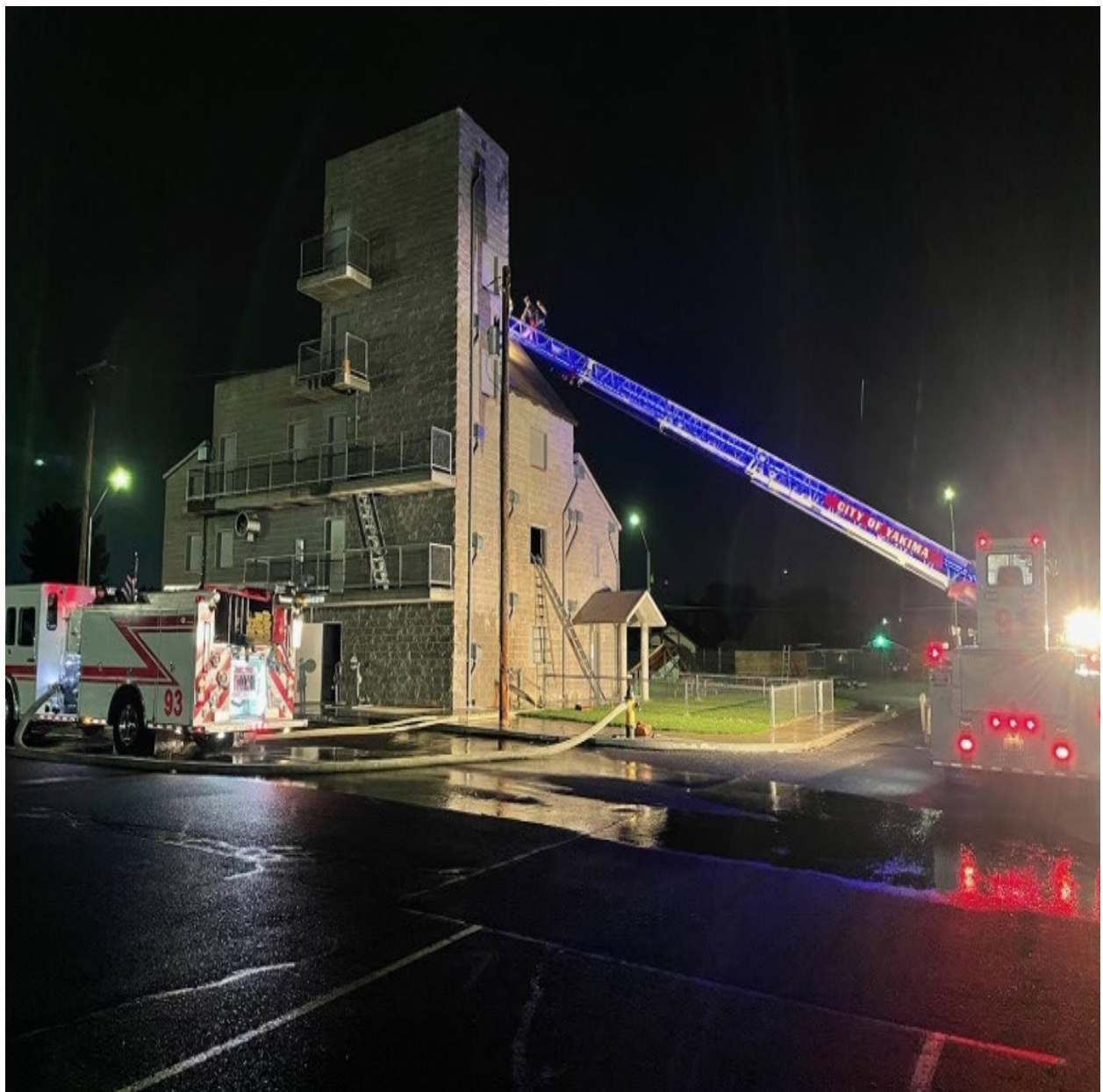


City of Yakima Fire Department 2022 Annual Report



CITY OF YAKIMA FIRE DEPARTMENT

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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Message from the Fire Chief

Honorable Mayor, members of the Yakima City Council and City Manager,

The Yakima Fire Department would like to report on the activities and response data for the 2022 calendar year. During 2022 there were several accomplishments worth highlighting as the COVID pandemic had finally started to taper off and life was returning to a new normal. One significant accomplishment was the City and the Yakima Fire Department underwent its fire protection rating review done by the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau; these assessments are done every five years. We were very pleased to report that the City of Yakima remained a solid Fire Protection Class 3.

The department was able to make some progress on the replacement of several fire department vehicles thanks to the America Rescue Plan Act. In January we ordered the third KME fire engine. We were also able to replace three command vehicles and purchased a used technical rescue truck from a rural fire department on the East coast. A significant number of structural firefighter personal protective equipment pieces were replaced and have been having third party cleaning and testing inspections done on a consistent basis.

Our administrative team wants you to know we are continuously evaluating the ways in which we provide the essential services to the residents of Yakima, in an effort to be as effective and efficient as possible. The most valuable asset to our department is our members; the men and women who are our responders, our 911 communications team and our support personnel.

