

2017

VISALIA  
FIRE DEPARTMENT  
ANNUAL REPORT



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## **VISION**

**WE WILL CARRY ON THE PRIDE OF OUR PROFESSION BY  
PROVIDING EXCELLENT SERVICE THROUGH  
INNOVATION  
PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP | COMPASSIONATE CARE**

## **MISSION**

**DEDICATED TO PROTECTING ALL THROUGH EXCELLENT  
SERVICE**

## **CORE VALUES**

**INTEGRITY | PROFESSIONALISM | HONESTY | RESPECT  
DIVERSITY | RESPONSIBILITY | VALOR**



**Doug McBee**  
Fire Chief  
Director of Emergency Management

## MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

The past year was demanding for the fire service in California and the Visalia Fire Department played its part in protecting both life and property. 2017 was a record year for snow pack in the Sierra Mountains followed by a hot dry spring. This caused severe flooding even along the Kings River. We also saw increased growth of grasses and flash fuels which ultimately helped create the environment for large wildfires. The prolonged summer and early fall heat with the increase in winds in late fall created fire storms throughout Northern and Southern California. Our wildland team members were out on multiple fires and often for up to 14 days at a time. Our crews at home worked the required extra hours to make coverage possible and the State Wide Mutual Aid system was taxed to meet the resources necessary to combat this fire season that is close to becoming year round instead of seasonal.

Locally the Pier Fire in Tulare County challenged all local resources and required federal assistance to help with containment and extinguishment. We had our OES Engine 375 at this fire for over 16 days. We also had 9 personnel, two fire engines and additional equipment in Santa Rosa and in Ventura for what resulted in tragic loss of life and tremendous property damage. Our crews performed admirably and we still get thank yous from the community on both fire complexes. This year has been the most expensive in California history for fires.

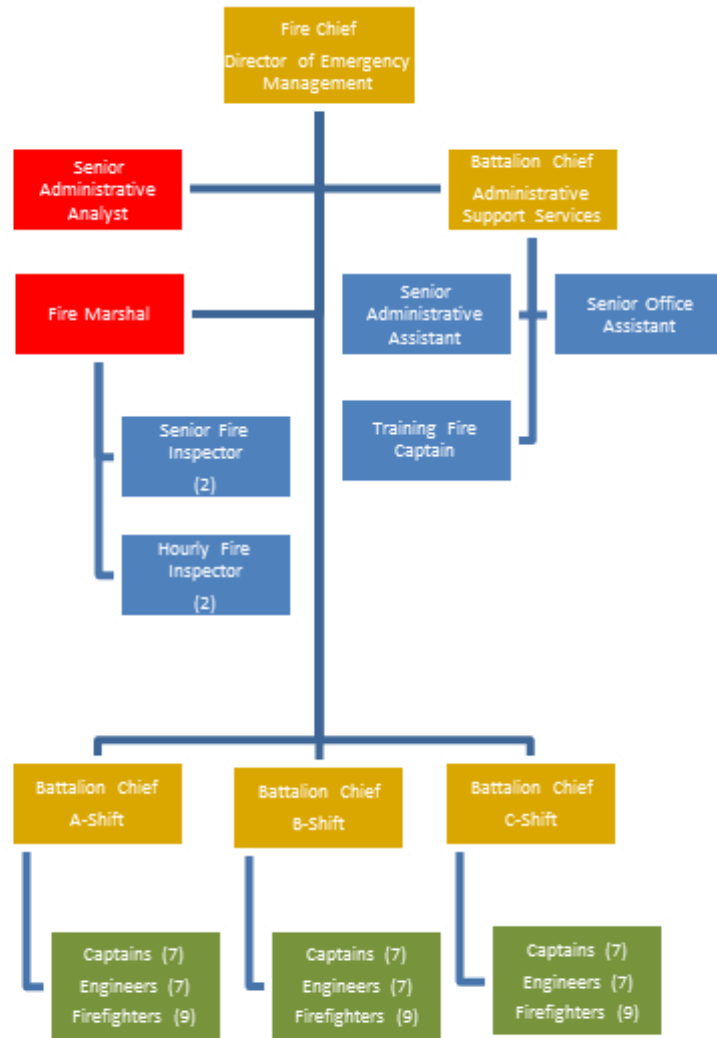
August of 2017 saw the completion of the Visalia Emergency Communication Center. This project began in 2010 and saw ground breaking in 2016 with over a year to fully construct. This state of the art Communication Center is built to Essential Building Standards. It is approximately 19,000 square feet and home to Visalia Police and Fire Dispatch, Traffic Monitoring, Information Services, the Emergency Operations Center and Fire Administration. Its grand opening was in September on a Temporary Conditional Occupancy and achieved a full Certificate of Occupancy in November. It is a great addition for public safety needs today and into the future.

I have been blessed to have spent the last 5 years with what I believe is the best Fire Department I have had the privilege to lead. The men and women of the VFD are committed to our community and give the absolute best service possible to customers and citizens on a daily basis. This organization truly lives by its Mission Statement, "Dedicated to protecting all through Excellent Service". It is an honor to serve the City of Visalia and all who live, work and enjoy what Visalia has to offer. It is with this in mind I respectfully submit the 2017 Annual Report.

*Doug McBee*

Fire Chief and Director of Emergency Management

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



*We want to thank you for all your hard work. You were amazing and your hard work has been greatly appreciated. We wish you the best of holidays. Thank you for everything you do for every community you touch.*

*-Windsor Creek Extended Child Care*

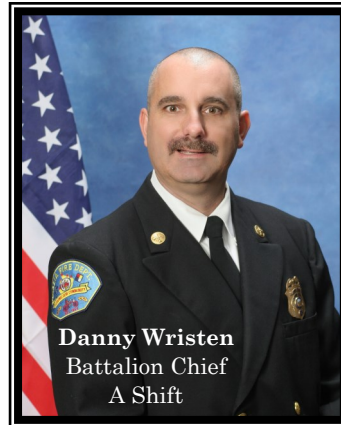
## FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMAND STAFF



**Doug McBee**  
Fire Chief



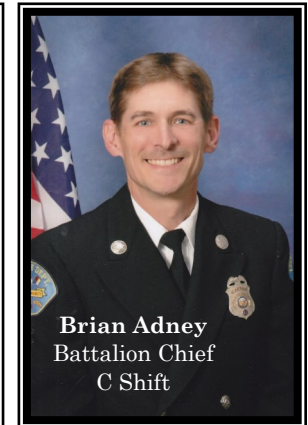
**Dustin Hall**  
Battalion Chief  
Administration



**Danny Wristen**  
Battalion Chief  
A Shift



**Darrin Hughes**  
Battalion Chief  
B Shift



**Brian Adney**  
Battalion Chief  
C Shift

**Doug McBee, Fire Chief, and Director of Emergency Management** is responsible for all aspects of fire operations and financial management for the Visalia Fire Department. He has been with the department since June 2013. Prior to coming to Visalia, Chief McBee served as the Executive Director of the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Association, as well as the CEO of McBee and Associated, LLC. He spent approximately 8 years as the Fire Chief/CEO of the West Metro Fire Protection District in Denver, and 27 years with the City of Aurora, Colorado Fire Department as a Chief Officer.

