

2014-15 Civil Grand Jury SFFD Report  
Department Responses

CGJ Year	Report Title	Finding	Response Required	2015 Responses (Agree/Disagree)	2015 Response Text
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F1.1. SFFD continues to fail to meet EOA response time standards, resulting in lost revenue for the City.	SFFD Chief of Department	Disagree, partially	The Department acknowledges that it is still a few percentage points short of the EAO Standard. However, this shortfall does not directly result in lost revenue as the associated cost of additional staffing to meet the EOA standard is higher than the revenue to be gained for the percentage gap. The Department must balance the need for increased market share with the need for minimal supply of ambulances throughout the City at all hours of the day, including the early hours of the day when the demand for ambulances is minimal. Since January 2015, the SFFD share of the ambulance response has been gradually increasing (Figure F1.1). The SFFD is implementing a number of measures to continue this trend: 1. This year, in April, the SFFD hired a new class of 42 EMTs to increase the number of units available during peak hours. 2. Working with the Emergency Provider Data Working Group, the Department is implementing a new methodology to better match daily staffing levels with the expected ambulance demand. 3. Working with the Private Ambulance Providers, the Department is re-designing the ambulance shifts to take into consideration the private ambulance supply.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F1.1 .SFFD continues to fail to meet EOA response time standards, resulting in lost revenue for the City.	SFFD Commission	Disagree, partially	The Department acknowledges that it is still a few percentage points short of the EOA standard. However, this shortfall does not directly result in lost revenue as the associated cost of additional staffing to meet the EOA standard is higher than the revenue to be gained by meeting the EOA standard. The Department must balance the need for increased market share with the need for minimal supply of ambulances throughout the City at all hours of the day, including the early hours of the day when the demand for ambulances is minimal. Since January 2015, the SFFD share of the ambulance response has been gradually increasing. The SFFD is implementing a number of measures to continue this trend: 1. This year, in April, the SFFD hired a new class of 42 EMTs to increase the number of units available during peak hours. 2. Working with the Emergency Provider Data Working Group, the Department is implementing a new methodology to better match daily staffing levels with the expected ambulance demand. 3. Working with the Private Ambulance Providers, the Department is re-designing the ambulance shifts to take into consideration the private ambulance supply.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F1.2. The current dynamic dispatch model fails to meet EMSA response times in the western neighborhoods of the City (Battalions 7, 8, 9 and 10) for several reasons, chief among them the long distance from Station 49 for restocking an ambulance during a working shift and the long distance from hospitals, where ambulances tend to congregate in the natural course of their duty.	SFFD Chief of Department	Disagree, partially	In the last few months, the SFFD has made significant improvements in the ambulance response times through the City (Figure F1.2, Table F1.2). Improvements have been uniform through all battalions. Although the SFFD continues to work throughout the goal of responding in every battalion within the EMSA Policy 4000 standards, the policy applies to the overall area of the City and not to each battalion individually. As Table F1.2 how's, the Department has been able to minimize response times in the busiest areas of the City while maintaining coverage of all areas of the City. Improvements have been achieved in part through new EMT hires, deployment of new ambulances (vehicles), and additional ambulance demand analyses. Further measures are being implemented presently: 1. Acknowledging the dynamic nature of the ambulance demand, the Department is hiring a new class of per-diem Paramedics (H-8) that will be deployed as-needed based on the projected daily demand. 2. Working with Local 798, the Department is implementing a new 12-hour rotating schedule that provides additional coverage over the existing 12-hour/40-hour work week schedule. 3. Additional software tools will be deployed at the Dispatch Center (DEC) to better determine the location of all ambulances in order to maximize area coverage.