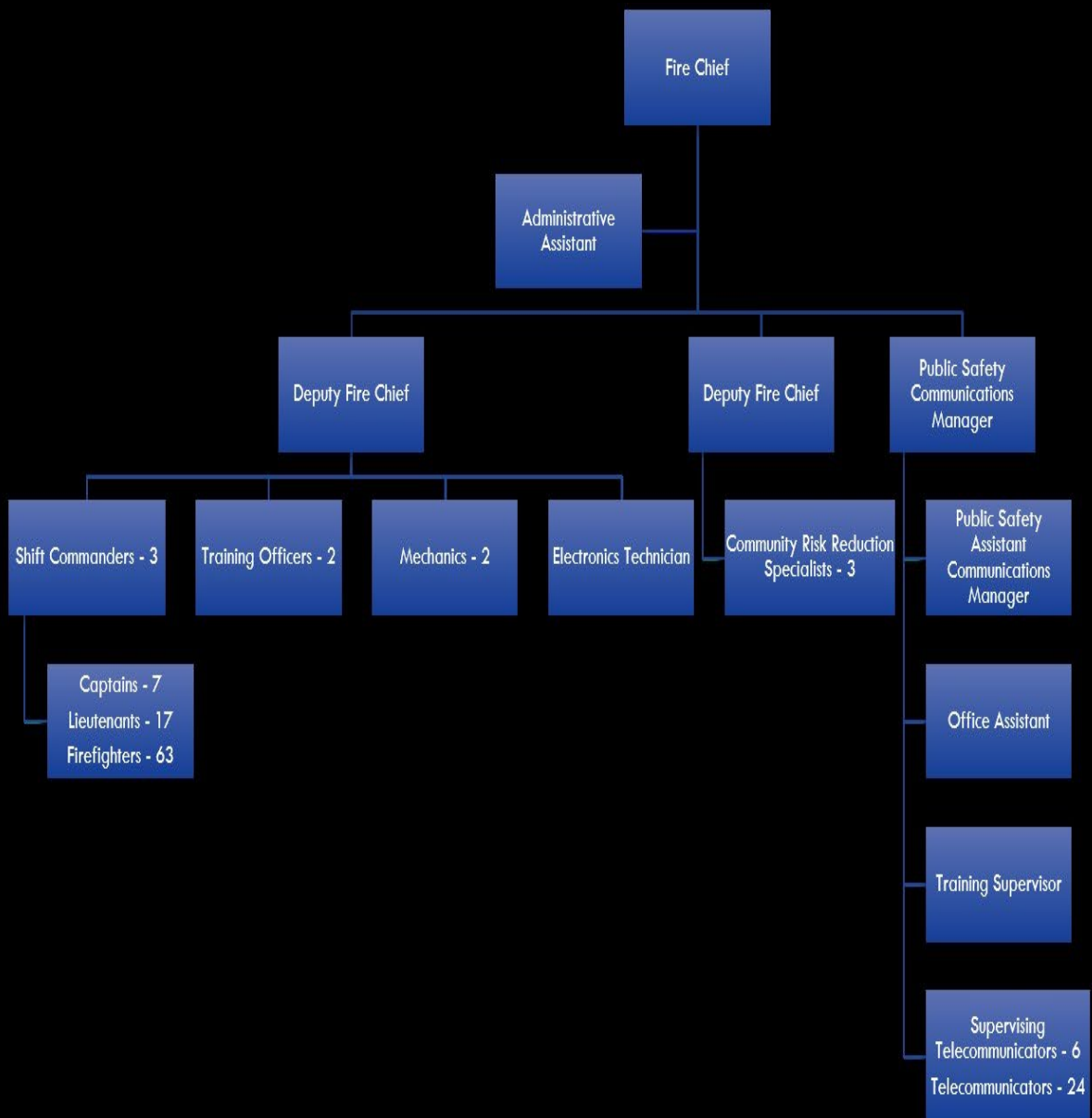
As a department that is responsible for the mitigation of all risks and hazards, our members have countless hours invested in training. This training is required to maintain our operational readiness and also provides safety to our members and the residents of our City.

On behalf of the entire department, I want to thank you for continued support. It is an honor and privilege to serve you as the Chief of the Yakima Fire Department.