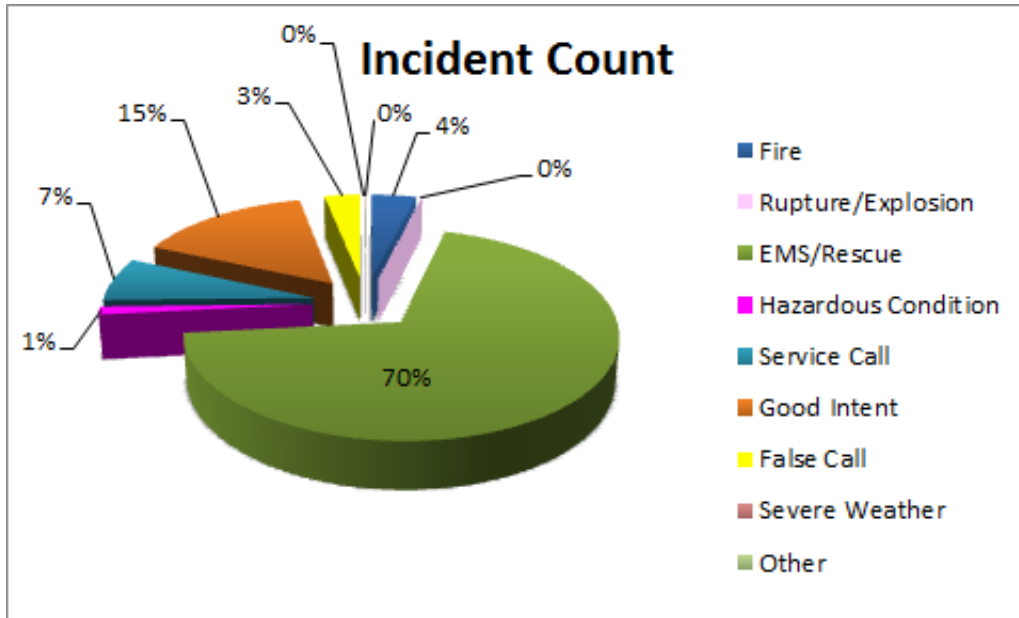
**Dustin Hall, Battalion Chief, Fire Administration**, Chief Hall began his career with VFD in 2000; he was one of the first Paramedics trained by the department and since then has been very active in the department's EMS Program. Chief Hall has a Bachelors Degree in Fire Service Administration.

**Danny Wristen, Battalion Chief** began his career with VFD in 1992. He promoted to Battalion Chief in 1999. Chief Wristen has serviced as Fire Marshal, Administrative and Shift BC. He has been involved in Emergency Preparedness, Hazardous Material Response, and Technical Rescue, and many other fire department programs. Chief Wristen has an Associates Degree in Fire Science.

**Darrin Hughes, Battalion Chief** began his career with VFD 1996. He served as the departments first Administrative Training Captain in 2009 and operated the new Training Facility. Chief Hughes was promoted to Battalion Chief in 2012. He is currently working on completing his Bachelor of Science Degree.

**Brian Adney, Battalion Chief** began his career with VFD in 1992, and has worked in all ranks of the department including Battalion Chief. He has been involved in almost all work programs within the department including Emergency Preparedness, Hazardous Material Response, Emergency Medical Services, and Buildings & Grounds. Chief Adney has an Associates Degree in Fire Science.

# OPERATIONS STATISTICAL DATA



**TOTAL CALLS  
FOR SERVICE**

**IN 2017**

**15,301**

**TOTALS CALLS  
2016 VS 2017**

**14,283 < 15,301**

*To Chief McBee &  
The Visalia Fire-  
fighters. Thank you  
for working with us  
on our need for non-  
emergency lift as-  
sists for our hospice  
patients. We appre-  
ciate it!  
Sincerely,  
-Susan Buscaglia*

Threatened by Fire  
Fire Loss

\$59,067,896  
\$ 4,152,503

**FIRE AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME**  
5:30

Value Saved

\$54,915,393

**EMS AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME**  
5:11

## TOTAL CALLS BY MONTH

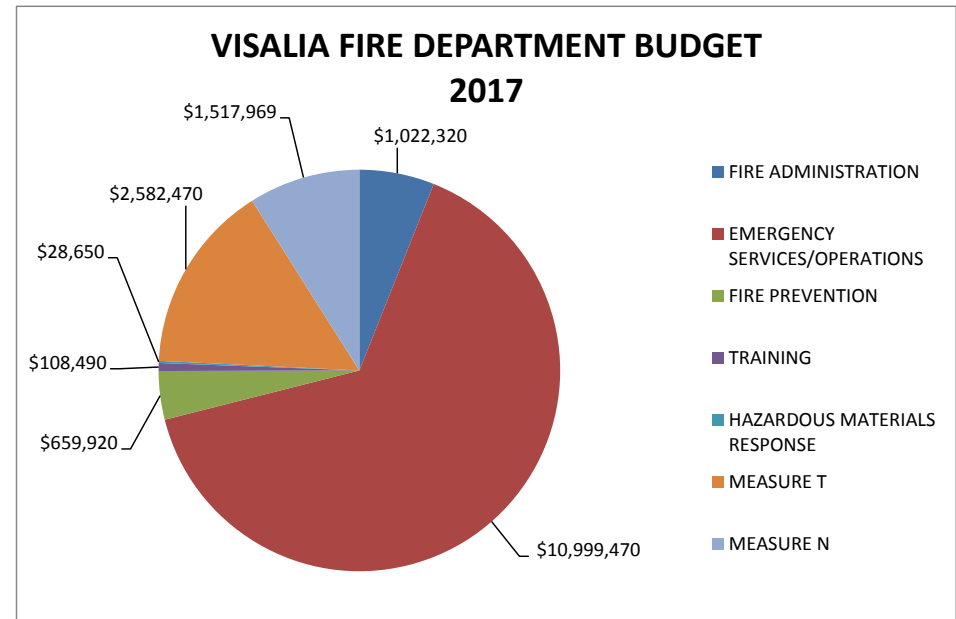
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1,311	1,128	1,268	1,254	1,292	1,290	1,322	1,295	1,218	1,276	1,246	1,404

## DIVISIONS | FIRE ADMINISTRATION

The Administration/Support Services Division is responsible for the administrative activities of operating the department. Administrative activities include financial administration and coordination to ensure effective and efficient use of the department’s resources; promotions and recruitments; leadership, departmental website functions, payroll, and training record maintenance.

### Major Division Accomplishments:

- Completion of new Visalia Emergency Communication Center (VECC) and CAD Replacement
- Transition of Fire Administration to VECC
- Applied for grant totaling \$240,000 through Assistance to Firefighter Grant for radios
- Effectively managed the operating budget and department was under budget overall
- Completed Mid-Year Review
- Participated as a member of the Tulare County Drought Task Force
- Served in a leadership role with Tulare Kings County Fire Chiefs
- Billed a total of \$170,000 in declarations, and work orders.
- Tax rolled 28 abatement cases totaling approximately \$38,000
- Processed 13 billing requests for Strike Team Reimbursement totaling \$569,000
- Processed 115 Public Records Requests
- Completed 89 CV9s
- Other items;
  - ⇒ Fire Station 53 warranty issues
  - ⇒ Recruitment/Promotion
  - ⇒ Succession Planning for the future
  - ⇒ Working with Allied Agencies





# DIVISIONS | OPERATIONS

## **EXTINGUISHER PROGRAM**

In 2017, all fire extinguishers on fire department apparatus received their annual service. Additionally, all extinguishers on fire fleet vehicles were labeled with their apparatus identifier.

## **HOSE AND APPLIANCE PROGRAM**

In 2017, the Hose and Appliance Program operated on a \$10,000 budget. Staff is currently in the process of pricing out two new Intake Relief Valves, New Hydrant Bags and High Rise Bundle Straps. Each year all fire hose is tested to ensure it operates without failure at required pressures. The department will be renewing the bid contract with the fire hose testing company. Annual fire hose testing generally takes place in April or May of each year.

## **FIRE PRE-PLAN PROGRAM**

In 2017, eighteen fire pre-plans were assigned to engine and truck company crews. This year the focus of the pre-plan target area was the downtown area businesses in the 100 to 300 block areas of Locust, Church, Acequia, Court, Floral and Main Street, which were completed in December.

## **WILD LAND / STRIKE TEAM PROGRAM**

This program oversees the equipment utilized when strike teams are deployed. When a Visalia Fire Unit is deployed on a Strike Team, they obtain one of three Strike Team boxes that includes a variety of items necessary for their assignment. Each year and throughout the year, the boxes are inventoried and or updated to ensure they contain the appropriate items needed. In 2017, the fire department assisted on 15 Strike Team deployments throughout California. It is anticipated the State will be reimbursing the City of Visalia a total of \$668,000 for staff time.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM**

The Accountability Program oversees the ordering and purchasing of passport tags (name tags), command boards and helmet tags. These items are used for personal and resource accountability within the ICS System on various incidents. Items in this program are purchased as needed. The program operates on a \$1,000 per year budget.

