bluffton.
2. Provide design, procurement, installation, implementation, and programming and maintenance services for all IT and communication related services to a rebuilt (renovated & expanded) fire station (Station 32) located off Callawassie Drive in Okatie, and provided similar services to a soon-to-be relocated fire station (Station 31) in Pritchardville.
3. Provide upgrade services to the districts existing desktop computers by replacing hard drives with faster, higher capacity electronic drives, and upgrading all operating systems to Windows 10 Professional, and Microsoft Office software to Office 2019.
4. Upgrading all vehicular mounted iPad computers to new cellular-based iPads which will allow field connection to the new FireWorks RMS system without having to be in-range of a LAN connection. This will allow fire crews to access the FireWorks RMS system and write both fire and medical incident reports in the field without having to return to a station.

## Training Department



**Terry Sheriff**  
Battalion Chief Training and Development

The Training Division personnel consist of a Battalion Chief of Training, Two (2) Assistant Training Officers and an Administrative Assistant. The Training Division, under the direction of the Training Battalion Chief, conducts and coordinates organizational development in areas of:

### **1. Recruit Training**

- Provides new recruits with an in-house, 10 week recruit school program and is responsible for conducting and administering all training requirements and programs.
- Manages recruit school which enables over 360 hours of training in a variety of courses.
- In conjunction with the South Carolina Fire Academy (SCFA), instructs new recruits in the NREMT-Basic curriculum.

### **2. Fire Suppression Training**

- Ensures all Fire/EMS personnel are properly certified by maintaining employee training/certification files and provides quarterly reports to the Deputy Chief of Operations and Shift Battalion Chiefs.
- Provides a continued annual training plan for yearly training.
- Encouraging individual and company training every shift.

### **3. Emergency Medical Services Training and Re-Certification**

- Provides EMTs and Paramedics with training courses and assisting them in preparing for certification and re-certification requirements.

### **4. Technical Rescue Training**

- Regional Response Team and Special Rescue Training.

- Hazardous Material Incidents Response Training.
5. **Company Officer and Firefighter Development Programs**
    - Hosting and delivering developmental classes for our personnel.
    - Developing a continuing education plan for all personnel.
    - Providing higher levels of classes for continued education, to teach new skills, and to assist each employee with career development.
    - Conducting Promotional processes for competitive rank positions.
  6. **CATE/Explorer Program**
    - Works closely with the Bluffton High School to provide training and the development of high school students in the area of Emergency and Firefighting Services.
  7. **Strategic Planning**
    - Works with all members to plan, implement and evaluate the Strategic Plan.

The Training Division provides and creates training programs as necessary to meet established state and federal mandates each year. The Division is responsible for ensuring that all District members meet the requirements set forth by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Insurance Services Office (ISO), Occupational Safety Health Association (OSHA) and the internal requirements by the Fire District.

The Training Division is responsible for organizing, designing, implementing, and managing training and employee programs for the Bluffton Township Fire District. The Training Division will strive to provide the highest quality training, instruction, and educational support to our members. This is intended to prepare our Department to serve our community in the most efficient and effective means possible, and to ensure the safety of our personnel and citizens.

The Training Division works closely with the Mission Statement of the Fire District. The BTFD Mission Statement is to *“efficiently protect the lives and property of our community in a kind and professional manner.”* The Training Division attempts to deliver the most meaningful and realistic training possible while ensuring personal safety.

#### **Training Department Mission Statement**

**The mission of the Bluffton Township Fire District’s Training Division is to consistently enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all fire department personnel through standardized and progressive educational programs, as well as to support the organization’s mission by providing outstanding customer service.**



### 2019 Accomplishments

- Plan and schedule over 564 hours of continuing education with the SCFA.
- Plan and schedule quarterly mutual aid training.
- Over 51 confirmed personnel attending higher education and continuing education classes.
- Hosted and instructed over 340 hours of SCFA Courses to over 196 of our personnel.
- Working with the SCFA to provide in-house instructors with the ability to teach all SCFA classes.

### 2019 Accomplishments

- 21 in-house instructors recertified to teach various SCFA Classes.
- Provided driver's, pump and aerial training on 2018 107' Pierce Ascendant for 21 personnel.
- Assisted with 711 Class Registrations for SCFA, NFA, and National Conferences.
- NFPA 1410 Standard on Training for Emergency Scene Operations Drills.







## 2019 Accomplishment Overview

- Assisted with the implementation and revamp of the pay study and promotional requirements for each rank.
- Trained and instructed 22 new Driver/Operators.
- Began a Mutual Aid Training Program with Jasper County and continued Mutual Aid Training with Hardeeville.
- Provided Live Fire training for members of the District that consisted of practical evolutions, focusing on hose management and fire suppression, based on NFPA 1001 and NFPA 1002 Standards.
- Provided Class E Evaluation and Testing for new driver/operators.
- Provided monthly required medical and fire training to meet ISO and NREMT requirements.
- Coordinated Hurricane and HAM Radio refresher training to the District with utilization during Hurricane Dorian.
- Working with Maintenance provided training to 22 personnel with starting their Driver/Operator Orientation program.
- Provided Promotional testing to Battalion Chiefs and Station Captains.
- Assigned and Provided Fire and Medical Training:
  - Shift 1: over 11,000 hours
  - Shift 2: over 25,000 hours
  - Shift 3: over 11,000 hours

## 2020 Training Initiatives

The Training Division has created goals for the 2020 year. These goals reflect the District's Strategic Plan. These goals will be reviewed and updated annually to assure currency and allow for adaption to changing circumstances.