Respectfully,

Aaron J. Markham, Fire Chief

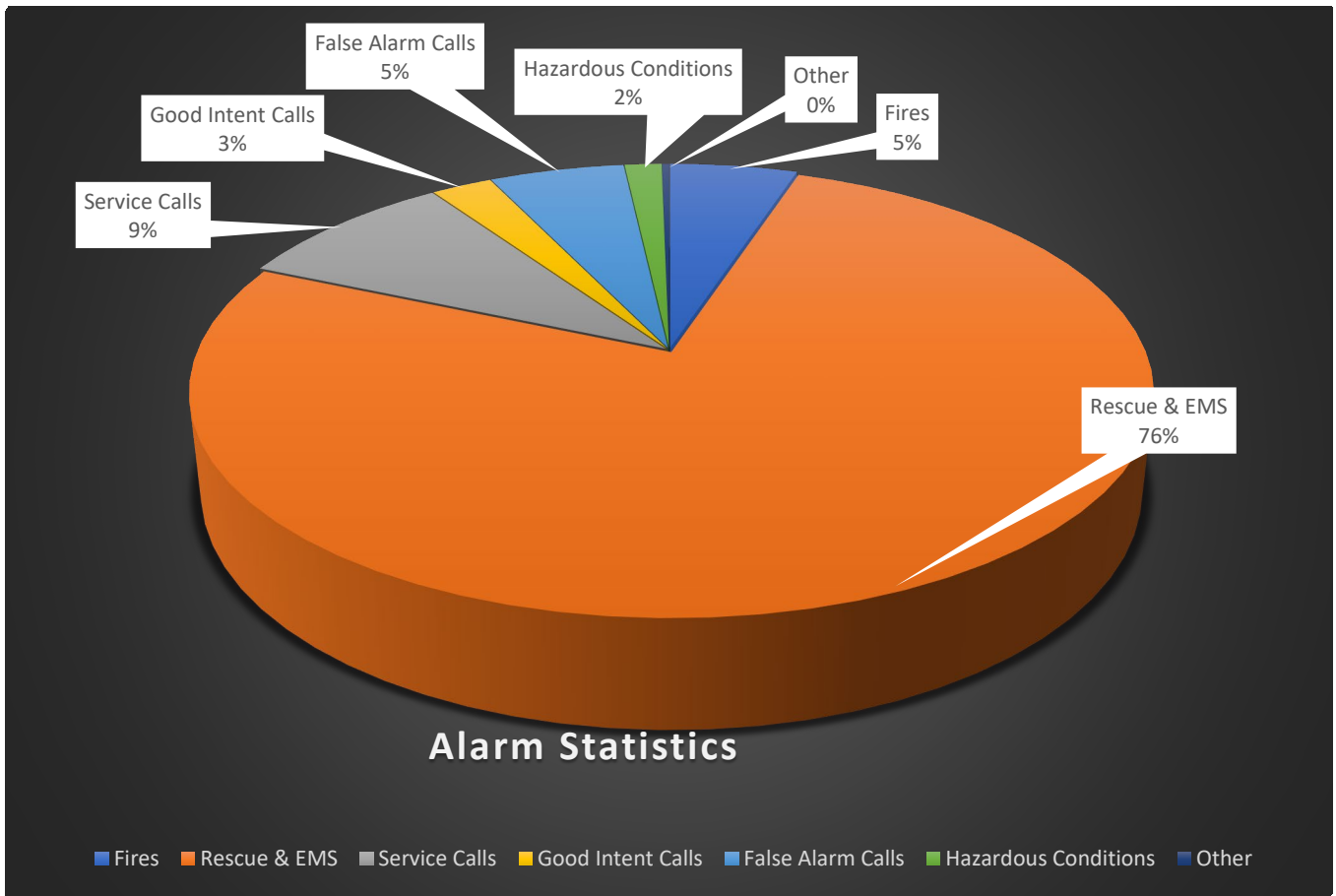
Yakima Fire Department Organization Chart



Fire Department Operations

The Operations Division of the Fire Department is responsible for mitigating all fires (structural, wildland, and others), emergency medical incidents, hazardous materials incidents, technical rescue incidents and natural and man-made disasters. Because of the workload, this division is staffed with 90 personnel who are tasked with mitigating the emergency incidents. The Operations Division also oversees two personnel in the training division. The men and women of this division have the upmost pride and dedication in serving the residents and businesses in the City of Yakima. Several challenges and many successes were presented in 2022. Yakima Fire Department's larger undertakings were the creation of a new Incident Command System (which is in the process of being implemented) as well as hiring and training of both new and current firefighters. The team's exceptional dedication to the safety of the public and unwavering commitment to the community is seen and felt by all.





Major Incident Type

Major Incident Type	# of Incidents	% of Total
Fires	623	5.09%
Rescue & EMS	9345	76.38%
Service Calls	1093	8.93%
Good Intent Calls	297	2.43%
False Alarm Calls	660	5.39%
Hazardous Conditions	181	1.48%
Other	36	0.30%

Total incidents 12235

Response Time Standards 2022

In 2006, the Washington State Legislature adopted a measurement tool to help local governments that provide Fire and Medical emergency services to evaluate their Fire Departments. RCW 35.103. requires fire departments to adopt response time standards and to report to their governing body annually their performance in relation to those adopted standards. In 2007, the City of Yakima and the Yakima Fire Department adopted the nationally recognized time standards for responses. These standards represent fire service best practices and help maximize a fire department's chances of saving lives and property in various emergencies.

Meeting these time standards are critical to the fire department's ability to save lives and property. Continued annexations, new construction, and a rapidly increasing call volume is resulting in extended response times and overall failure to meet our adopted time standards. A Standards of Coverage Document is needed to adequately assess the Yakima Fire Departments staffing levels, station locations, and community needs. This type of assessment has not been done for the Yakima Fire Department in over 50 years.