## **QUARTERMASTER PROGRAM**

The Quartermaster Program orders PPE, clothing and equipment for personnel and the fire department. In 2017, the department donated used uniforms and PPE to educational institutions and the fire service. Our PPE have gone to CTE high school programs in Visalia and Dinuba, while we have donated Class A uniforms to a company that uses them for a Bereavement Program for firefighters.

*Dear Firefighters,  
Thank you so much  
for everything you  
do—especially all of  
your hard work  
with the fires in the  
North Bay. You are  
all great role models  
and heroes for stu-  
dents. Love,  
The First Graders in  
Room 2*

### **SMALL ENGINE, EQUIPMENT, AND TOOLS PROGRAM (SEET)**

TNT Rescue Service, Budget \$4,000 – All 8 sets of our TNT Rescue equipment were serviced. This service is outsourced to a certified technician with TNT Rescue at a cost of \$500 per set. Manufacturer recommends this be an annual service. Small Engine Service, \$700 – All small engines in the department were serviced in 2017. This service includes; oil change, spark plug, filters, belt and any other maintenance items that need to be addressed. This equipment is essential to our daily operations and must be in good working order. Equipment purchase for new Pierce Engine, \$5,000 – Staff is currently gathering the equipment inventory for our new engine using existing inventory, and equipment from apparatus being placed out of service.

### **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROGRAM**

On May 24, 2017, the California Office of Emergency Services visited Visalia to inspect the Hazardous Material equipment & records, and on July 6, 2017 Visalia's Type I Hazardous Materials Team was re-certified for another 5 years.

### **FACILITIES PROGRAM**

In August of 2017 the stairs at Station 52 were re-coated with Line X non-slip coating. The carpet in the office of Station 52 was replaced in February. Fourteen recliners were replaced at Station 51, 52, 54, and 56. The laminate flooring at Station 52 on the first and second floor were replaced. A total of 15 beds were ordered and delivered to Stations 51, 54, and 56.

### **MAPS, FOAM, LADDERS PROGRAM**

Response maps are an important part of fire department preparedness. This year all station wall maps were replaced and are in the process of updating the response map books. The City's GIS Division produces all of the maps for the department. Staff maintains a close relationship with GIS to ensure the end products are easy to read and contain the correct information.

The Visalia Fire Department utilizes an advanced foam product that can be used on three different types of fire classification. This foam product is carried on all fire apparatus and will assist with extinguishing ordinary combustibles, flammable liquids and metal fires.

The Visalia Fire Department utilizes many different types of ladders to assist with fire suppression and access issues. The fire department maintains a large inventory of ground ladders and currently has two aerial ladders. All ladders are required to be maintained per National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) guidelines and require annual outside testing for certification. This year all department ladders were tested.

## **APPARATUS PROGRAM**

- Completed final inspection of a new Pierce Arrow XT Fire Engine at the Pierce Factory. The engine was delivered to the City Shop on December 11, 2017, at a cost of \$610K, and will be in service by 01/31/2018. The apparatus was prepaid, saving the City \$20,919. It will replace a 1994 Pierce fire engine that will go into reserve status.
- Designed and finalized specifications for a new Pierce Arrow XT Quint Aerial Apparatus and placed prepaid order in January of 2017 in the amount of \$1,017,969. The vehicle is now in final prebuild at Pierce Factory with a start date of construction in January of 2018, with a delivery date to Visalia in May/June 2018. The addition of this aerial truck will help with firefighting efficiency, safety and ultimately the ISO rating. This apparatus was funded through Measure N and will provide the City with two staffed truck companies daily.
- Designed and finalized specifications for a Pierce Light and Air Support Unit to replace a trailer mounted 1998 air compressor. The air support unit provides a compressor to fill self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) bottles. This is a very specialized unit that has many safety features to ensure only uncontaminated air is utilized to fill the bottles. It operates at very high pressures and requires trained personnel to operate. This unit will also provide a new tool to the VFD as it includes a light tower. Many of our incidents occur during the night-time hours and the light tower will provide improved illumination on our incident scenes. The cost of this unit is \$404,423 which is also funded through Measure N and will provide the Visalia Fire Department with a reliable source to fill SCBA bottles and improve our emergency lighting during night-time incidents.

## **SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS PROGRAM (SCBA)**

The Visalia Fire Department maintains a fleet of 70 SCBA units. SCBA's are a required part of the firefighters' personal protective equipment (PPE) ensemble and allows firefighters to enter atmospheres that could be immediately deadly to life and health. These atmospheres are found when combating fires, during hazardous material incidents and during some rescue situations. The VFD has one in-house SCBA repair technician and on average repair five to six SCBA units per month. Annually, the department sends out five SCBA's for advanced repairs. The ability to handle in-house repairs saves the City several thousand dollars per year.

Due to the associated risks with SCBA's, there are many levels of inspections that are required. One such inspection is the annual bench testing. The department uses a contractor to complete this inspection. The bench testing process involves connecting the SCBA to a specialized machine that checks the flow pressure and ensures all internal parts are in proper working order. Another inspection completed is the SCBA mask fit-test. VFD maintains the equipment and trained personnel to conduct this test. Each spring, all fire personnel who could be required to wear an SCBA have to complete the SCBA mask fit-test.

*Seeing you in our  
community in our  
darkest hour....  
Well there's not even  
words for it. You are  
extraordinary heroes.  
You saved so much  
of our beautiful  
home. We will never,  
ever forget you. Love  
to you and your fam-  
ilies.*

*-Jocelyn  
Sonoma County, CA*

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM**

On December 11, 2017, the department conducted the annual Emergency Operations Center (EOC) exercise for the City of Visalia. Thirty-five EOC team members attended the training, as well as eight guests from Tulare County OES and HHSA. The exercise consisted of an introduction to the new EOC location and an overview of evacuations, care and shelter operations. Captain Steve Philips led the discussion involving the legal authority to provide evacuations. Danny Wristen discussed the new EOC and the City of Visalia responsibilities for shelter operations. Andrew Lockman from Tulare County OES provided an overview of the assistance from Tulare County during evacuations and shelter operations. Several members from Tulare County HHSA discussed their role in care and shelter operations.