- Working with the Strategic Planning Committee, continue to work on Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan: "Enhance the delivery of emergency medical services (EMS) to be more efficient and progressive for our community."
- Review ways to track ISO Records and training hours that is used by the Training Division.
- Continue to review and plan for a 5 year strategic plan for the training grounds.
- Continue to review processes in place for Accreditation and expand.
- Expand the ability of both Training Officers to mirror each other's responsibilities and instructor capabilities.
  - Obtain IFSAC Instructor 3.
  - Obtain IFSAC Fire Officer 3 & 4.
  - Obtain more IOW's from the SCFA.
- Administrative Assistant to attend training.



## Community Risk Reduction



**Daniel Wiltse**  
Fire Marshal

The overall goal of the Community Risk Reduction Division is to protect the lives and property of the citizens and visitors of the Bluffton Township Fire District through the use of fire inspections, plan review, education and fire cause determination.

The Community Risk Reduction Division is headed by Battalion Chief Dan Wiltse. The remainder of the Division is made up of two Senior Fire Inspectors (Sandy Stroud and Scott Cochran), one Community Risk Reduction Officer (Lee Levesque) and one Community Risk Reduction Educator (Captain Randy Hunter).



### **Fire Inspections/Code Enforcement**

The main objective of this task is to gain voluntary compliance with the associated fire codes as adopted by the State of South Carolina. The Fire Inspectors complete annual inspections of all existing commercial properties along with needed follow up inspections. In 2019, the Fire Prevention Division conducted 3,069 fire and life safety inspections. In addition to these annual inspections, the Division has other duties they are responsible for such as:

- Review of site plans, new construction plans, fire protection system plans and the like.
- Business license inspections as requested by Beaufort County
- Acceptance testing of new fire protection systems
- Bi annual Click2Enter inspections
- Special Events inspections
- Burn permit issuance (inside the Town of Bluffton)



In addition to these duties, the Fire Inspectors must be certified through the State of South Carolina as Certified Fire Marshals. This also requires annual continuing education through authorized training agencies.

### **Fire Investigation**

The Fire District is authorized by South Carolina State law to investigate all fires to determine the origin and cause of the fire. The Fire District's Investigation Team consists of the Fire Prevention Division. All Division members are Certified Fire and



Explosion Investigators through the National Association of Fire Investigators. The team works with local law enforcement such as the Beaufort County Sheriff's Department and the Town of Bluffton as well as South Carolina State Agencies

such as the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division's Arson Investigators in the event of incendiary fires. The Fire Investigation Team completes 40 hours of training per year in accordance with ISO standards.

### **Public CPR and AED Program**

Captain Hunter was transferred to the CRR Division to take over the CPR/AED, Public Access Defibrillator Program as well as be the trainer for the Stop the Bleed Program. Captain Hunter is responsible for all aspects of CPR instruction and overseeing all of the Fire Districts CPR Instructors. We currently offer three different CPR courses: BLS for Healthcare Providers, BLS Heartsaver and Friends and Family CPR. In 2019, Julie taught approximately 949 students CPR.



In addition to these duties, Captain Hunter has also assumed the lead for our Public Access Defibrillator Program. The purpose of this program is to provide Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) in public places to decrease the time for a bystander to start providing emergency medical care in the event of sudden cardiac arrest. This program is starting in the Town of Bluffton and will eventually encompass the entire Fire District.

### **Public Education**

The Bluffton Township Fire District accepts life safety education as one of its most important priorities. With that sentiment in mind, every member of the district accepts the responsibility of preventing the emergency before it affects those we protect.

To assist our residents in protecting themselves we provide a number of community outreach programs that are tailored to specific audiences, specific community hazards, and the general public at large.

In 2019 The BTFD conducted 511 community outreach programs such as:

- Smoke alarm installation and inspection (907 smoke alarms installed in 317 homes)
- Child Car Seat Installations (136)
- Holiday Specific Safety Presentations

- Fall Prevention Presentations
- Home Fire Safety Survey Program
- Prom Promise/Safe Driving Programs
- College Fire Safety Program
- 9-1-1/Smart 9-1-1 Program



## Fire District Stations

### Fire Station 30 -199 Burnt Church Road: "Old Town"



#### Apparatus in House

- BTFD- Engine
- BCEMS- Ambulance

### Fire Station 31 – 178 May River Road: "Pritchardville"

#### Apparatus in House

- BTFD- Engine
- BTFD – Water Tender



**Fire Station 32 - 155 Callawassie Drive: "Callawassie"**

**Apparatus in House**

- BTFD- Engine
- BTFD – Water Tender
- BCEMS – Quick Response Vehicle (QRV)



**Fire Station 33 – 12 Buckingham Plantation Drive: "Moss Creek"**

"Moss Creek"