Fire Suppression

Turnout Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a turnout time standard of 120 seconds for a fire suppression incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- **125 Seconds**
Met standard- **49%**

Travel Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a travel time standard of 240 seconds for the arrival of the first engine company to a fire suppression incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- **283 Seconds**
Met standard- **33%**



Full First Alarm Assignment: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a response time standard of 480 seconds for the arrival of the full complement of a first alarm response to a fire suppression incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- **812 seconds**
Met standard- **18%**

Emergency Medical Service (EMS)

Turnout Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a turnout time standard of 90 seconds for an EMS incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- 99 Seconds
Met standard- 47%

Travel Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a travel time standard of 240 seconds for an EMS incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- 234 seconds
Met standard- 65%

Special Operations (Hazardous Materials and Technical Rescue)

Turnout Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a turnout time standard of 120 seconds for a technical rescue incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- 117 seconds
Met standard- 63%

Travel Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a travel time standard of 240 seconds for a special operations incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- 250 Seconds
Met standard- 38%

Aircraft Rescue and Firefighter (ARFF)

Turnout Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a turnout time standard of 120 seconds for an ARFF incident. This standard should be met 90% of the time.

2022 Average- 62 Seconds
Met standard- 100%

Travel Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a travel time standard of 240 seconds for an ARFF incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- 64 Seconds
Met standard- 100%

Wildland Fire

Turnout Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a turnout time standard of 120 seconds for a wildland fire incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- **137 Seconds**
Met standard- **56%**

Travel Time: The City of Yakima Fire Department has adopted a travel time standard of 240 seconds for a wildland fire incident. The department should meet this standard 90% of the time.

2022 Average- **400 Seconds**
Met standard- **30%**



SunComm

Call Statistics-

Total 911 Calls: 160,433
Abandoned 911 Calls: 16,647
Incoming Admin Lines: 41,204
Outgoing Calls: 87,996

Average 911 Call Answer Times by Month-

The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) sets standards and guidelines for 9-1-1 call handling. According to NENA standards, 90% of all 9-1-1 calls shall be answered within 15 seconds and 95% should be answered within 20 seconds. SunComm did an exceptional job exceeding those standards during all hours, despite consistent under-staffing throughout 2022:

January: 4.542 Seconds	July: 4.552 Seconds
February: 4.479 Seconds	August: 4.907 Seconds
March: 4.649 Seconds	September: 4.495 Seconds
April: 4.668 Seconds	October: 4.813 Seconds
May: 4.422 Seconds	November: 4.601 Seconds
June: 4.730 Seconds	December: 4.820 Seconds

Response Statistics-

In 2022, SunComm dispatched the following number of incidents for the following agencies:

Yakima Fire: 12,361

Yakima Police:

Dispatched Incidents - 65,573
Traffic Stops - 25,237

Union Gap Police:

Dispatched Incidents- 5,909
Traffic Stops- 1,946

Warrants-

SunComm enters all warrants for the Yakima Police Department. In 2022, we entered 3,532 warrants into Spillman, WACIC and NCIC making those warrants available to be served by law enforcement agencies nationwide within 72 hours of their issuance according to Washington State ACCESS standards. The average time calculated to process a warrant from intake to final audit is approximately 20 minutes. Additionally, SunComm handled 564 warrant recalls from both Superior and Municipal court this year. On average it takes approximately 5 minutes to complete one recall, equating to an additional 47 hours of work dedicated to this task.

Collectively, SunComm committed approximately 1224 hours to warrant tasks in 2022.

Record Requests-

SunComm's Administrative Assistant processed approximately 2,900 record requests during 2022. These requests are for 9-1-1, radio audio recordings as well as CAD incidents and are being requested by user agencies, the public, investigators and prosecutors.

Personnel Action-

In 2022, SunComm had 34 total personnel allocations including administrative, supervisory and line-level staff. At the close of 2022, all three of the administrative positions (Manager, Assistant Manager and Administrative Assistant) were filled. There were seven supervisory allocations including six floor supervisors and one training supervisor. All but one supervisor position was filled. In 2022, SunComm continued with its transition from two distinct line-level classifications (dispatcher and call-taker) to a consolidated classification (Telecommunicator). This transition was completed in an effort to align SunComm with agencies of similar size throughout the state. Additionally, the transition created a larger workforce pool which aided in scheduling and reducing overtime. In 2022, there were a total of 24 line-level positions. The year culminated with 9 line-level positions filled, leaving 15 vacancies.

Throughout 2022, SunComm had nine members resign from their positions. Two were probationary Telecommunicators, four were seasoned Call-Takers, one was a Telecommunicator and two were Supervisors. These resignations were a combination of employees pursuing other careers and transferring to other communications centers.



Throughout the majority of the year, SunComm was operating at a critically under-staffed level. This resulted in excessive overtime expenditures, burnout of remaining employees and an increased sick leave usage. SunComm employees worked a total of 10,58 hours of overtime in 2022 at a cost of \$525,035. While it placed a huge burden and a demanding workload on those who maintained their positions serving the community, SunComm maintained their commitment to customer service and responder safety.

In 2022, the City of Yakima Human Resources Department opened recruitments for SunComm twelve times. From these recruitments, five candidates were hired. As a whole, the City of Yakima saw a significant decline in the number of applicants across all classifications; SunComm only seeing 145 applicants total. Public safety was significantly impacted as the stress of the job and the hours required can be prohibitive to many applicants.