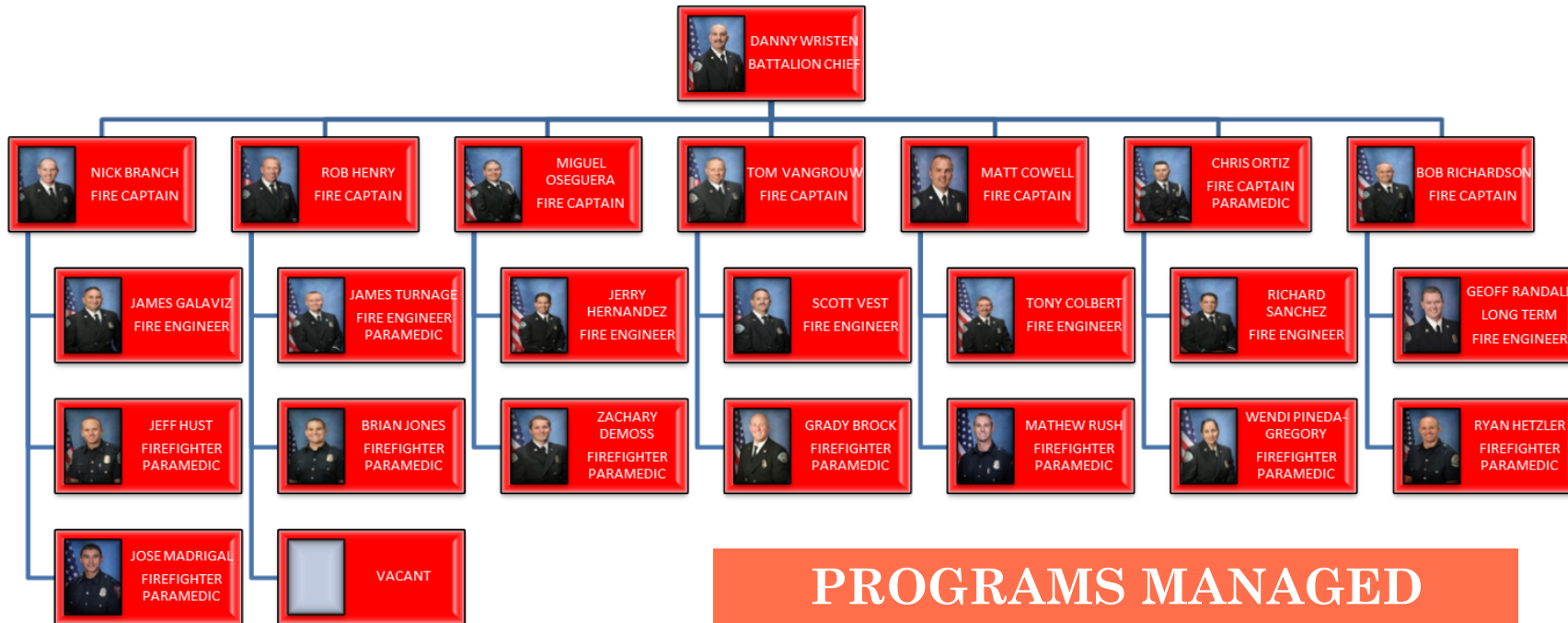
With the opening of the new Visalia Emergency Communications Center (VECC), the primary location for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) moved from Fire Station 55 to the VECC. Fire Station 55 will continue to serve as a back-up location. The new VECC location will provide an improved setting for the EOC, greater security, improve the continuity of operations for the City of Visalia and allow better coordination with Dispatch and the future Traffic Management Center (TMC). We will be restructuring our internal systems and work flow to better utilize the new EOC location. In addition, the new EOC facility will provide additional technologies to improve overall operations. One of the responsibilities of the Emergency Preparedness Program is to monitor the weather forecast and take appropriate action for upcoming weather impacts. Once we are aware of a weather forecast that has a potential impact for Visalia, we send an email to the Department Head Group (DHG) and advise them of the situation. This allows the DHG to advise their employees if there could be impacts to particular city departments. Extreme heat and extreme cold weather events are monitored closely. The City of Visalia currently provides a Cooling Center anytime the weather temperature is forecast to be 105 degrees or higher; the City of Visalia Transit Center serves as the Cooling Center. When the temperature is forecast to be 30 degrees or cooler, the City of Visalia utilizes the Visalia Rescue Mission as the Warming Center. With a relationship with the Rescue Mission for more than ten years they have agreed to assist anyone in need during these cold weather events. An average year has approximately five heat and cold events each, usually lasting several days in length.

## **INFECTION CONTROL**

What to do in case of exposure to an infectious material is a mandate from the Federal and State governments and is one the City's priorities. The Fire department manages this program for the City, ensuring a central point of management for efficiency and effectiveness. For approximately 10 years, staff has developed and implemented a robust system that includes appropriate response processes, training, and infrastructure to protect or provide the best and most appropriate follow up possible.

With this mandate, approximately five years ago staff was approached to assist other local agencies with this requirement. Staff developed a complete training program that has been taught to approximately 200 students across the State from a variety of agencies and disciplines; including fire, police, EMS, transportation, waste water, safety, and solid waste personnel. By teaching these classes to outside agencies, approximately \$30,000 in revenue has been generated to cover costs.

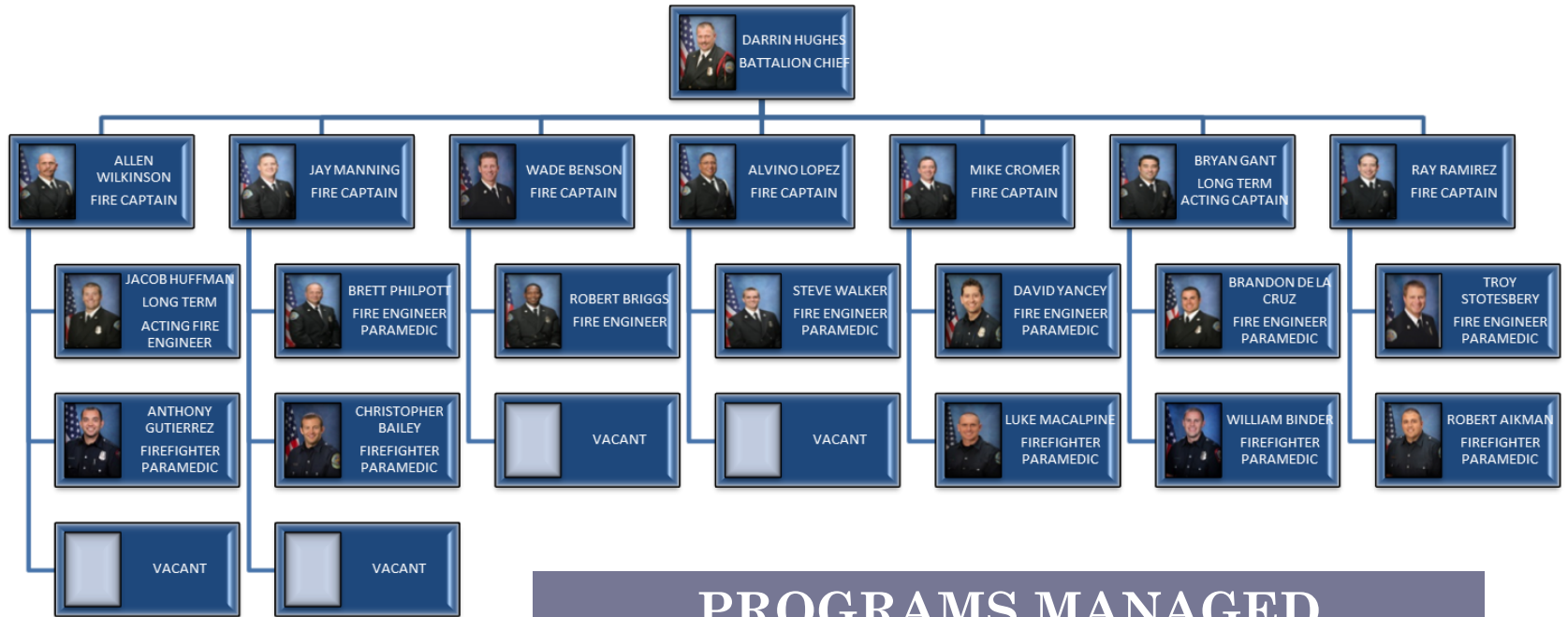
# A SHIFT



## PROGRAMS MANAGED

- ◇ APPARATUS / PUMP TESTING
  - ◇ FOAM F500
- ◇ EOC / EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
  - ◇ LADDERS / MAPS
    - ◇ SCBA
    - ◇ TELESTAFF
- ◇ STATION / OFFICE SUPPLIES