**Apparatus in House**

- BTFD- Quint
- BTFD – Quick response boat
- BCEMS- Ambulance



**Station 34 - 25 William Pope Drive: "Sun City"**

Apparatus in house

- BTFD- Engine
- BCEMS- Ambulance x 2



**Station 35 – 357 Fording Island Road: "Headquarters"**



Apparatus in house

- BTFD - Engine
- BTFD – Tower Ladder
- BTFD - Heavy Rescue
- BTFD – Battalion Chief
- BTFD – Brush Truck

**Station 36 – 254 Sawmill Creek Road: “Colleton River”**

Apparatus in house

- BTFD - Engine



**Station 37 – 568 Old Palmetto Bluff Road: “Palmetto Bluff”**



Apparatus in house

- BTFD - Engine

# Career Mile Stones

## Officer Promotions

Every year the men and women of Bluffton Township Fire District have a unique opportunity to promote within the department. Promoting an officer is an opportunity that comes on an as-needed basis. Bluffton had a big year when it came to officer promotions. Some people wait there whole career to become an officer. The rapid growth in the Bluffton community has provided this opportunity to several deserving personnel. Through rigorous testing both mentally and physically, these select firefighters proved that they were the best for the task. Bluffton would like to Honor those accomplishments by sharing with you who these persons are.



**Jeffery Smith** - Lieutenant



**Michael Provo** - Lieutenant



**Walter Arlt** - Lieutenant



**Dwayne Wilkinson** - Captain



**Matthew Urys** - Captain



**Derek Beeler** - Captain



**Jason Brahm** - Captain



**Paul Harrelson** – Training Captain Medical



**Leonard Childs** – Training Captain Fire



**Brandon Stevenson** – Station Captain



**Jeff Kuehn** – Station Captain



**Adam Corn** – Station Captain



**Rhett Livingston** – Accreditation Captain



**Pete Reid** – Personnel Battalion Chief

## Newest Assets at a Glance

As the growth continues, the fire and emergency service needs of the community also change. The growth not only requires more personnel and additional training it also requires more fire equipment. Bluffton Township fire district procured two significant lifesaving assets for the district in 2019. Many hours of research went into figuring the need for and designing each apparatus. Here are the new assets and a description of their basic functions.