The inability to recruit, hire and retain qualified applicants has been detrimental to SunComm; however, as 2022 culminated, there was an increase in the number of recruitments and number of applicants hired. The goal is to continue this trend and work towards filling vacancies, reducing overtime and limiting burnout.

Training

Message from the Training Supervisor Mark Brusio:



SunComm continued to implement the changes that were implemented with the training program in 2021. The academy for new hires was modified to provide a foundation for all disciplines and not just 9-1-1. New hires now come out of the 6-week academy with foundational knowledge on call taking, police dispatch, and fire dispatch. Communication Training Officers (CTO's) have been working hard to ensure that trainees meet the minimum qualifications required to pass the training on a specific discipline. The majority of trainees have been checked off on multiple disciplines as SunComm works towards a staff of Telecommunicators that are fully cross-trained. In addition to floor training, new hires have participated in mandatory state classes: Telecommunicator I and Telecommunicator II.

Public Education

Message from the Public Education Coordinator Jessica Finnell:

Public Education in 2022 was impacted by COVID-19 and therefore fewer community events were offered. However, as restrictions lifted, the Public Education team was able to participate in several of the annual public education events:

- **Selah National Night Out – August 2, 2022**
- **Yakima Police National Night Out – August 2, 2022**
- **Grandview National Night Out – August 9, 2022**
- **Union Gap National Night Out – August 9, 2022**

The Public Education team was slowly able to reintegrate into the community to attend community events and provide education on public safety and the 9-1-1 system.

Peer Support

Message from Team Leader Cheryl Miller:

The Suncomm Peer Support Team is comprised of three individuals including Call-Taker Cheryl Miller, Supervisor Albert Miranda and our newest recruit, Dispatcher Brittney Niblett.

Our team had a difficult year regarding staffing with a large employee turnover; with new employees come new challenges and increased demands for our existing employees. Some of these increased demands included additional required overtime to assist with the training of new

hires and provide standard floor coverage to ensure the safety of the public and first responders. We have worked with several new hires not only through their training process, but also through their first few traumatic incidents.

TERT

SunComm maintained their partnership on the Washington State Telecommunicator's Emergency Response Team, otherwise known as TERT through 2022. This team deploys to other Communications centers in the event of large-scale emergencies, allowing the employees at those communications centers the opportunity to focus on their families, homes and personal matters while our dispatchers work the imminent threat of the event.

While our team did not deploy on or require assistance from TERT on any incidents in 2022, they maintained their certifications, held their annual planning meetings and were prepared throughout 2022 to aid in the event of any disasters. Mutually, if SunComm were to have faced a large-scale disaster in our area other TERT teams would deploy to and provide the same service to us, allowing our teams the same professional courtesy, if necessary, in the event of a large-scale emergency in our area.



Yakima Fire Department Awards and Recognitions

During the years of COVID the department got behind on recognizing members of the department for outstanding achievements and awards. This was due in part because several members of the Awards Committee were no longer employees of the department. In 2023, the Awards Committee reviewed nominations for the years that were missed. The following awards and commendations were approved by the nominating committee for the years 2020, 2021, and 2022, bringing the department up to date on recognizing these members for their outstanding performance.



Commendation for Actions Taken Under Hazardous Conditions Lieutenant Jeremiah Stilley

For performance of duty with a degree of excellence and proficiency that has set him apart from his peers- Under hazardous conditions

On June 4, 2021 at about 0450 hrs. TK291 responded to a report of a structure fire. While enroute E94 and E93 confirmed that it was a working fire and there was a report of child inside of one unit of the structure. On arrival at the scene, TK291 was assigned to perform primary search of the unit that the child was reportedly in. Lt. Jeremiah Stilley acted as the anchor point for his crew as they conducted an oriented search. During the search Lt. Stilley came across a portable crib that was zipped closed. He made access into the crib and found an unresponsive 2 y/o child. Lt. Stilley declared that he had an active rescue and was assisted by his crew in extricating the child out of the super-heated and smoke-filled environment. Once the child was moved out of the poisonous environment Lt. Stilley performed a rapid assessment on the child's condition. He determined that the child was not breathing and immediately began to perform mouth to mouth ventilations on the child, without regard to his own health. He continued to perform these ventilations until relieved by E94 personnel.

Lt. Stilley performed his job with a degree of skill and proficiency and focus on the health of a member of our community that clearly sets him apart from his peers. In recognition of his outstanding performance, Lt. Jeremiah Stilley is hereby awarded a Yakima Fire Department Commendation Under Hazardous Conditions.

Commendation for Actions Taken Under Hazardous Conditions Firefighter Pete Duthie

For performance of duty with a degree of excellence and proficiency that has set him apart from his peers- Under hazardous conditions

On July 28, 2014 TK91 responded to a report of a person having a syncopal episode. While responding to the incident SunComm notified the responding units that the patient was hanging from the top of a flag pole on the top of the Federal Building. TK91 arrived on scene with E91 and quickly established a plan of action. FF Pete Duthie smoothly and efficiently deployed TK91's aerial ladder to make access to the patient. FF Duthie deployed the tip of the aerial ladder to within a foot of the patient. He monitored the progress of the rescue as FF Ancira and FF Shahan worked within the last three rungs of the ladder to secure the patient. Once the patient was moved onto the ladder FF Duthie smoothly lowered the ladder with two Firefighters and a patient down onto the building roof.