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2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F1.4. SFFD has reduced the mandatory minimum of four Rescue Captains to three, resulting in an increase in span of control from a recommended 10 ambulances per Rescue Captain to 20.	SFFD Chief of Department	disagree with it, partially	The Department agrees that the span of control for EMS Captains should be reduced in the current fiscal year. This will be occurring with the revised supervision model at Station 49, allowing for the return of the Station 49 -EMS Captain to .field operations. However, it should be noted that the workload has only increased slightly for the Rescue Captains. In 2005, the each one of the four RCs responded to an average of 7.48 calls/day. In 2014, each one of the three RCs responded to an average of 7.82 calls/day (about 5% increase).
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F1.5. SFFD has no formal strategic plan and is not creating such a plan in the near future; the Fire Commission seems a natural group to assist the Chief in this very important venture.	SFFD Chief of Department	disagree with it, partially	The absence of a formal strategic plan does not mean that the Department does not have separate, individual strategies to meet the evolving needs of various operational areas. However, the Department does recognize the value of having one organized plan consolidating its strategies and initiatives. The Department received funding this Fiscal Year to secure resources for this purpose, and a Strategic Planning Committee spearheaded by the Fire Commission President has been formed.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F1.5. SFFD has no formal strategic plan and is not creating such a plan in the near future; the Fire Commission seems a natural group to assist the Chief in this very important venture.	SFFD Commission	disagree with it, partially	At the urging of the Fire Commission, the Fire Department has embarked on a strategic planning process. The planning began in the spring of 2015 with meetings with the President of Local 798, outside consultants who specialize in strategic planning, and a former Chief of the Oakland Fire Department. Following these meetings, the Chief and President of Local 798 formed a Steering Committee that includes members from each rank in the Department, President of the Fire Commission, and individuals from outside of the Department, thus creating a Committee with a breadth of experience and expertise. The Steering Committee held a kick off meeting on July 21, 2015. The Department retained an outside consultant to facilitate the kick-off meeting. The Committee anticipates completion of the strategic plan in the spring of 2016.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F2.1. The City could save a significant amount of the \$160 million currently earmarked for a new training facility by keeping the current training center on TI, even if improvements were required	SFFD Chief of Department	Agree	
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F2.2. Wherever located, SFFD training center requires a significant amount of property as well as special safety considerations, since it must have propane storage tanks plus other facilities and props that can simulate a variety of fires.	Treasure Island Director	Agree	While a response is requested of the Treasure Island Director, TIDA is not technically proficient in design and construction of fire training facilities and defers any additional response to the San Francisco Fire Department's response to this finding.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	F2.3. Most fire departments in the region do not have training facilities comparable to the TI training center (or the new SFFD training center that would replace it). Some of these agencies use the TITC for training and would likely continue use if it remains available, even if the fee structure was converted to include revenue for SFFD and the City.	SFFD Chief of Department	Agree	

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2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.1. That by December 2015 the Chief develop a plan and the methodology for bringing response times for both Code 2 and Code 3 calls to required levels, and that the Department achieve compliance with EOA standards by December 2016.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has been implemented	The development of a plan and methodology was formalized in the fall of 2014 with the formation of the City's ambulance work group, headed by the Mayor's Office with representatives from SFFD, DEM, Controller, Board of Supervisors, Fire Commission and other relevant stakeholders. This work group and its various sub groups were responsible for analyzing the issues facing the City's EMS system and developing recommendations to meet both response and EOA metrics for both the SFFD and private providers. A number of these recommendations have been implemented , including additional staffing for the Department, the purchase of new ambulances, and the staffing of a nurse at a DPH shelter. In addition, a number of recommendations have been funded in the new FY15-16 budget or are currently being implemented, such as restoration of the HOME team , per diem employees and other initiatives . There is on-going analysis done to staffing levels, work load, and call volume to regularly monitor the performance of the system , and all invested providers meet regularly to discuss issues and topics of relevance.