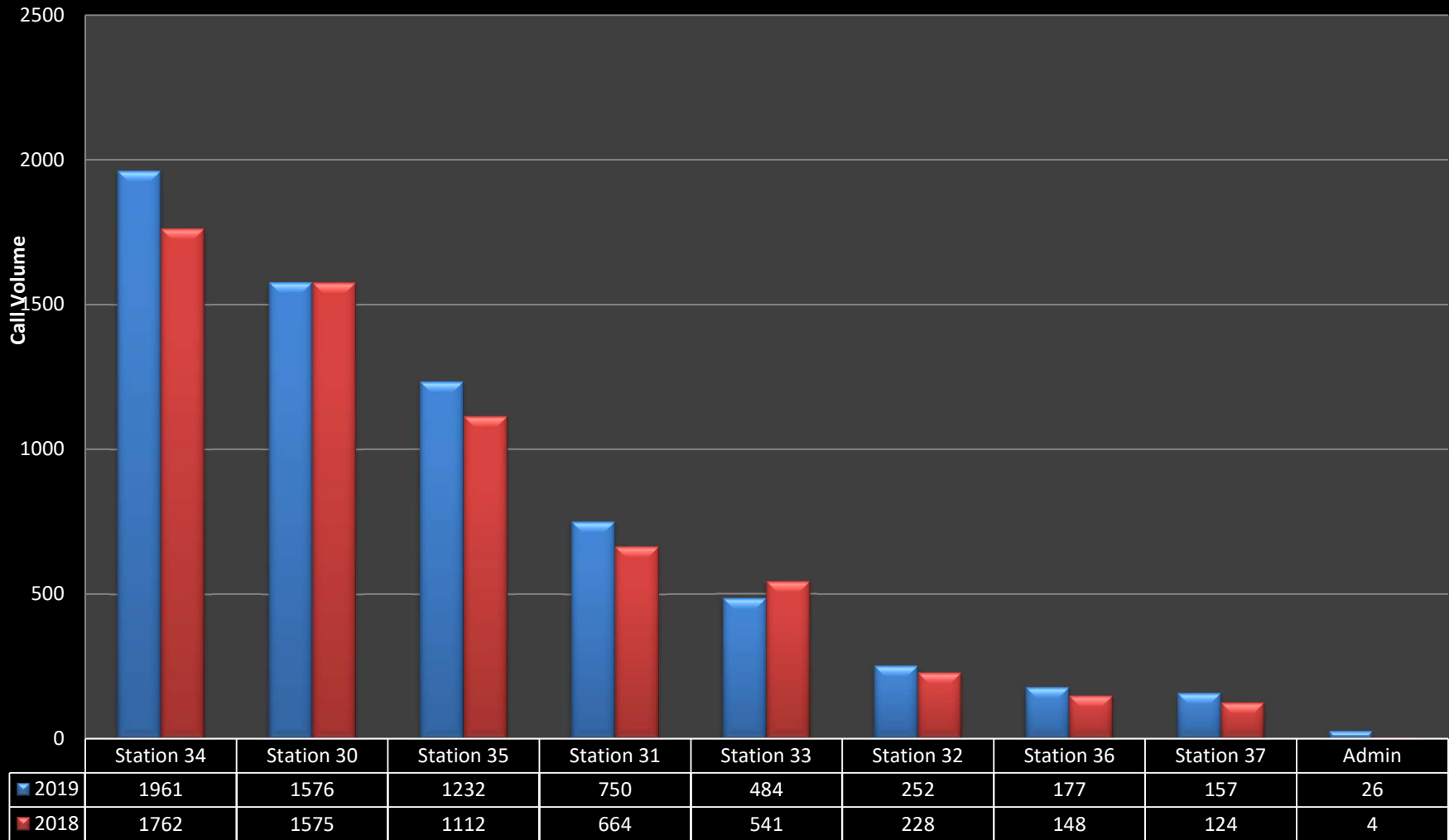


**Quint** – 2019 – Pierce – Enforcer chassis with a 107' steel straight stick ladder – 10' 8" in height – Weight, 42,530 lbs empty & rated for 56,300 lbs of equipment and water – Function, runs first out at Station 33 for structure fires, vehicle accidents, medical and other calls as needed. Runs back up to Station 30 & 36 as second due. This unit is unique in that it can perform as a pumper and also as an aerial ladder company.

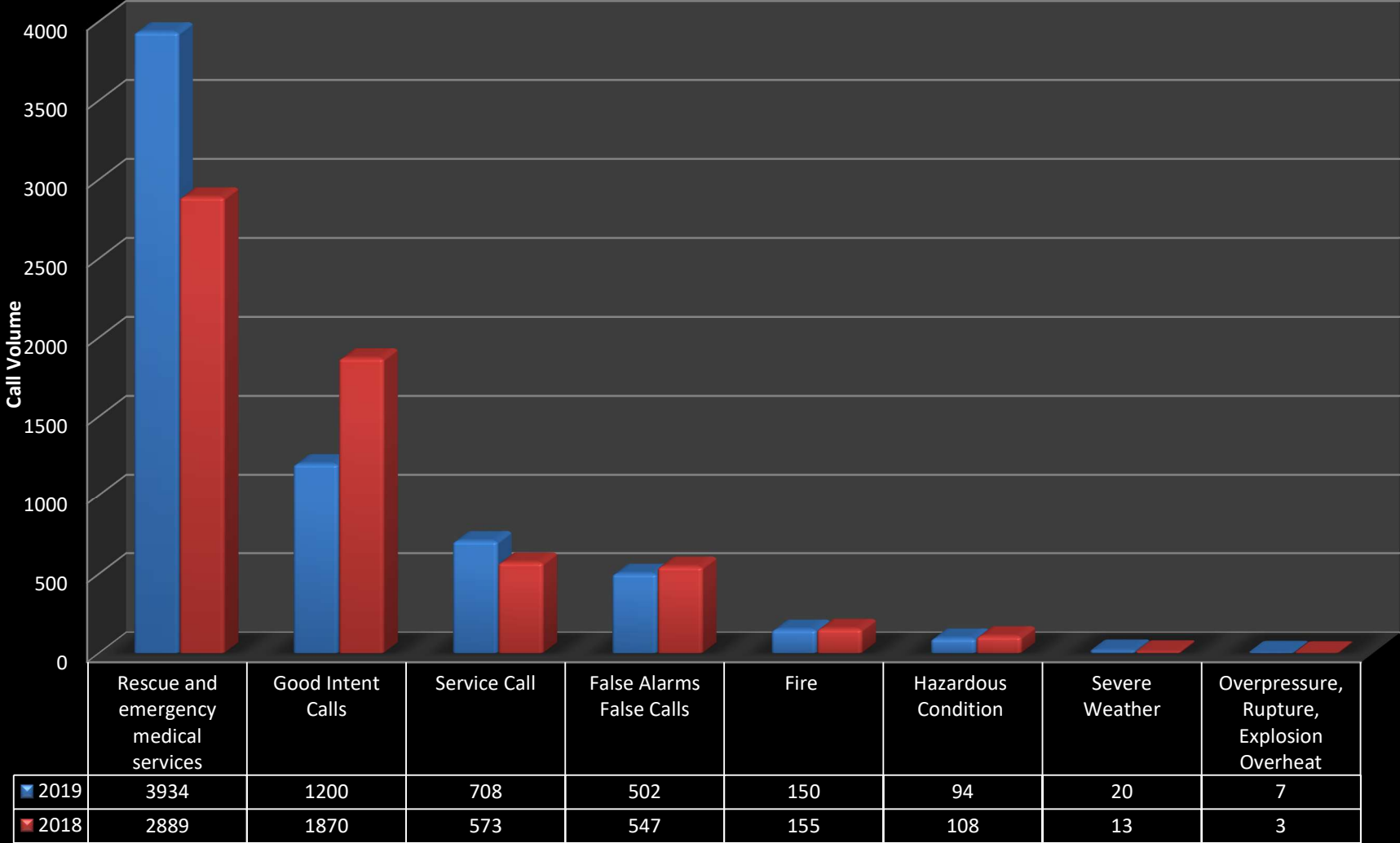
**Heavy Rescue** – 2019 – Pierce – Enforcer – 10' 8" in height – Weight, 32,165 lbs empty & rated for 47,000 lbs with equipment – Function, runs first out at Station 35 as a rescue unit for all types of calls, including; vehicle accidents, structure fires, hazmat incidents, trench rescues, high angle rescues, entrapment calls, lost person calls, and water or marine emergency calls. This vehicle actually carries an inflatable boat for use in lagoon and pond rescues in addition to its large cache of specialized rescue equipment.



