

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors



The  
Team  
That  
Cares

Community  
Volunteers

**HOMER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**



# Report on the Homer Volunteer Fire Department Recommendations for Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

*“An Educational Institution that Provides EMS and Fire Services”*

**Cost Effective Fire Protection  
The ISO Evaluation and Rating  
Fire Department Budget  
Fire Department Staffing  
Volunteer Emergency Services  
Staffing Recommendations  
Immediate Intervention  
Benefits**

**2018  
486 EMS Call – 78%  
142 Fire Calls  
Total 628  
Responses**

# Cost Effective Fire Protection

- The role of the Fire Department is to achieve the lowest “Cost of Fire” to the community
- Appropriate investment in the FD Budget and Code Compliant Construction reduces Fire Loss and Insurance
- The goal is to achieve the most cost effective balance

**Fire Department Budget**

**Fire Loss**

**Fire Code Implementation  
and Fire Safe Construction**

**Fire Insurance Premiums**

# Fire Department Economic Impact

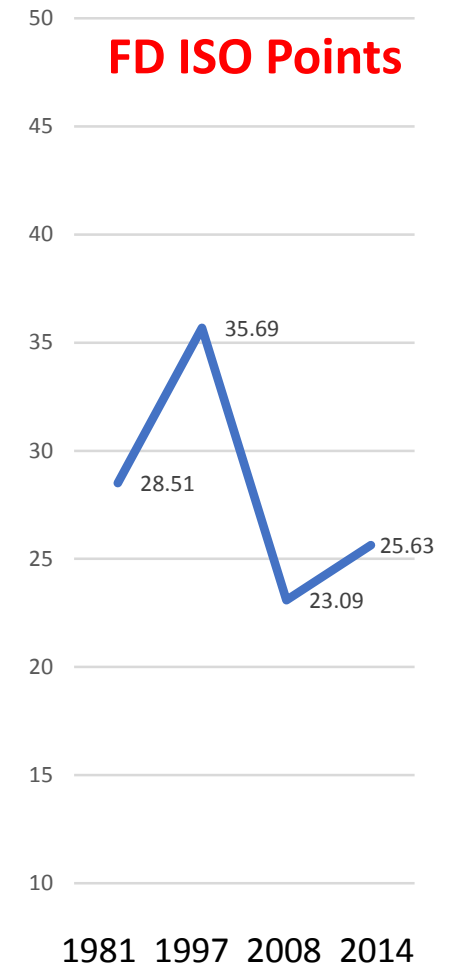
- **HVFD reduces insurance premiums paid by at least 4 to 6 times its annual budget, more than offsetting all of the City property taxes**
- **Insurance premium dollars paid leave the community. Most tax dollars remain in the community**
- **When fire service capacity is neglected, insurance rates rise and property values and property tax revenues are depressed, as is development and investment**
- **To recover requires budget increases to regain the lost capacity. Initially this puts additional downward pressure until insurance rates fall again**
- **Failing to maintain the appropriate level of fire service is a costly mistake for a community**