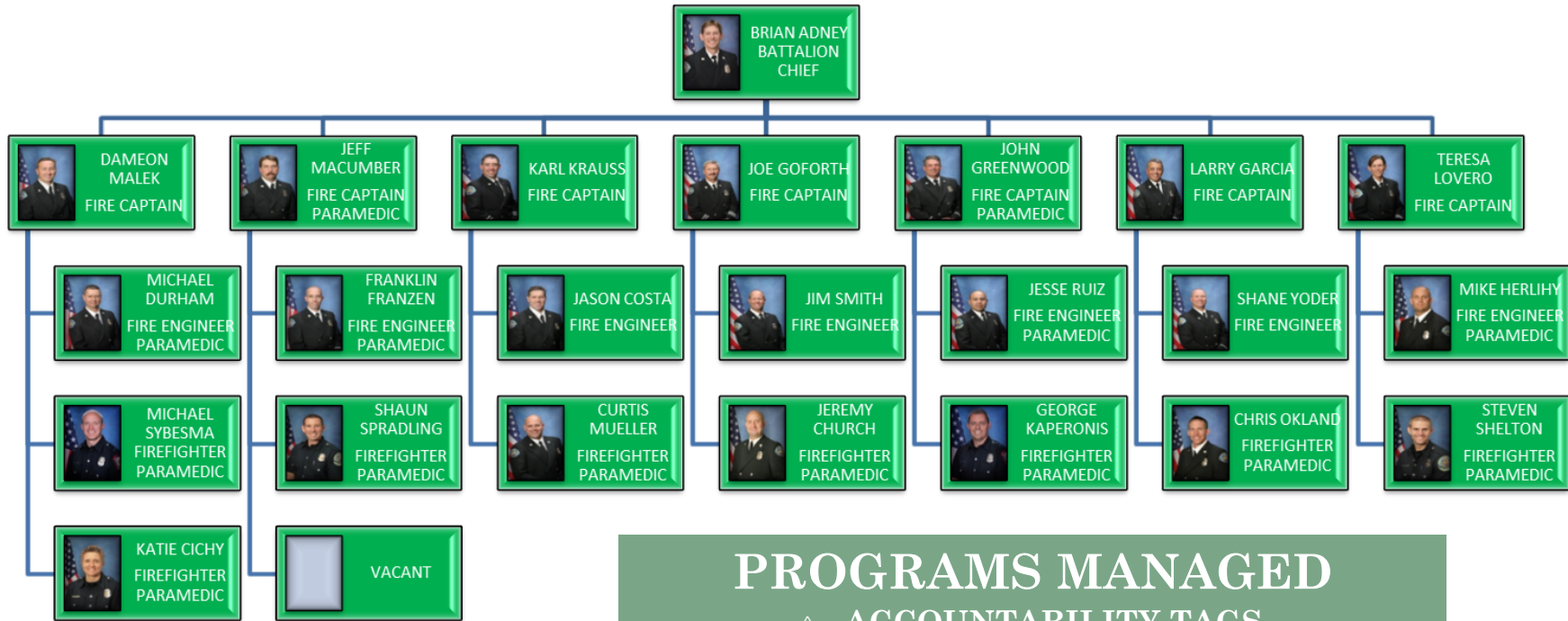
# B SHIFT



## PROGRAMS MANAGED

- ◇ FIRE EXTINGUISHERS
- ◇ EQUIPMENT & POWER TOOLS
  - ◇ FACILITIES
  - ◇ FIRE RMS / NFIRS
- ◇ HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
  - ◇ HONOR GUARD
- ◇ QUARTERMASTER
- ◇ SOGs / LEXIPOL

# C SHIFT



## PROGRAMS MANAGED

- ◇ ACCOUNTABILITY TAGS
- ◇ COMMUNICATIONS -ASST
- ◇ HOSE / NOZZLES / FITTINGS
  - ◇ PREPLANS
- ◇ WILDLAND STRIKE TEAM
  - ◇ SHIFT TRAINING
  - ◇ EMS / EMS TRAINING

**INSPECTIONS**

In 2017, the Prevention Division and Engine Companies conducted a total of 3,221 Fire & Life Safety Inspections and billed a total of \$171,778 in Fire & Life Safety Operational Permits.

**PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**

Property maintenance cases are started on properties with trash, junk and or debris, weeds and any other items that constitute a fire hazard. Many properties are vacant undeveloped lots, commercial properties, and vacant or occupied homes. In 2017, a total of 1,061 property maintenance cases were started, 472 Courtesy Notices were sent, 990 initial Inspection, 841 follow-up inspections and 213 Declarations of Public Nuisance notices were issued. The department billed a total of \$59,000 in cost recovery fees with 105 properties being abated.

**FIRE INVESTIGATIONS TEAM**

The Fire Investigation Team is responsible for investigating fires to determine their origin and cause. As Peace Officers, Fire Investigators conduct criminal investigations and prosecute arsonists. The Team is also active in public education, continuing education, and illegal fire-works enforcement. The Team is made up of four suppression and two prevention personnel trained in fire investigations by the State Fire Marshal's Office. In 2017, the Fire Investigation Team conducted more than 55 fire investigations.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION**

The department provides educational programs tailored to different groups from schools, in-home trainings, churches and community service groups. In 2017 Engine Company Personnel completed 219 tours, visitations, and presentations. The department provided this service to approximately 20,000 people in the community. Thirty-nine community members participated in the department ride-a-long program. Additionally, 214 smoke alarms were installed in homes throughout the city.

The department also hosts two popular community events each year: **Youth Fire Camp Workshop** is one of the most popular summer camps in the City of Visalia. Approximately 120 campers (ages 5-12) participated in the workshops. Each workshop is filled with fire related activities such as fire hose pulls, practicing STOP, DROP & ROLL, learning to use a fire extinguisher and much more. The Visalia Fire Department **Open House** marks the conclusion of Fire Prevention Week. Open House allows the department to share the fire prevention message in a large event setting. Families and community members have the opportunity to tour the Fire Training Center, an ambulance, fire trucks, and police vehicles. The emphasis is on fire prevention and life safety skills. This year, approximately 700 members of the community participated in this great event.

**SITE PLAN REPORT**

As a member of the Site Plan Review Committee, the fire department reviews plans and operational statements, for proposed businesses, operations and future constructions projects throughout our community. In 2017, staff reviewed 282 plans submitted to the committee for review.

**SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE**

A Special Event is any organized activity involving the use of or having an impact on public property – public parks and facilities, streets, sidewalks or any other public right of way. The Special Events Committee is comprised of representatives from various departments. In 2017 the Committee reviewed 119 event applications; including, Project Homeless Connect, Farmers Market, St Patrick's Day Parade, PALS Easter, Earth Day, Fill the Boot, Color Vibe, Downtown Visalia Car Show, Waiter's Race, Taste the Arts, Visalia Band Review, Veteran's Day Parade, Christmas Tree Lighting, Candy Cane Parade, Jingle Bell Run.





### **Emergency Medical Services**

The fire department responds to numerous types of incidents ranging from fires, public request, hazardous conditions, and EMS. Nationally, the fire service typically responds to approximately 75% to 85% EMS incidents. In 2017, the percentage of EMS calls was 70%. Over the past five years, EMS incidents have increased by 38% .

Staff continues to ensure responders receive quality training, have the most up-to-date equipment, and provide the best standards of practice to every person that requires assistance. Over the past year, staff has purchased new portable suction devices, and completed the final phase of updating the department's cardiac monitor/defibrillators. The department uses internal instructors to provide high quality training in three disciplines; advance cardiac life support, pediatric advance life support, and cardio pulmonary resuscitation. Each of these disciplines are required by our local authority. The department saves on average \$27,000 per year by providing in-house training.

The EMS Division has continued to foster a great working relationship with Kaweah Delta Medical Center (KDMC) and their residency program. As part of the residency training, physicians must complete a number of hours of ride along time with the fire department in the prehospital setting. Finally, this year we have been able to secure a new medical director who is passionate not only for EMS but for the Visalia Fire Department and its roll in EMS. We look forward to providing the high quality service that citizens have come to expect and look forward to the challenges that it provides.

## Training Stats 2017 18,340 hours

- 2,429 EMS Training Hours
- 1,060 Hazardous Materials
- 2,430 Facility Training
- 3,272 Officer Training
- 2,827 Driver Operator
- 6,322 Company Training Hours

## DIVISION | TRAINING

The Visalia Fire Department Training Division started the year with training changes on reporting in Target Solutions. To meet ISO training standards the “Training Tracker” was incorporated into the Target Solutions Platform. From that platform staff is able to track personnel’s progress that meet ISO goals. The most important of which generates a 1/3 of our training points awarded from ISO for Facility Training.

Fire Fighters **Rush** and **Gutierrez** completed an 8-week Fire Academy and graduated on May 26, 2017. Firefighters **Madrigal, Kaperonis, Sybesma, Binder** and **Shelton** successfully completed probation and moved to regular status.

