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Savannah Fire Department

Comprehensive Organizational Review

February 14, 2019

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT

Purpose of Study

Review Operations of SFD:

Improve Effectiveness

Opportunities for Efficiency

Consider Best Practice

Result: 4 Separate Reports

General Organizational Review, Personnel

Efficiency/ISO, and EMS



Methodology

1. Review relevant operational and financial documents
2. Interviews with senior staff
3. Focus groups with employees
4. Anonymous workplace climate survey of employees
5. Review comparable departments





Engine (Pumper)



Fire Ladder (Aerial)



Quint (Combined)



Heavy Rescue



Background on Savannah Fire

Current Status:

15 Stations

336 Authorized Positions

318 certified firefighters

Departments:

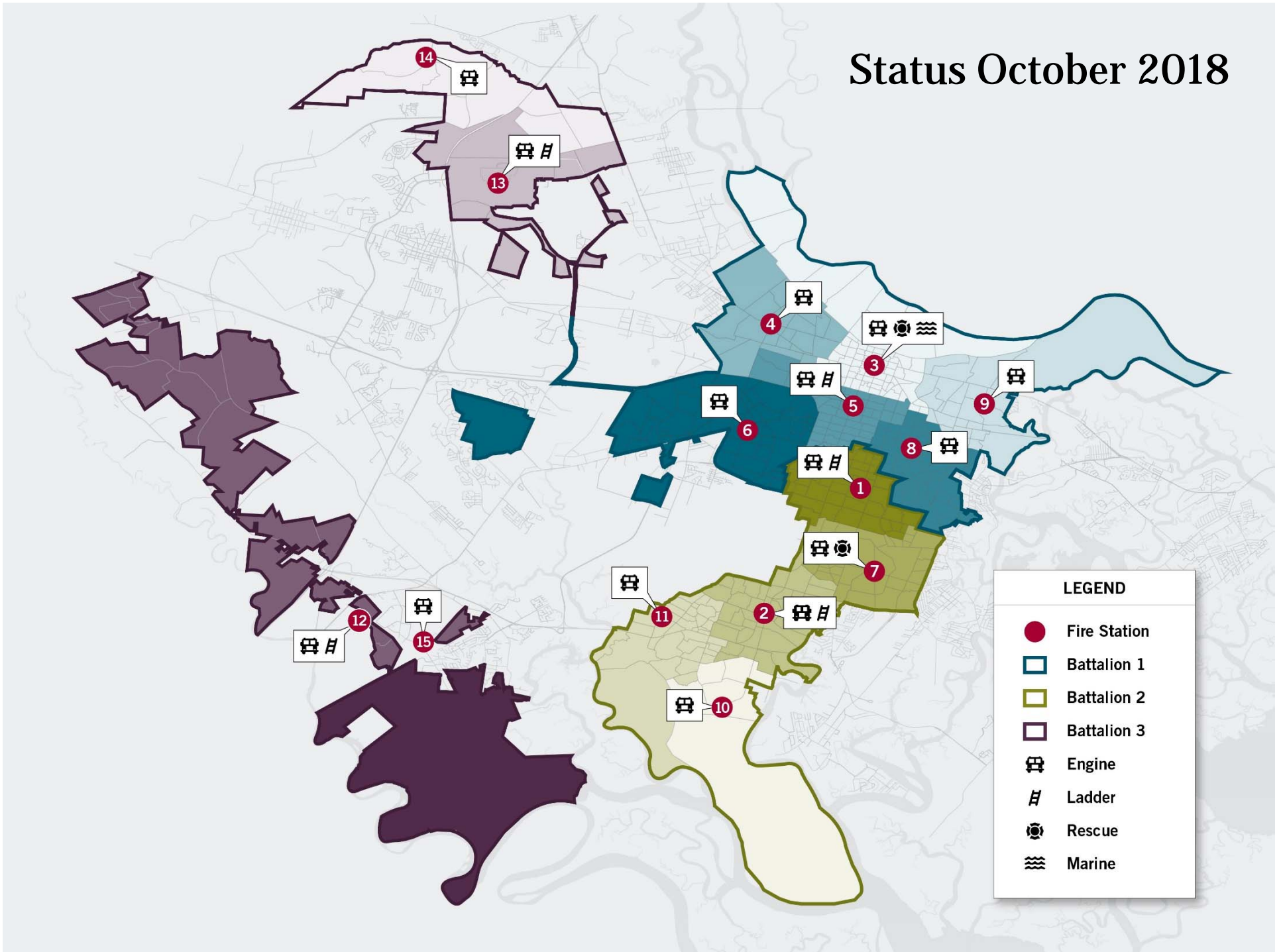
Operations

Logistics

Emergency Management



Status October 2018



Findings – General Review

SFD effective in core missions:

Fire Suppression, Rescue, Fire Prevention

ISO I and national certification

Response times match comparable
fire departments

Opportunities for improvement



General Organizational Review

OPERATIONS



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Operations - Options

1. Funding for Marine Company
2. Research Professional
3. Skill-Based Pay



General Organizational Review

LOGISTICS



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Logistics - Options

1. Permanent Assignment to Training
2. Capital Maintenance of Fire Stations
3. Exhaust Filtration Systems for Stations
4. Contracting for Fleet Maintenance



General Organizational Review

FIRE PREVENTION



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Fire Prevention – Options

1. Elevate Fire Prevention from Division to Department
2. Include PIO within Fire Prevention
3. Administrative Secretary



General Organizational Review

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



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Community Outreach - Options

1. Expand Child Fire Safety Education
2. Expand Social Media Presence
3. More Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations



REVIEW OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND MORALE



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Personnel - Findings

SFD is facing substantial morale and cultural challenges in many areas.

Pay, promotions, discipline, transfers, communication, support for senior leadership

Firefighters are dedicated to serving public and loyal to fellow firefighters.



REVIEW OF PERSONNEL

Example Responses from Climate Survey



Doing my job well gives me a strong sense of personal satisfaction.

Answer	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	77.1	205
Slightly agree	16.5	44
Neither agree nor disagree	3.0	8
Slightly disagree	0.4	1
Highly disagree	3.0	8
Total	100%	266



How would you rate the overall morale level within the SFD?

Answer	Percent	Count
Excellent	1.9	5
Good	4.2	11
OK/fair	20.4	53
Poor	72.3	188
No opinion	1.2	3
Total	100%	260



Everybody is treated fairly in the SFD.

Answer	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	3.9	10
Slightly agree	9.6	25
Neither agree nor disagree / neutral	12.7	33
Slightly disagree	24.6	64
Strongly disagree	49.2	128
Total	100%	260



Overall, the SFD is well managed.

Answer	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	5.8	15
Slightly agree	9.7	25
Neither agree nor disagree / neutral	8.9	23
Slightly disagree	34.9	90
Strongly disagree	40.7	105
Total	100%	258



Personnel - Options

1. Management Training

e.g., Discipline, Diversity

2. Classification & Comp Study

3. Amend Promotions Process

4. Improve Employee Recognition



ISO AND EFFICIENCY

REVIEW OF OPPORTUNITIES



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Efficiency - Findings

ISO credits from last review: 92.73

Opportunity for cost savings – Personnel
76% of budget (FY 2018)

Change from ISO 1 to ISO 2 should have little
impact on homeowner insurance

Analysis based on 90 firefighters as minimal staff

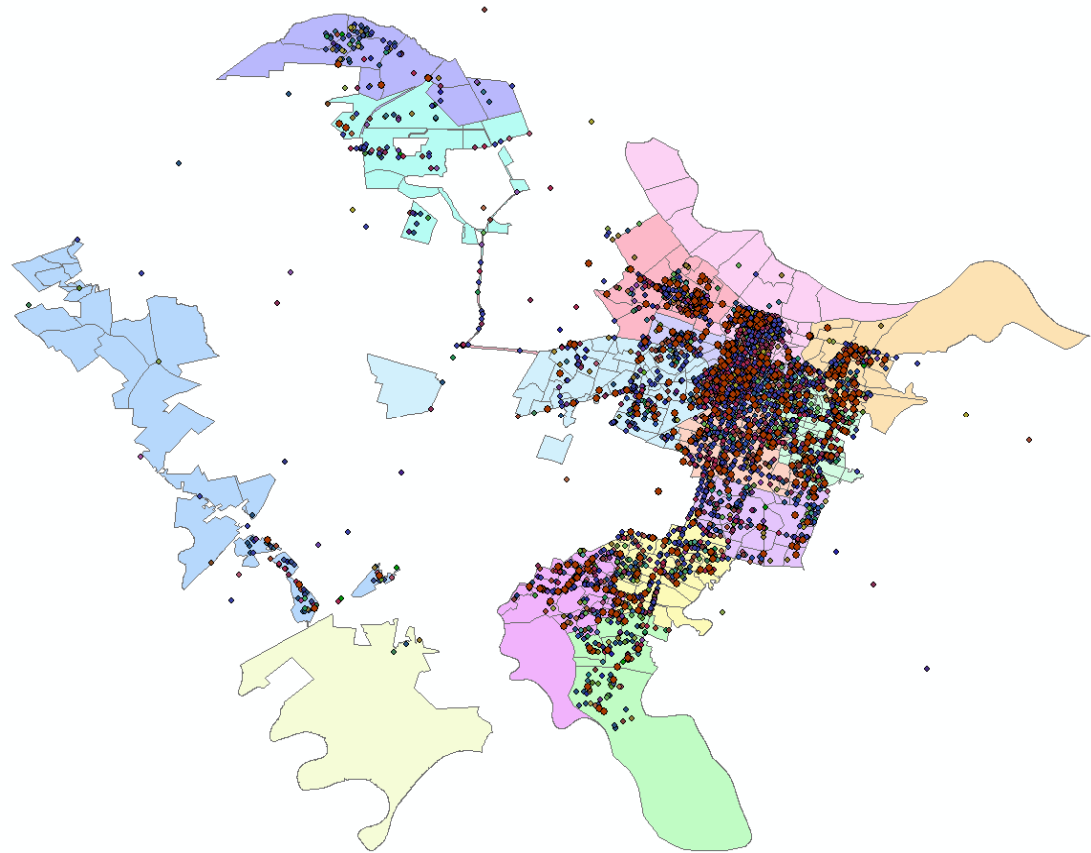
Challenge: Balancing risk and service cost