FF Duthie performed his job with a degree of skill and proficiency that clearly sets him apart from his peers. In recognition of his outstanding performance, FF Pete Duthie is hereby awarded a Yakima Fire Department Commendation Under Hazardous Conditions.

Commendation

Non-Hazardous Conditions

Firefighter Joanna Albrecht

For excellence and proficiency in the performance of duty:

On April 6, 2021 E92 and E94 were dispatched to a report of a possible code 5. E92 arrived on scene and found the patients husband attempting CPR on his wife. E92 performed a quick and thorough assessment on the patient and determined that the patient could not be resuscitated. E92 cancelled E94 and the incoming ambulance. It was at this time that FF Joanna Albrecht stepped in to console the patients grieving son. She spent more than 30 minutes consoling the child. Her communication, demeanor, compassion and obvious concern calmed and consoled the child considerably.

FF Albrecht's concern for and care of a child in distress exemplifies the best qualities of being a firefighter and serving our community. In recognition of her outstanding and exemplary performance, Firefighter Joanna Albrecht is hereby awarded a Commendation Under Non-Hazardous Conditions for performing duties of an exceptionally difficult nature with a degree of excellence and proficiency exceeding her peers.

Unit Commendation
Non-Hazardous Conditions
Call-Taker Karen Lanphere
Dispatcher Shayna Pray
Call-Taker Brooklyn Wolcott
Dispatcher Cynthia Mulligan

For performance with a degree of excellence in an exceptionally difficult situation:

On May 29th, 2022 Call-Taker Lanphere received a 9-1-1 call regarding a stolen vehicle that had just occurred from the Yakima Post Office. Lanphere quickly learned from the reporting party that his child was in the vehicle when it was taken. As Lanphere quickly and accurately entered all pertinent information into the call comments, Dispatcher Pray began dispatching and relaying items to the responding officers. Dispatcher Pray announced the information to her neighboring agencies in order to inform them of the incident. Call-Taker Wolcott began receiving other calls regarding the incident and questioned each caller thoroughly to ensure the most up to date information was obtained. Dispatcher Mulligan was advised that the victims cell phone was in the stolen vehicle, she relayed this information to Call-Takers Wolcott and Lanphere both whom worked together to ping the phone for a real time location.

As the crew worked together to assist officers with finding the vehicle and child, they continued to process each call with care, professionalism and importance. They ensured all agencies obtained the updated information within a timely manner. For Call-Taker Lanphere, Call-Taker Wolcott, Dispatcher Pray and Dispatcher Mulligan's concern for care for the child, exemplary teamwork together in addition to working with outside agencies the child was ultimately located unharmed. In recognition of their outstanding and exemplary performance, they are hereby awarded a Commendation Under Non-Hazardous Conditions for performing duties of an exceptionally difficult nature with a degree of excellence and proficiency exceeding their peers.

Commendation

Non-Hazardous Conditions

Call-Taker Cheryl Miller

For performance with a degree of excellence in an exceptionally difficult situation:

On September 3, 2022, 9-1-1 received a call for a physical domestic that lasted several hours after SWAT being called to the scene. During this incident the suspect called 911 numerous times, Miller took the calls and attempted to calm the suspect down and get him to cooperate with police. Time after time she transferred the suspect to whichever officer or negotiator who had requested to speak to him. Due to her patience and calming demeanor, Miller built a rapport with the suspect. Miller listened closely to the non-verbal cues such as hearing gun racking all while maintaining a calm voice on the line. She documented all pertinent information in the call comments which were quickly relayed to the responders in order to maintain officer safety.

Call-Taker Cheryl Miller's empathetic approach with the suspect, use of de-escalation tactics and encouragement to be cooperative with responders ultimately allowed for all involved parties safety. In recognition of her outstanding and exemplary performance, Call-Taker Cheryl Miller is hereby awarded a Commendations Under Non-Hazardous Conditions for performing duties of an exceptionally difficult nature with the degree of excellence and proficiency exceeding her peers.

Telecommunicator of the Year

Assistant Public Safety Communications Manager

Angela Brown

In 2022, Angela Brown was named Telecommunicator of the Year by SunComm staff. This award is bestowed upon employees who demonstrate outstanding dedication and achievement throughout the year.

Brown was promoted to Public Safety Communications Assistant Manager in April of 2022. While tackling her new role, she continued to assist on the dispatch floor to reduce overtime caused by the staffing issues. In September, she stepped into the role of Acting Manager while the Manager was on leave. Brown continued to complete her own job responsibilities, while assisting on the floor during this time.

Brown's unwavering dedication to the center and SunComm staff is exemplary. She personifies our goal of "Commitment to Coworkers" by demonstrating professionalism and self-awareness in order to develop cooperative working relationships, which will in turn foster cohesiveness within and between communications teams.