Relatively new to VFD was a review of Alternative Fuel Vehicles. Groppetti Ford graciously allowed the department to take a vehicle to Station 51 to look over and review safety issues associated with Hybrid and Electric Vehicles.

In May, Visalia Fire Department hosted the All Hazards Safety Officer class provided by Elite Command Training. Attendees came from far and wide to attend this valuable training opportunity. The department also changed the bi-annual swift-water training by taking a plunge in the mighty St John’s River. While not exactly swift water, it helped to remind personnel of the forces moving water can place on a human body, and crews were able to train with the line launcher now carried on Truck 51.

The highlight of 2017 came in the warm month of July with a presentation of High Rise Training. Tulare County Facilities allowed the department to use the old Social Services Building to conduct a pseudo High Rise scenario. Additionally, the training was conducted at night, completing one of our required night drills for 2017.

In September, Visalia Fire Department hosted American Integrated Training Systems Emergency Vehicle Operations Train the Trainer Course. It was attended by members of American Ambulance, Kings County Fire and Visalia Fire Department. One student from Alturas traveled to attend as well.

The last 3 months of 2017 concentrated on Individual and Company Core Evolutions.

Goals for 2018:

Complete 2 night drills

Establish Compliance with NFPA 1410

# TECHNOLOGY

## DISPATCH

The fire department is dispatched by a combination dispatch center of both police and fire. Over the past year, a lot of time and resources have been devoted to the move from the old site located at Station 51/Police Head Quarters to the new Visalia Emergency Communications Center (VECC). The official move took place on December 6.

Fire staff has also been working with Dispatch on updating practices and policies to make field operations safer. Staff has been able to identify several items changed to reinforce operations, thereby increasing the safety of firefighters. New practices relevant to the way communication occurs and how dispatchers follow units will be implemented.

## TECHNOLOGY

Society has become so dependent on technology, it is used in every aspect of people's daily working lives. Whether writing incident or patient care reports, looking for victims in a smoky environment with a thermal image camera, or operating a fire engine or truck, we are technology dependent. Consequently, staff remains diligent in efforts to reduce expenses, increase efficiency, and improve the availability of current technological practices.

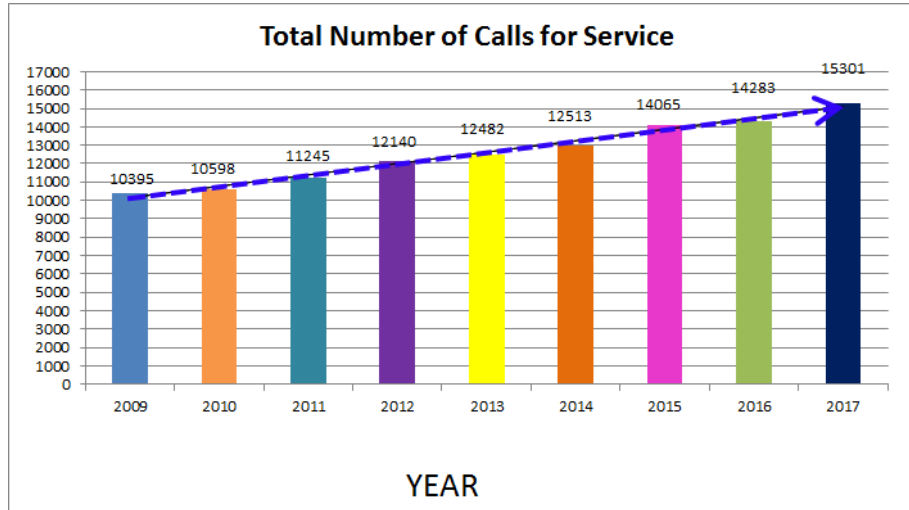
The department has invested several resources in communications and report documentation in the field. Over the last couple of years staff has updated communications equipment by purchasing the most current portable radios carried by firefighters. These new radios provide the ability to communicate with both fire and police/EMS from one radio. With these new radios and the new equipment installed in the new dispatch center, the dispatcher will be able to identify who is "keying" up on the radio as well as obtain the firefighters location via GPS location transmitted from the radio.

The other area of significant investment is the documentation capabilities by fire personnel in the field. This allows for timely and accurate report writing. It also allows personnel to capture signatures from other providers and citizens that help to support accurate reports and minimize liability. Keeping this technology in use decreases duplication of efforts associated with proper documentation. If the firefighter had to document on paper, they would then have to ensure proper documentation via digital records in the department's software system; thereby decreasing productivity, increasing duplication of efforts and errors associated with documentation, while increasing liability and risk.

*The Thomas Fire was the most damaging fire Ventura County has ever faced. Our agency, employees and community members are grateful for the support you provided during our time of need. Thank you!*

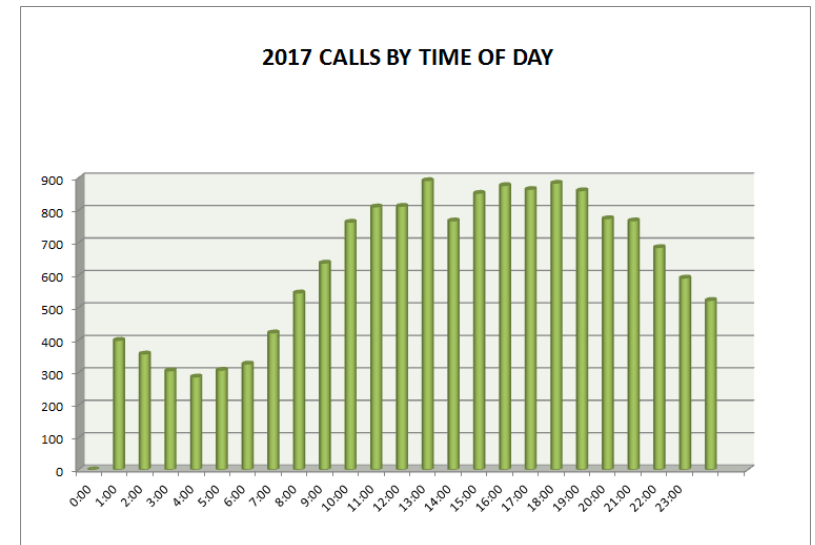
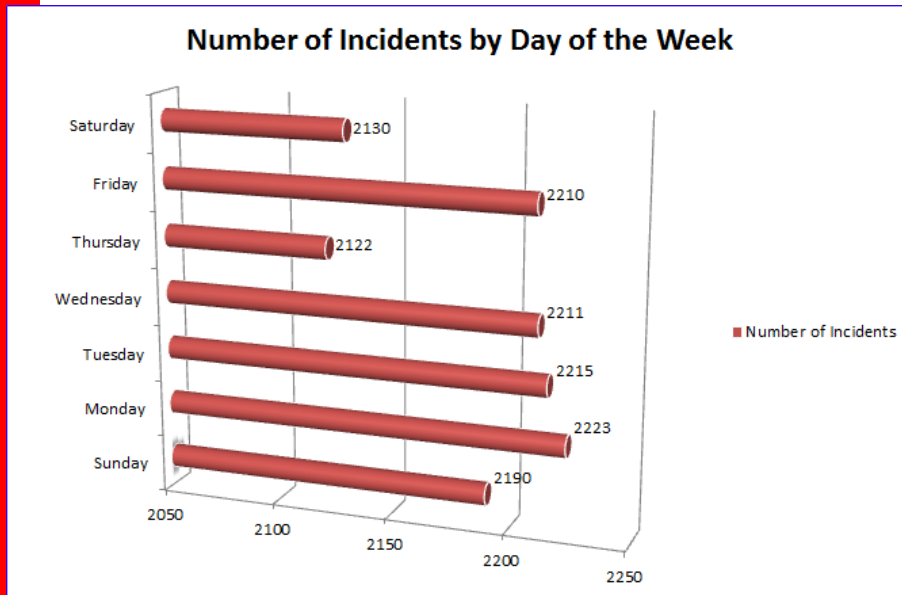
*-Mark Lorenzen  
Fire Chief  
Ventura County Fire  
Department*