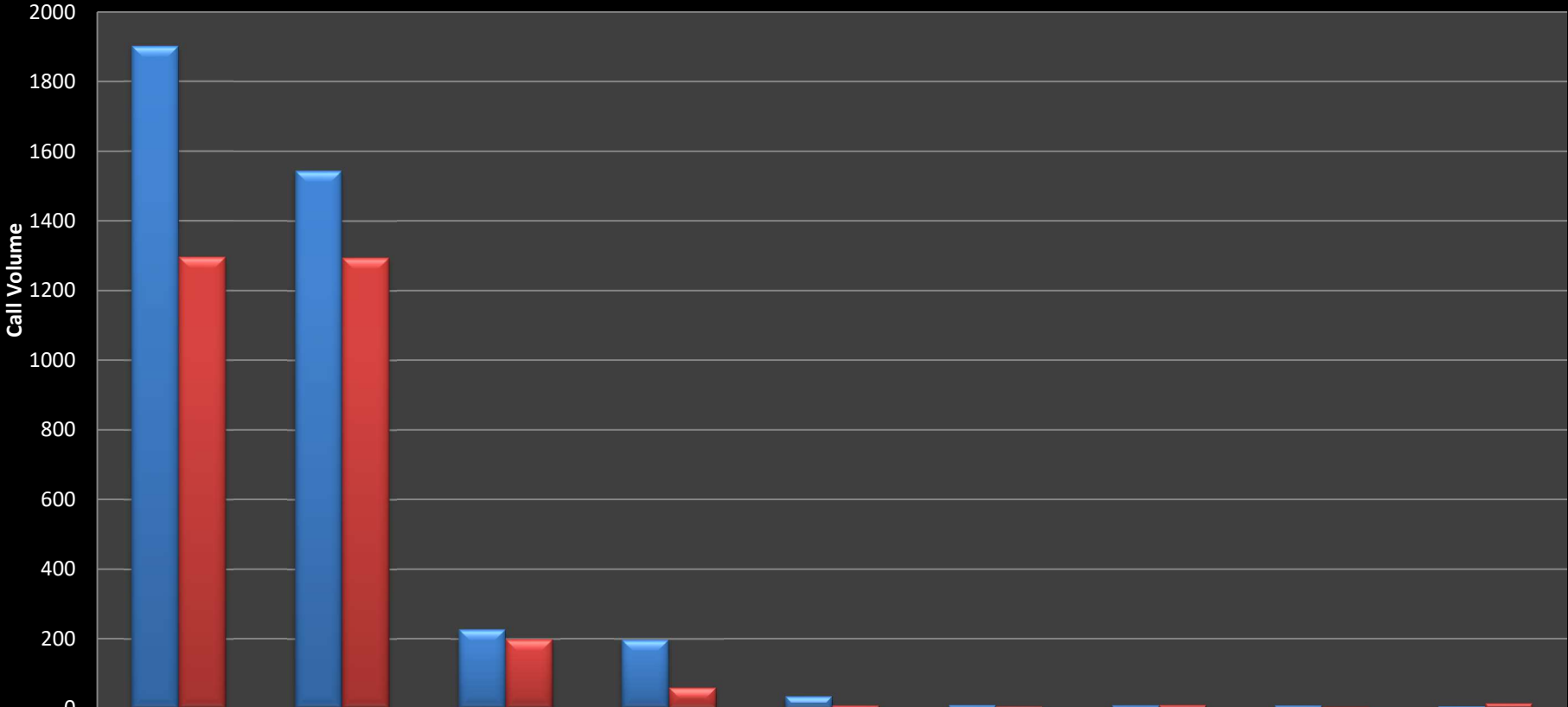
## Appendix A: Call Volume by Station 2019-2018