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2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.1.1. The Fire Commission should require the Chief to prepare a monthly report on ambulance performance versus the EOA and the average number of ambulances capable of responding to a service call.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has been implemented	Even before the Civil Grand Jury Report was issued, the Fire Commission had already tasked the Chief of Department to report on ambulance response times and progress toward meeting the EOA. These reports are typically provided by the Deputy Chief of Operations. The Commission has been actively monitoring these issues for years.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.1.1. The Fire Commission should require the Chief to prepare a monthly report on ambulance performance versus the EOA and the average number of ambulances capable of responding to a service call.	SFFD Commission	The recommendation has been implemented	Even before the civil grand jury report was issued, the Fire Commission had tasked the Chief to report on ambulance response times and progress toward meeting the EOA. These reports are typically provided by the Deputy Chief of Operations. The Commission has been actively monitoring these issues for years.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.2. That by July 2016, the Chief institute a modified static/dynamic model of ambulance deployment to include ambulances based at stations in Battalions 7, 8, 9, and 10 with the remaining ambulance fleet operating out of Station 49.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable	There are numerous issues with a model where ambulance employees work a 24-hour shift, as the Department experienced in the early years of the merger with DPH. These include fatigue, safety and deterioration of clinical skills, which result from long work periods at high call volume without adequate rest breaks. In addition , the Department was part of a lawsuit surrounding FLSA overtime at the time it employed the 24-hour ambulance shift model, since employees that work 24-hours on an ambulance are not considered fire suppression employees and are subject to separate labor rules. The 24-hour shift is generally discouraged within the EMS industry. A number of current ambulance posting locations are right by or are very close to existing fire stations; thus, provided that the system has sufficient resources and those postings can be maintained, these areas should then be well covered within the dynamic ambulance deployment model.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.2.1. The Civil Grand Jury recommends the number of supply trips from Station 49 be reduced through the implementation of a secure inventory reserve at some stations or by contracting with a medical supply company to restock supplies at firehouses.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has not been, but will be, implemented in the future	The Department is currently developing a plan to increase counts of medical supplies and establish satellite "caches" at various fire stations and other locations throughout the City to allow ambulance crews to re-stock their ambulances without having to travel back to Station 49.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.3. That by July 2017, the Chief schedule sufficient new training academies so that all engines will have a paramedic on every crew.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation requires further analysis	There are additional on-going costs to the Department to staff all engines with H- 3 FF/PMs that are above and beyond what is incorporated in the Department's Operating budget. The Department is currently meeting its first ALS on-scene response time metrics Citywide, and is increasing staff in its H3 FF/PM tier through the hiring of Paramedics from within into the Fire Academy. The Department's goal is to achieve 32 daily ALS engines out of 44 by the end of the fiscal year. In addition, there is much debate within the health care industry as to whether an ALS-capable resource makes an impact on patient survival rate and quality of care when compared to a BLS resource. This is an issue that will continue to be analyzed, both at the Department and City levels.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.4. That the span of control for Rescue Captains be reduced in the next fiscal year, bringing the Department into compliance with Admin Code 2A.97	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has not been, but will be, implemented in the future	The Department agrees that the span of control for EMS Captains should be reduced in the current fiscal year. This will be occurring with the revised supervision model at Station 49, allowing for the return of the Station 49 EMS Captain to field operations. This would restore the number of 24-hour EMS Captains working as medical supervisors to four.