## 2017 | BY THE NUMBERS



CALLS FOR SERVICE HAVE STEADILY INCREASED OVER THE LAST NINE YEARS

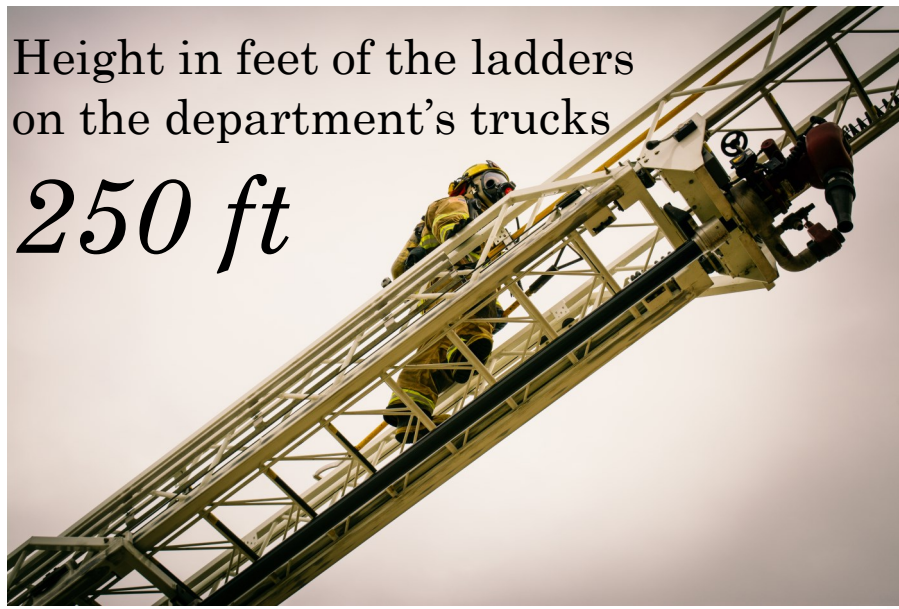
32%



## 2017 | BY THE NUMBERS

Height in feet of the ladders  
on the department's trucks

*250 ft*



Gallons of water transported in  
the department's apparatus

*5,800 gal*



*Dear Visalia Fire  
Department Staff  
and Volunteers,  
Thank you for all  
you have done to  
help support our  
North Bay Commu-  
nity during this  
difficult time.  
Your efforts are  
much appreciated.*

NUMBER OF FIRE-  
BASED TRAINING  
HOURS CONDUCTED  
AND RECEIVED BY  
FIRE DEPARTMENT  
PERSONNEL IN 2017

*18,340 hrs*



Length of hose in miles  
carried by fire apparatus

*7.4 mi*



**STATION 51**

- Located at 309 S. Johnson Street
- Opened in 1969
- Houses Engine 51, Truck 51, Reserve 251, Truck 251, Breathing Support 51
- Total Calls in 2017 | 3,546
- Average Response Time | 05:10
- Total Fires | 138
- Total EMS | 2,364
- Total Other | 1,044



**STATION 52**

- Located at 2224 W. Monte Vista Avenue
- Opened in 1995
- Houses Engine 52 and Reserve Engine 252
- Total Calls in 2017 | 2,797
- Average Response Time | 05:07
- Total Fires | 83
- Total EMS | 1,977
- Total Other | 737



**STATION 53**

- Located at 5025 W. Walnut Avenue
- Opened in 2016
- Houses Engine 53 and Reserve Engine 253
- Total Calls in 2017 | 2,896
- Average Response Time | 04:51
- Total Fires | 59
- Total EMS | 2,205
- Total Other | 632



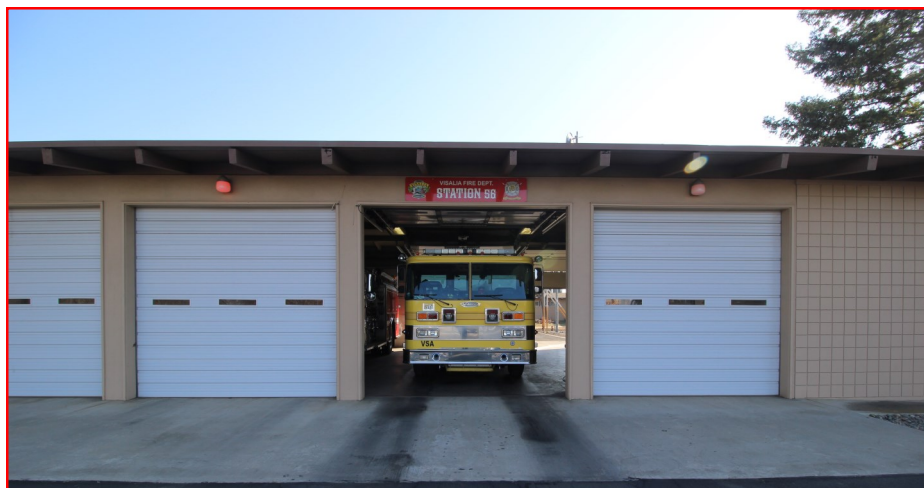
### STATION 54

- Located at 440 W. Ferguson Street
- Opened in 1995
- Houses Engine 54 and Reserve OES 375
- Houses Battalion 55, 57, 58
- Total Calls in 2017 | 2,522
- Average Response Time | 04:52
- Total Fires | 140
- Total EMS | 1,799
- Total Other | 583



### STATION 55

- Located at 6921 W. Ferguson Street
- Opened in 2009
- Houses Engine 55 and HazMat Trailer
- 1935 Seagrave & Silsby Steam Pumper
- Total Calls in 2017 | 1,252
- Average Response Time | 06:04
- Total Fires | 83
- Total EMS | 773
- Total Other | 396



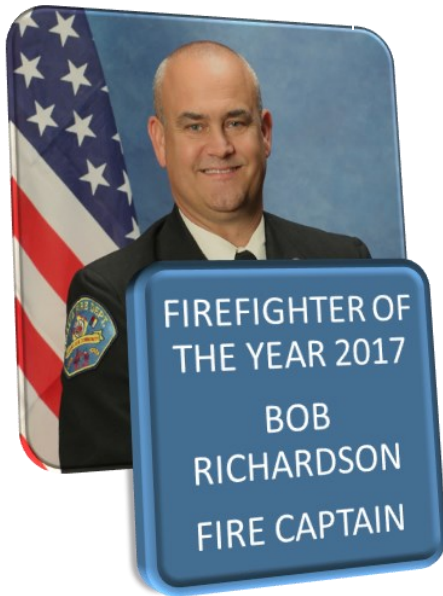
### STATION 56

- Located at 1968 S. Lovers Lane
- Moved-in in 2006
- Houses Engine 56
- Total Calls in 2017 | 2,288
- Average Response Time | 05:07
- Total Fires | 99
- Total EMS | 1,491
- Total Other | 698

*Dear Visalia Fire Department, Thank you for all of your hardwork and dedication towards our current fires. We really appreciate you for facing danger and risking your lives to save our community, homes, pets, people, and lands. One day I hope to do what all of you guys are doing making a change in our community. Another big thank you for coming out of town to fight for others property and land. Sincerely,  
-Gabriel Contreras*

# RECOGNITION

## 2017 EMPLOYEES SERVICE AWARDS



NAME	YEARS	TITLE
BRIAN ADNEY	25	FIRE BATTALION CHIEF
MIKE CROMER	25	FIRE CAPTAIN
DEREK FRICKE	25	FIRE CAPTAIN
ROB HENRY	25	FIRE CAPTAIN
DANNY WRISTEN	25	FIRE BATTALION CHIEF
RICHARD SANCHEZ	20	FIRE ENGINEER
DAMEON MALEK	15	FIRE CAPTAIN
BRETT PHILPOTT	15	FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC
TROY STOTESBERY	15	FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC
KURTIS BROWN	10	FIRE MARSHAL
GRADY BROCK	05	FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC
JEREMEY CHURCH	05	FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC
JEFFREY HUST	05	FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC
BRIAN JONES	05	FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC
SHAUN SPRADLING	05	FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC
DAVID YANCEY	05	FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC

**FLEX PROMOTION**

CORBIN REED  
SENIOR FIRE INSPECTOR


MARIBEL VASQUEZ  
SENIOR FIRE INSPECTOR

**230 YEARS OF COMBINED SERVICE TO THE CITY OF VISALIA**




# CONTINUING EDUCATION


# PROMOTIONS




LUKE MACALPINE  
FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC  
FIRE OFFICER CERTIFICATION




RYAN HETZLER  
FIREFIGHTER PARAMEDIC  
FIRE OFFICER CERTIFICATION




CORBIN REED  
SENIOR FIRE INSPECTOR  
VISALIA SUPERVISOR ACADEMY




DEREK FRICKE  
FIRE CAPTAIN  
VISALIA SUPERVISOR ACADEMY




DUSTIN HALL  
BATTALION CHIEF  
CHIEF OFFICER




MIKE HERLIHY  
FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC




JESSE RUIZ  
FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC




BRANDON DE LA CRUZ  
FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC




DAVID YANCEY  
FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC




STEVE WALKER  
FIRE ENGINEER PARAMEDIC



ALLEN WILKINSON  
FIRE CAPTAIN



DAMEON MALEK  
FIRE CAPTAIN



NICK BRANCH  
FIRE CAPTAIN

*When we woke to the "orange glow" on October 8th, we had no idea the disaster that would befall our community and county. For the next few days we feared the fires in the near distance would engulf our own neighborhood. The sounds of the screaming sirens and the roaring aircraft in the weeks that followed rattled our nerves but also reminded us that we had an army of brave and dedicated souls protecting us. We were comforted knowing that all of you were here for us, coming to our rescue and staying with us until we were safe. Thank you so much for caring and for fighting so hard for us. You will be forever in our hearts.*  
-Danielle

# RETIREMENTS & DEPARTURES



*PATTI REED*

*FIRE ENGINEER*

**30** YEARS OF  
SERVICE



*TODD STALKER*

*FIRE CAPTAIN*

**25** YEARS OF  
SERVICE



*LARRY GARCIA*

*FIRE CAPTAIN*

**16** YEARS OF  
SERVICE

KEVIN RIGGI  
HOURLY FIRE INSPECTOR  
12/24/16 - 3/10/17

## INTERESTING FIRE DEPARTMENT FACT

### The Dalmatian

We've all come to associate the Dalmatian with fire departments and firefighters, but why and when did these dogs become a firehouse mascot? Dalmatians have been around for almost 600 years, and they were first associated with English horse drawn coaches of the 1700s. Because of their ability to run long distances, and their natural, calming effect on horses, Dalmatians were used to accompany the English coaches. Dalmatians ran beside the horse pulling the coach and defended them against any encounters along the road. In the firehouse, when an alarm would sound, Dalmatians would bark to alert the horses and the firefighters, and they would clear the way for the fire wagon. Dalmatians would run alongside the horses pulling the fire fighter apparatus and provided a comforting presence to the horses while they were by the fire. In the fire houses, Dalmatians not only became a companion to the horses; they also developed a bond with the firefighters. They became a symbol of the fire department. After steam fire fighting equipment and horses were no longer needed, the Dalmatian continued to be a symbol of fire department and fire fighting.



## NEW HIRES



2017

VISALIA FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

PHOTO GALLERY



JAPANESE MIKI CITY



FIRE CAMP



HOME FIRE CAMPAIGN

69 VOLUNTEERS / 638 SMOKE ALARMS INSTALLED



**FIRE CHIEF DOUG MCBEE  
40 YEARS IN THE FIRE SERVICE**



# HEROES IN A HALF SHELL, FIREPOWER

*Thank you for helping us.*

*-Sonoma County*

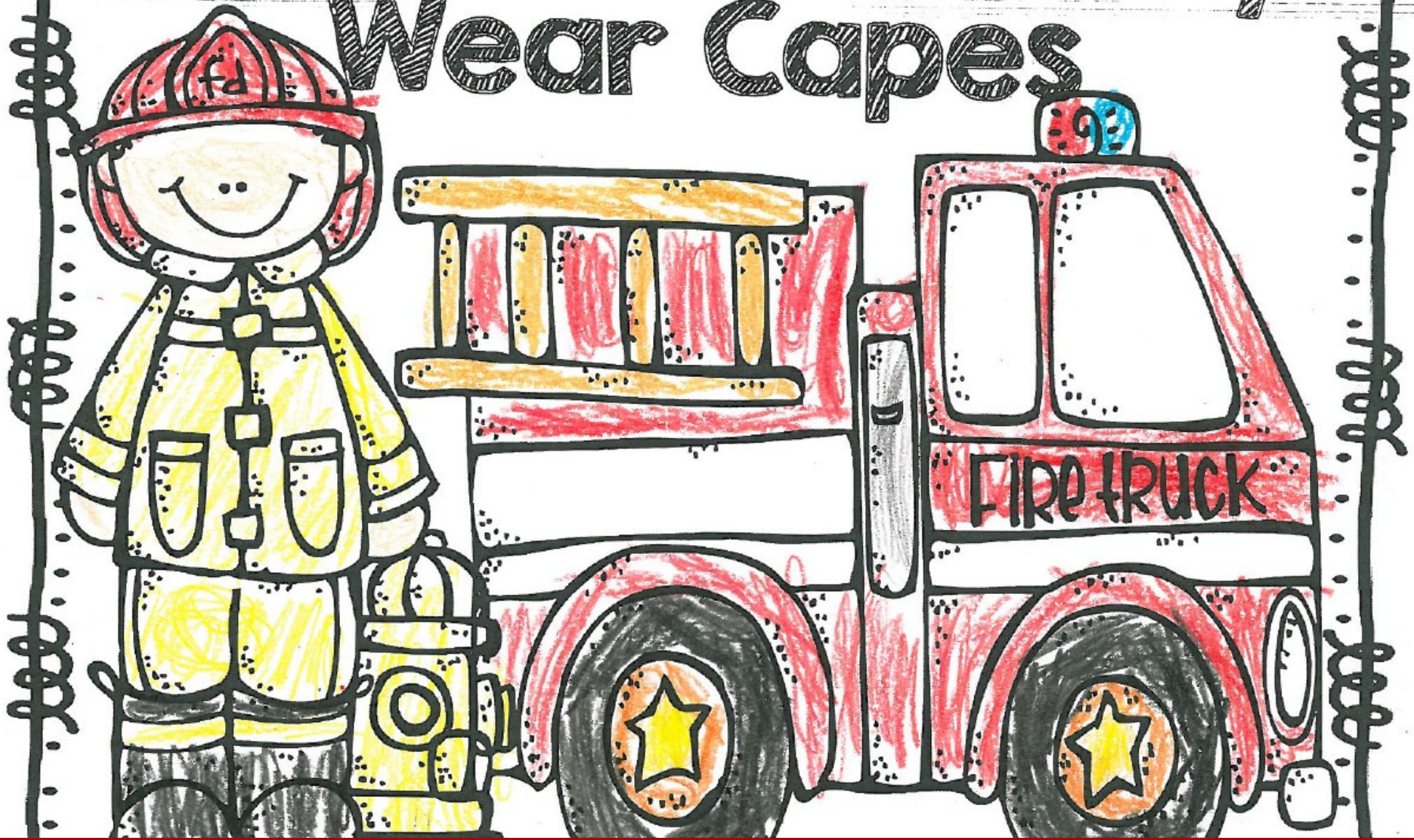


# OPEN HOUSE

POPULATION  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
39,523,613  
  
TULARE COUNTY  
471,842  
  
CITY OF VISALIA  
133,151

STATE OF CA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Heroes Don't Always  
Wear Capes



Dear Firefighter, Thank you for saving our homes. You are awesome! Be careful out there! From, Faith

VISALIA FIRE DEPARTMENT  
420 NORTH BURKE STREET, VISALIA, CA 93291  
(559) 713-4266 | [HTTP://VISALIA.CITY/VFD](http://visalia.city/vfd)