### Appendix B: Analysis by Incident type



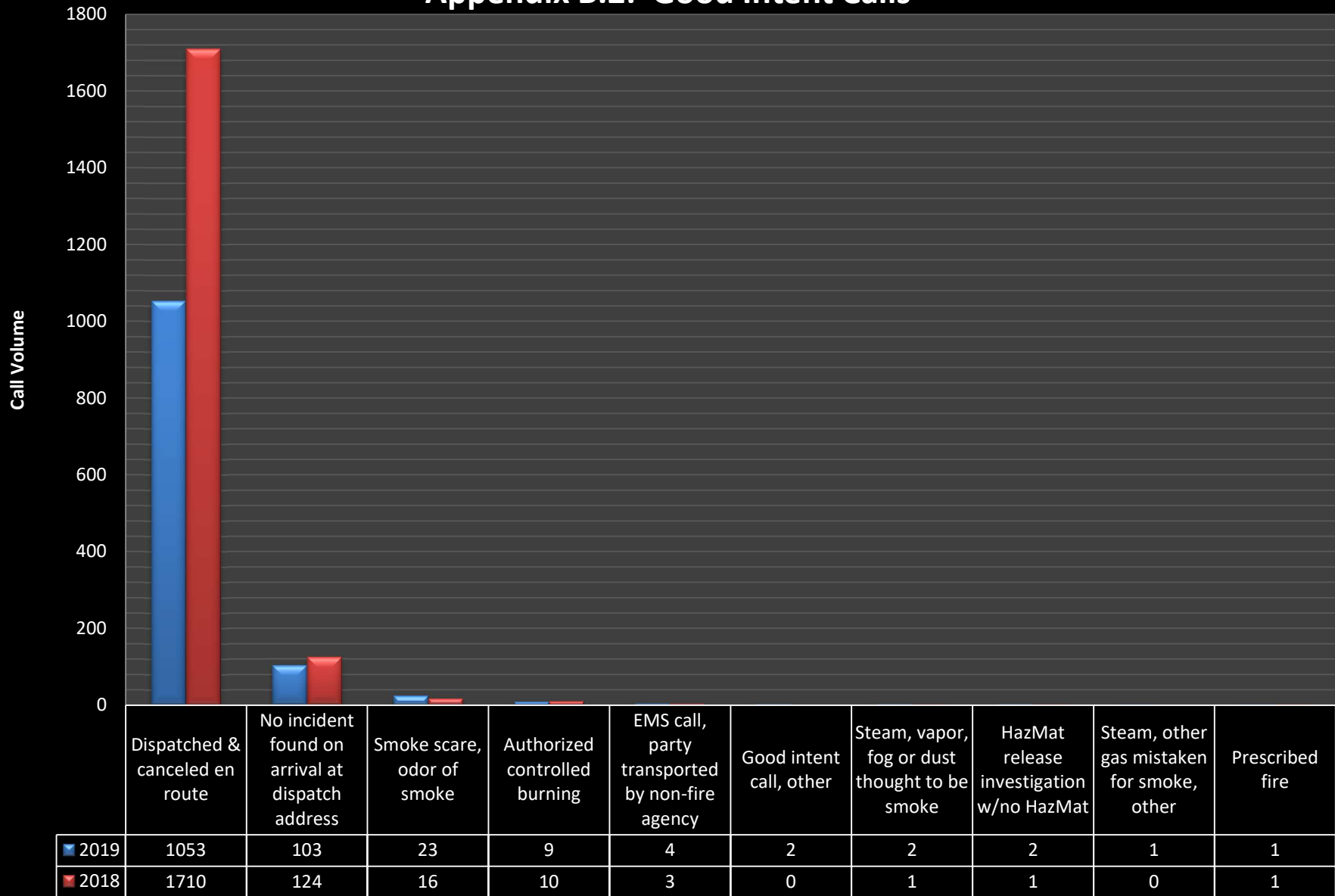
### Appendix B.1: Rescue and Emergency Services by Type 2019/2018



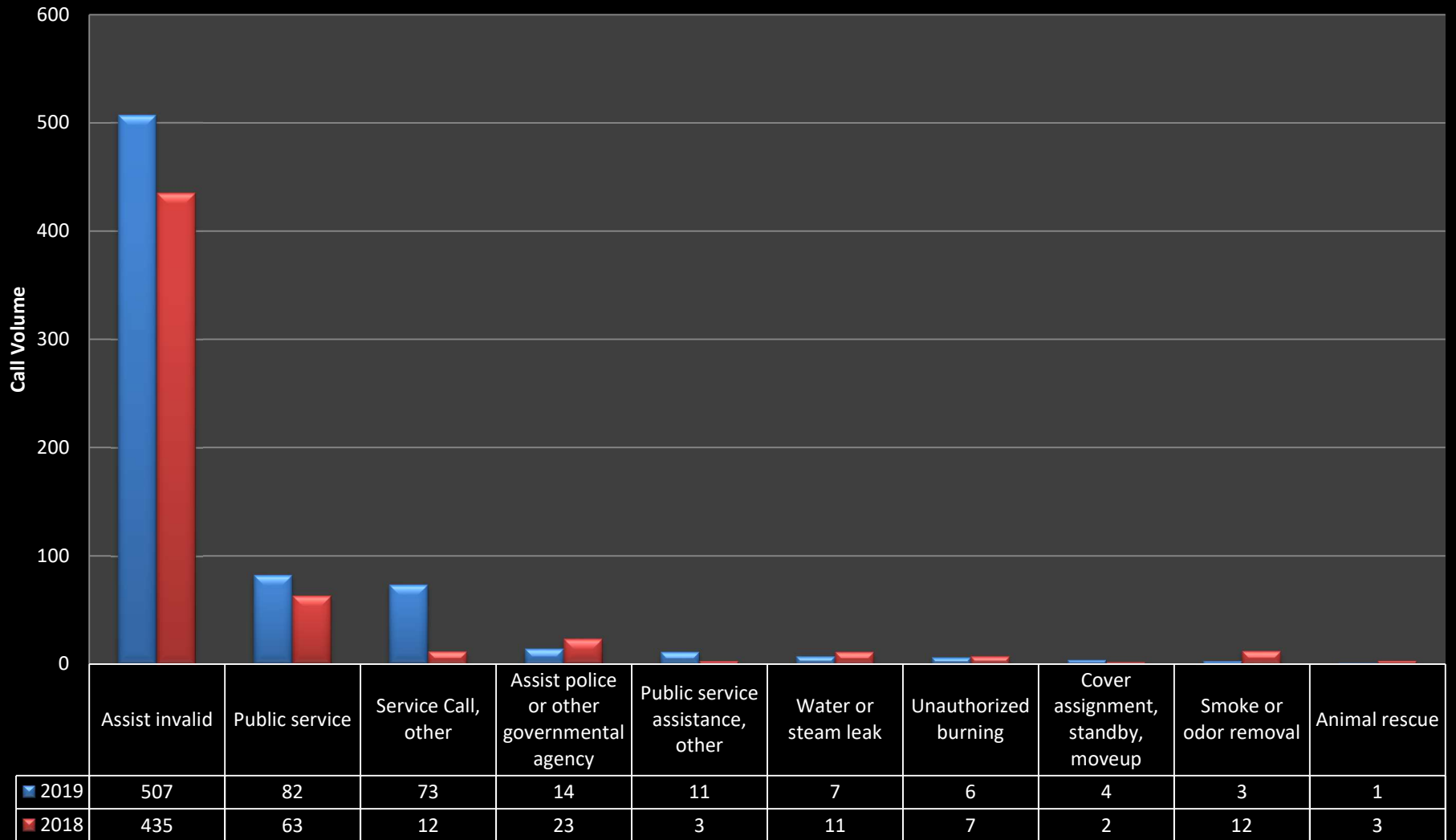
	Medical assist, assist EMS crew	EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	Motor vehicle accident with injuries	Emergency medical service incident, other	Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped)	Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator	Water related rescue	Other Rescue
2019	1901	1544	227	197	34	9	8	8	6
2018	1296	1294	198	60	8	5	9	4	14