Customer Service Award

Communications Division Office

Assistant Becky Rasmusson

As the Communications Division Office Assistant, Ms. Rasmusson is often the first point of contact for citizens, user agencies, allied agencies and vendors. She works with a variety of divisions and departments to process requests as well as facilitate projects and mitigate issues. In 2022, Ms. Rasmusson processed nearly 3,000 records requests from a variety of requestors. This is a critical component of this position and requires efficiency and timeliness in order to provide the data within the required timeline.

In 2022, Ms. Rasmusson took on the additional role of managing many of the software databases that SunComm utilizes. In this role, she provides technological support, enrolling new members, changing settings and adjusting the user's role within the software.

Ms. Rasmusson's dedication to providing excellent customer service is evident in the strong relationships she has built and fostered throughout her tenure at SunComm. Her desire to provide the best service possible and develop cooperative working relationships has a direct and positive impact on the division and those that SunComm serves.

Yakima Fire Officer of the Year 2020

Lieutenant Kai Nishida

The Yakima Fire Officer of the Year is chosen from among all of the Yakima Fire Departments promoted ranks: Lieutenant, Captain, Shift Commander, Deputy Chief, and Fire Chief. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, contributions to the department and/or community, and leadership.

2020 was a busy year for YFD. The COVID crisis was just beginning and it created a lot of worry and uncertainty for all of us. Despite that, Lt. Kai Nishida stepped up, like he always does, to take care of his crew. Every shift Lt. Nishida arrived at work with a positive attitude and a singular focus on making each day a good day. He spends time each shift to actively listen to his crew and understand their individual and group needs. This has led to a healthier and more positive work environment that has allowed his personnel to continue to excel.

He consistently works to train his crew to make them better at everything from basic skills to strategy and tactics. Additionally, he constantly strives to improve his own skill sets and is welcoming of corrections, new information, and new methodologies to help him and our department improve our craft.

His quiet and insightful demeanor with his strong and eloquent communication skills has established a reputation among all YFD crews as one of YFD's most respected company officers.

Yakima Fire Officer of the Year 2021

Lieutenant Steven Lockwood

The Yakima Fire Officer of the Year is chosen from among all of the Yakima Fire Departments promoted ranks: Lieutenant, Captain, Shift Commander, Deputy Chief, and Fire Chief. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, contributions to the department and/or community, and leadership.

2021 was a year of challenge and growth for the Yakima Fire Department. The Yakima Fire Department continued to grapple with the ongoing COVID crisis and many of our members began to design significant changes within the department. Lt. Steven Lockwood embraced the difficult circumstances and helped YFD face our challenges and progress forward. Lt. Lockwood worked diligently to train his crew, to the point that the Training Division recognized his continuous efforts. Lt. Lockwood used his experience and expertise in wildland firefighting to help design and teach YFD's annual wildland refresher training. His practical and knowledgeable perspective contributed greatly to making the training more valuable to our entire department. Additionally, Lt. Lockwood embraced the role of updating improving the Yakima Fire Departments wildland firefighting capability. He helped to research and instruct new hose lays, new equipment, insured we have safe PPE for wildland firefighting, recommended modifications to YFD's Brush units and the equipment they carry, among many other important suggestions. Lt. Lockwood's no nonsense and practical personality combined with a keen intelligence and positive nature represent the ideal for YFD's Company Officer and senior officer to emulate.

Yakima Fire Officer of the Year 2022

Lieutenant Brian Williams

The Yakima Fire Officer of the Year is chosen from among all of the Yakima Fire Departments promoted ranks: Lieutenant, Captain, Shift Commander, Deputy Chief, and Fire Chief. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, contributions to the department and/or community, and leadership.

2022 was a year that offered YFD some opportunity. Lt. Brian Williams work as a company officer and a general active member of YFD contributed greatly to that opportunity. First, Lt. Williams has worked for years to support his fellow firefighters with and through the Peer Support Program. He has been and continues to be a tireless advocate for the mental and physical health of everyone he works with. With all of the challenges YFD faced with the COVID pandemic, the actions of the Peer Support Group were never more important. He has taken his assignment as the B Shift TK91 officer seriously. He vigorously trains his crew and has actively advocated for current and updated equipment, PPE, and training. With the creation of a committee to help refine YFD's command and control for incidents, Lt. Williams stepped up and was an active participant in the discussions and the new systems development. His common-sense user oriented and realistic perspective contributed significantly to the process. With YFD's movement to rewrite our Policy and Procedure Manuals and our use of an outside company, Lexipol, to help us complete this task, Lt. Williams stepped up here again. For several months he was one of a small group that worked tirelessly to update the templated policies supplied by Lexipol to more accurately reflect how YFD actually works. He was instrumental in completing this first part of YFD's modernizing our Policies. Overall, Lt Brian Williams maintained a positive and constructive attitude that greatly improved the work environment around him.

Yakima Fire Employee of the Year

2022

Susan Madrigal

The Yakima Fire Employee of the Year is chosen from among all non-LEOFF YFD members. This is an award that is not always awarded. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, and contributions to the department and/or community.