Fire Operations - Workload

Incidents 2017

High	1
Moderate/High	426
Moderate	395
Moderate/Low	516
Low	3,537
Null	2,937
TOTAL	7,812



Efficiency - Findings

Reducing the maximum number of firefighters in a company to 3 is **NOT** recommended.

Having all 3-person companies increases the average response time to a fire by over 3 minutes (3:07).

24% increase over current benchmark (13 min). to reach ERF



Efficiency - Options

Option 2: Close Station 7 Rescue Company and create combined Ladder/Rescue Company at Station 2

Estimated Savings: \$915,758

Option 3: Close Station 13 Ladder Company Engine Company would use Quint

Estimated Savings: \$915,758

Assumes agreement with Pooler



Efficiency - Options

Option 4: Restructure Hazmat 2 Company (single position) from 24-hour to 8-hour shift. Reduce one or two shifts.

Maintain Hazmat Battalion Chief

Remaining employee(s) focus on commercial inspections/record keeping

Estimated Savings: \$76,025 - \$146,050



Efficiency - Options

Option 5: Service Reimbursement

Work with tax-exempt public authorities to receive PILOTs for benefit of fire and rescue services



SFD Providing EMS

Offering EMS represents a higher level of service to residents and visitors.

Currently, all firefighters are being trained as EMT-Basic.

SFD will NOT transport patients to the hospital.

SFD will need **additional capacity** for EMS call response.



Emergency Medical Service - Workload

Critical (“hot”) EMS calls within Savannah
= **20,016** in 2017

Over 250% increase from current
call volume

	EMS Calls	Percent of EMS Calls
Battalion 1	12,351	61.7%
Battalion 2	7,109	35.5%
Battalion 3	556	2.8%



EMS Simulation for Call Overlap

SFD Current Calls Plus EMS Calls, 2017

Incidents of Overlapping Calls	Count
Full-Hour Overlapping Calls (Mod/High Risk)	2
Half-Hour Overlapping Calls (Low/Mod Risk, EMS)	8,061
15 Minute Overlapping Calls (Not Rated Risk)	155
Total Overlapping Calls	8,218



EMS Service Options

1. Current Apparatus

Wear and Tear on apparatus

Use existing firefighters

Appropriate for low-volume call areas

2. Quick Response Vehicle (QRV)

Pick-up truck with extras

\$120,000

2 – person unit

Appropriate for high-volume call areas



EMS in Savannah

At least 1 QRV

Battalion 1 area

Reduce risk of call overlap

Estimated Cost for QRV and EMS = **\$718,661**

Remaining calls respond with current companies

Depending on volume and times of calls, **may need second QRV** (cost approx. \$608,000)



EMS – Other Considerations

1. Implementation plan
2. Chatham County Emergency Services agreement
3. Training for Chatham County 911 center employees
4. Impact on SFD community outreach
5. Hire permanent EMS trainer
6. Impact on employee compensation
7. Impact on ISO
8. Support from employees



Thank You

Questions?



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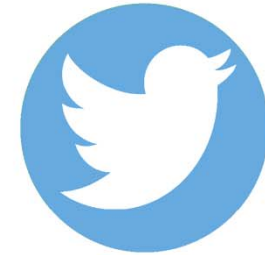
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