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2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.5. That by December 2015 the Chief, using funds allocated in the next budget year, contract with an experienced consultant to initiate a strategic plan covering: full funding for equipment renewal; facilities maintenance and updates; communication technology; and training for both normal operations and disasters	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has not been, but will be, implemented in the future	The issue of strategic planning has been a priority for the Department <sup>1</sup> but its development and implementation had been hampered by the lack of fiscal resources. In the new fiscal year's budget, the Department was allocated additional personnel to enhance the Department's planning capabilities. The Chief has recently formed the Department's Strategic Planning Committee, and this committee had its initial kick-off meeting last month. However, the caveat is that, even with a thorough and robust strategic plan, there is no guarantee that funding will be available to fully support the plan. This is an issue that the Department has been struggling with in the past (such as with the Department's existing vehicle replacement plan) and will continue to do so in the future, even with the improved economic conditions.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R1.5. That by December 2015 the Chief, using funds allocated in the next budget year, contract with an experienced consultant to initiate a strategic plan covering: full funding for equipment renewal; facilities maintenance and updates; communication technology; and training for both normal operations and disasters	SFFD Commission	The recommendation has not been, but will be, implemented in the future	The issue of strategic planning has been a priority for the Department, but its development and implementation had been hampered by the lack of fiscal resources. In the new fiscal year's budget, the Department was allocated additional personnel to enhance the Department's planning capabilities. The Chief has recently formed the Department's Strategic Planning Committee, and this committee had its initial kick-off meeting in July and follow-up meetings with stakeholder groups are occurring. However, the caveat is that, even with a thorough and robust strategic plan, there is no guarantee that funding will be available to fully support the plan. This is an issue that the Department has been struggling with in the past (such as with the Department's existing vehicle replacement plan) and will continue to do so in the future, even with the improved economic conditions.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R2.1. That the Chief review the current agreement with TIDA to determine whether it is possible to amend the agreement so as to retain the existing location of the training facility.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has been implemented	The Department believes that the best option would be to retain the current Treasure Island Training facility. However, this will take many discussions and coordination with TIDA, the Mayor's Office, and a number of other entities, to possibly implement. If a decision to retain the facility is mutually reached, the Department would then begin developing plans to upgrade the facility and potentially have it used as a regional facility to generate revenue for the Department.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R2.2. That TIDA review its current agreement with SFFD to determine whether it is possible to amend the agreement so as to retain the existing location of the training facility.	Treasure Island Director	The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable	The continued use of the existing fire training center on Treasure Island is not constrained by the agreement between the SFFD and TIDA, but is limited by the development plans for Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island. The development plan and FEIR for the Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island do not include the continued existence of the fire training center or a replacement facility, and those uses are not consistent with the adopted land use plan. On May 29, 2015, the Navy transferred 290 acres on Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Island to TIDA and development activities are expected to begin before the end of the year. The initial areas of development will be concentrated on Yerba Buena Island and the southwest corner of Treasure Island. The fire training center is located in what will be the fourth and final phase of development. Based on the current schedule for development, the fire training center should be able to continue operations for seven years before it would need to be vacated for development to proceed.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R2.3 That while Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 are being explored, the Chief and the Fire Commission determine an alternate site for the training center since, if an already City-owned site is not adequate to serve as a training center, purchase of a new site will be more than difficult in the current real estate market.	SFFD Chief of Department	The recommendation has been implemented	A request for funds has been submitted to Capital Planning for the construction of a new training facility. The request continues to be deferred due to the large cost of the project. Given the economic and construction climate in the City currently, it is highly unlikely that the Department would find a suitable space large enough to accommodate the needs of the Training Facility. Moreover, the chances of passing an EIR with the Live Burn portion of the facility would likewise be slim. Even if that theoretical plot of land could be found and the Department would receive a favorable EIR, the acquisition costs would be astronomical. There were discussions many years ago about allocating a portion of the new Hunters Point development for a new facility, but it does not appear that this was included in the current plans for the shipyard.
2014-15	San Francisco Fire Department What Does the Future Hold?	R2.3 That while Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 are being explored, the Chief and the Fire Commission determine an alternate site for the training center since, if an already City-owned site is not adequate to serve as a training center, purchase of a new site will be more than difficult in the current real estate market.	SFFD Commission	The recommendation has not been, but will be, implemented in the future	The Commission agrees that let is important for the Department to retain a first-class training facility. The Commission has been assured that the Department has reviewed the agreement with TIDA. Further, the Commission is aware that the Department would like to retain the location of its training facility on Treasure Island, but it does not have the authority to require TIDA to amend the agreement. The Department has advised the Commission that it is unlikely that TIDA will take any steps to remove or dismantle the existing training facility within the next seven years, at the earliest. Nevertheless, the Department has already advised the City's Capital Planning Committee that an alternate site might be necessary in the event that TIDA proposes another use for the current training site. The Commission will monitor TIDA's plans as they develop.