Being the Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief is often a difficult and challenging job. Having the additional duties of official time keeper for SunComm and the Yakima Fire Department, being the only support for the two Deputy Chiefs and the Training Division, being the only support for the Community Risk Reduction Division, being the only support for any needs from any of YFD's staff, and dealing with most of the public disclosure request pertaining to YFD makes the job even more overwhelming. Despite the overwhelming and monumental tasks, she deals with on a daily basis she comes to work each day with a huge smile and an overwhelming and infectious positive attitude. This is best demonstrated by the crews at Sta 91 that actively look forward to watching her back her truck into the parking lot and come through the kitchen with a smile and new conversation starting story, every day.

Her commitment to YFD can also be illustrated by her working from home, frequently without pay and on weekends and/or while sick, to ensure that all SunComm and YFD members timecards are completed in time for payday. Susie is the heart of the Yakima Fire Department and her commitment to each member, the department, and our community is second to none.

Rusty Hauber Memorial Firefighter of the Year 2020 Robert Williams

The Rusty Hauber memorial Firefighter of the Year Award is chosen from among the Yakima Fire Departments firefighters. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, and contributions to our Department and/or community for that year.

2020 was a busy year for YFD. The COVID crisis was just beginning and it created a lot of worry and uncertainty for all of us. Despite the uncertainty, stress, and strains, Firefighter Robert Williams displayed his calm and comforting manner daily. In doing so, he quickly became a calming focus amongst his peers. He maintained an infectious positive attitude that greatly reduced stress and worry many of us experienced. Additionally, FF Williams knowledge of the firefighting profession and his job guaranteed that all tasks he was given or assumed were completed professionally and with a high degree of accuracy. He displayed an exceptional degree of compassion with all of the citizens he responded to regardless of the circumstances. FF Robert Williams exemplifies the ideals of the profession of firefighting and the Yakima Fire Department.

Rusty Hauber Memorial Firefighter of the Year 2021 Tim Gese

The Rusty Hauber memorial Firefighter of the Year Award is chosen from among the Yakima Fire Departments firefighters. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, and contributions to our Department and/or community for that year.

2021 was a year of challenge for the Yakima Fire Department. The Yakima Fire Department continued to grapple with the ongoing COVID crisis and many of our members began to design significant changes within the department. FF Tim Gese exemplifies the archetype of “Senior Firefighter”. As YFD’s various committees met to propose changes to our ICS system, how we perform search and rescue, how we intend to use TK91, and other important issues FF Gese was always brought into the discussion. His insightful and practical demeanor frequently kept proposals anchored in practical reality.

He comes to work with a positive attitude and a desire to work. He has been described by his peers as: quiet, steady, reliable, hardworking, intelligent, practical, a dedicated father and husband, and one of the best instructors in YFD. FF Gese works to make himself and everyone around him better, every day. He actively designs and runs drills for his probationers, crew, shift, and at times the entire Department. Historically, FF Tim Gese has always been one of the first firefighters to volunteer to assist the Training Division in instructing many different and various subjects.

Rusty Hauber Memorial Firefighter of the Year 2022 Joseph Richards

The Rusty Hauber memorial Firefighter of the Year Award is chosen from among the Yakima Fire Departments firefighters. This award is bestowed upon the member that most exemplifies the Yakima Fire Departments attitude, ethics, and contributions to our Department and/or community for that year.

2022 was a year that held some opportunity for YFD. YFD began the process of making significant changes. FF Joe Richards was a contributor to some of those changes. His technical expertise in developing and designing electronic presentations was extremely important to the and roll out of YFD's new ICS plan. The final presentation that was used as training for all of the Yakima Fire Department was put together by FF Richards.

FF Richards also took on the responsibility of maintaining the House Fund. This responsibility requires significant amounts of time and is responsible for providing coffee, televisions, Cable service, newspapers, and numerous condiments for all YFD fire stations. His organization and dedication to helping his fellow firefighters and their daily needs often goes without thought or notice but is important to each member of our department.

FF Richards can also be readily categorized as a "Department Researcher." He consistently steps up to help research and improve almost any and every committee YFD has. His contributions are timely, thoughtful, thorough, and well-reasoned.

Finally, FF Joe Richards is described by his peers as an "all around example of a dedicated Yakima Firefighter – period." His positive attitude and can-do actions are infectious and helps make the Yakima Fire Department a great place.

Maltese Cross

Awarded for actions performed above and beyond the call of duty and at great personal risk

Firefighter M Ancira Firefighter J Shahan

On July 28, 2014 at 1231 hrs TK91 was dispatched to a report of a person having a syncopal episode. While en-route to the incident SunComm notified the responding units that the patient was hanging from the top of a flag pole which was also on top of the Federal Building.

On arrival, TK91 found the patient hanging upside down about 75 feet from the ground. The patient was no longer responding to verbal stimuli.

TK91 and E91 quickly deployed the aerial ladder to access the patient. Firefighter Mark Ancira and Firefighter John Shahan ascended the ladder and contacted the patient. The patient did not have a harness on, was hanging upside down and was tangled in the ropes he had used to ascend to the top of the flag pole.

Both Firefighters immediately recognized the significant danger the patient was in. Firefighter Ancira climbed to the last two rungs of the aerial ladder and physically hugged the patient to himself to prevent the possibility of the patient falling. Firefighter Shahan used his personal harness to secure the patient to the ladder and help move him to safety.

Firefighter Ancira and Shahan's courageous and selfless service earned them the high recognition of the Mae Cross.