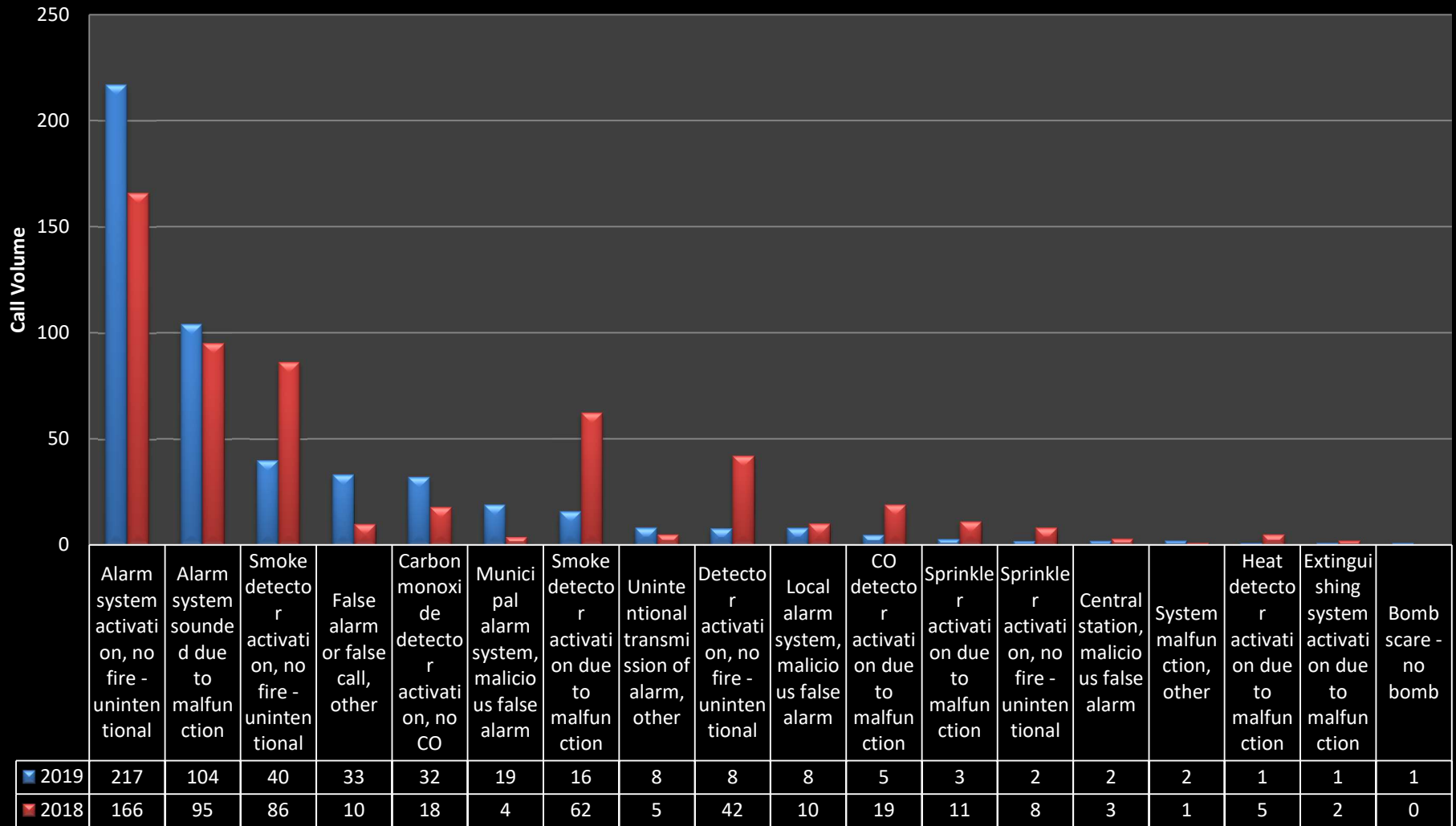
## Appendix B.2: Good Intent Calls



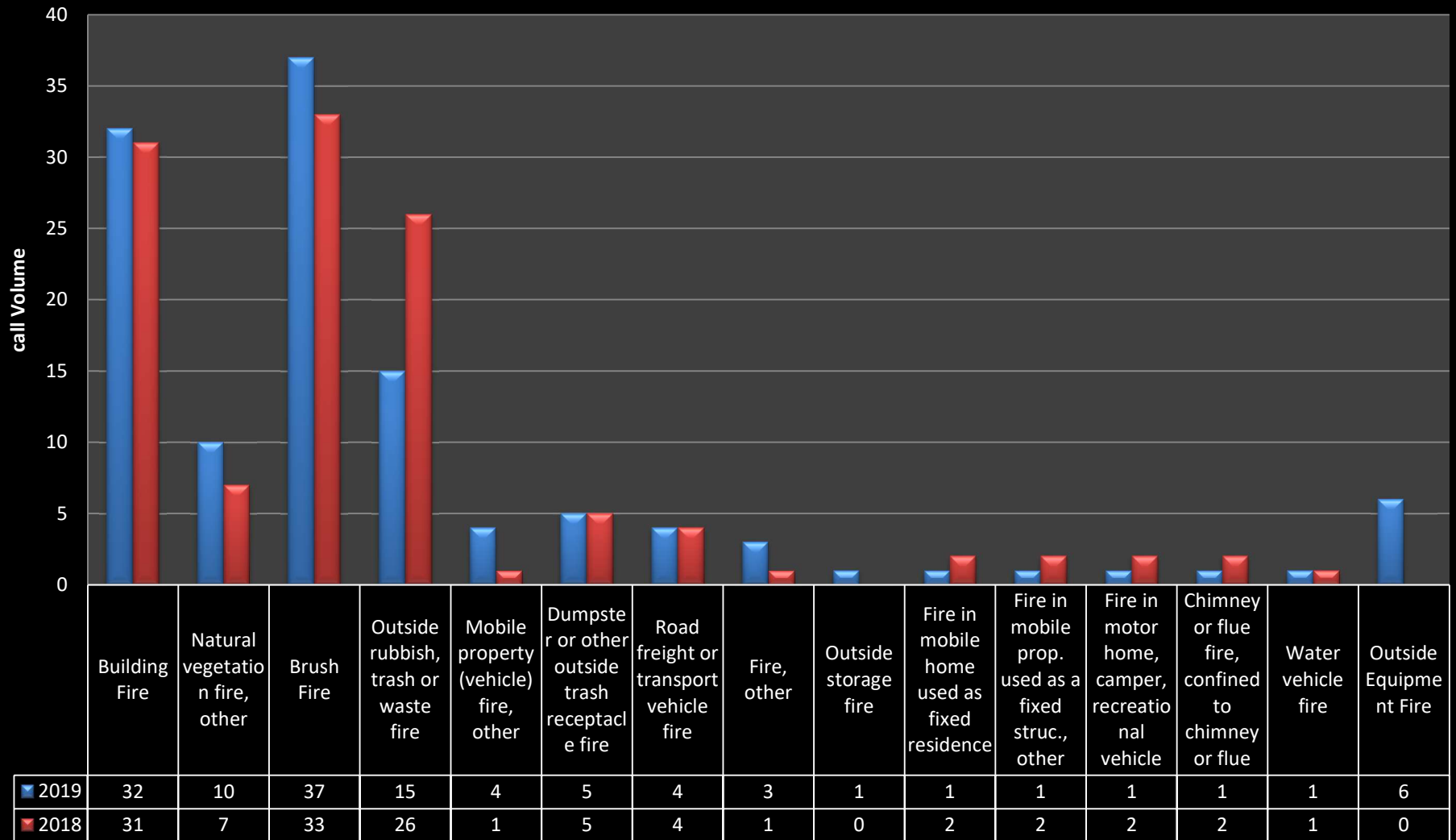
### Appendix B.3: Service Calls



## Appendix B.4: False Calls and False Alarms



## Appendix B.5: Fire Call Detail 2019/2018



## New Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2023

The Fire District maintains a five-year strategic plan. The previous plan expired in 2018, and a new the plan was developed in its place. The strategic plan provides a “roadmap” for the District as it looks ahead to improve services not only needed for the current time but the future as well. The new strategic plan was developed with the assistance of consultants from the Center for Public Safety Excellence Technical Advisor Program (CPSE-TAP).

With the help TAP, the District conducted an open meeting with the public to receive community input. The data derived from the public session were presented to District staff. The staff evaluated all aspects of the District’s operations to incorporate the information gained from the community. The process resulted in a new plan with substantial changes to the District’s vision and mission statements to reflect the communities' stated needs. The new strategic plan may be found on the District’s website at [www.blufftonfd.com](http://www.blufftonfd.com) .