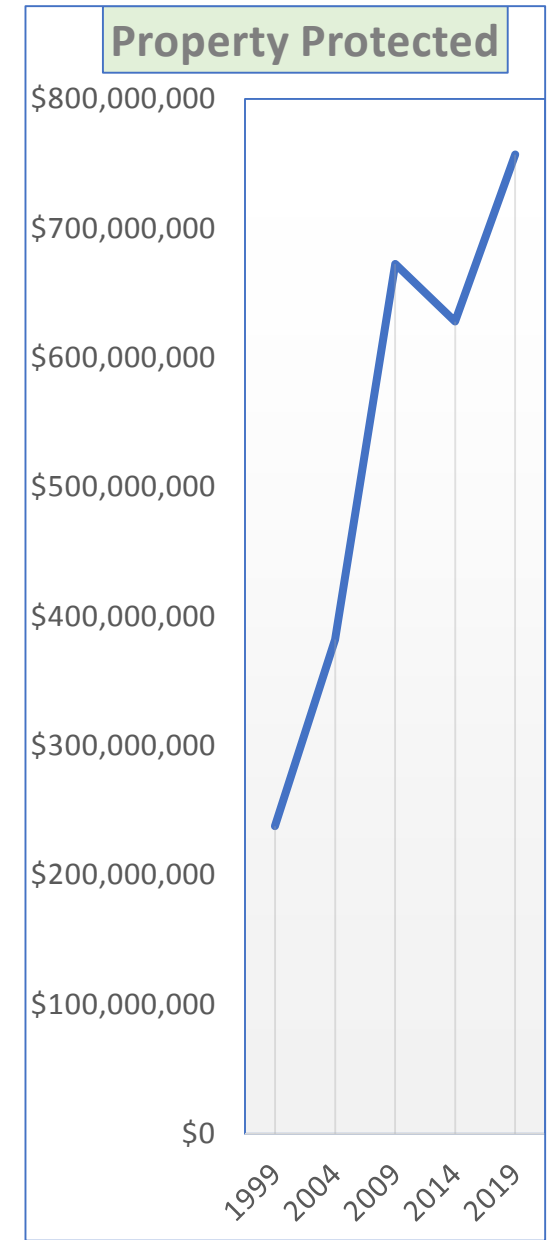
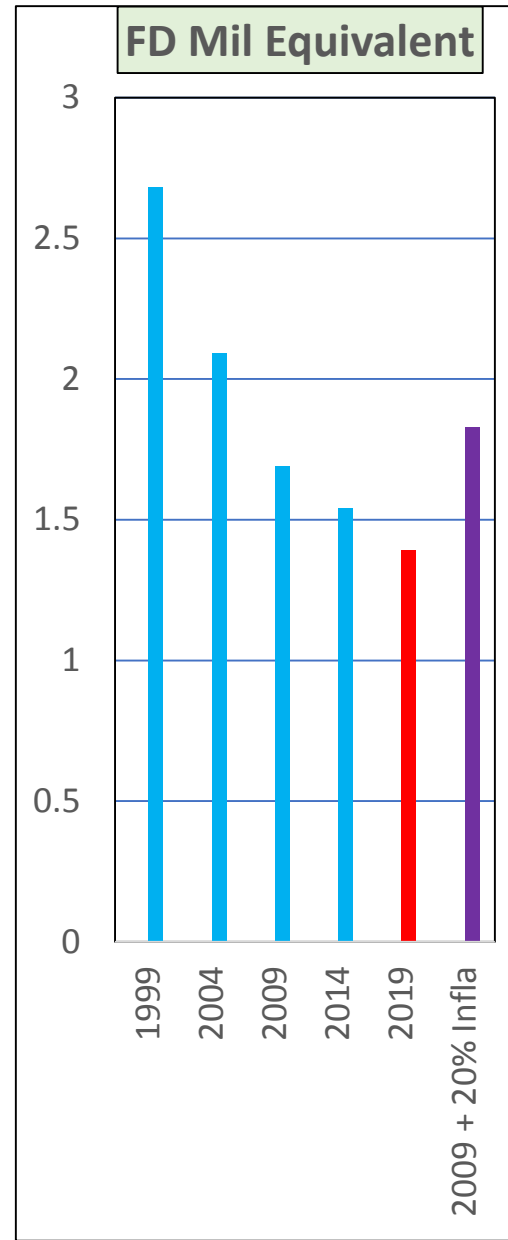
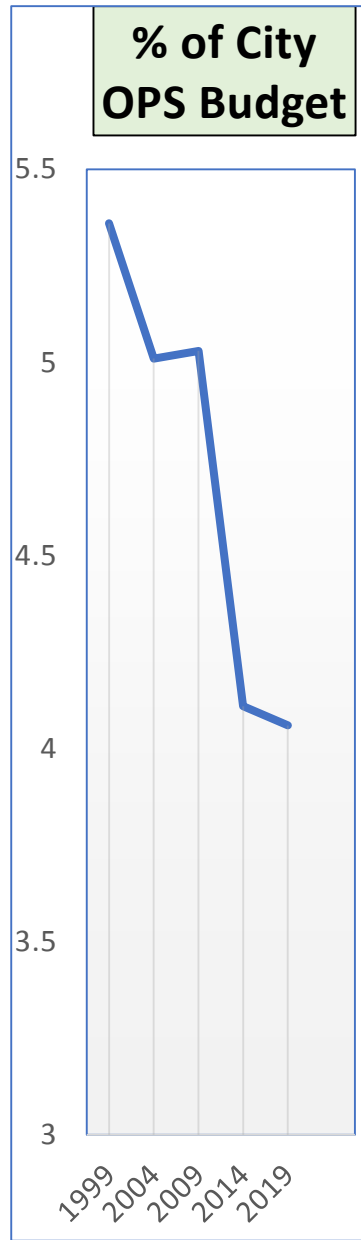
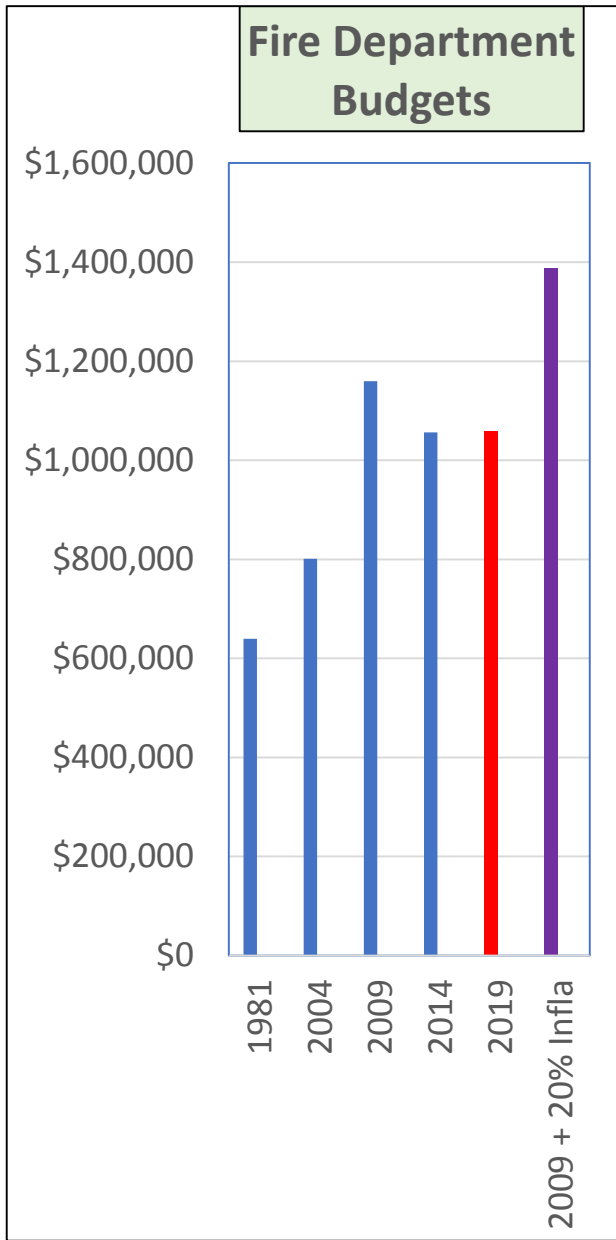
# Comparison of Insurance Services Office (ISO) Ratings 1981-2019

## Measure of Capacity to Need

Year	Max Points	1981	1997	Change 81-97	2008	2014	Change 97-14
Emergency Reporting	10.00	5.40	7.00	+30%	6.18	7.40	+37%
<b>Fire Dept.</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>28.51</b>	<b>35.69</b>	<b>+25%</b>	<b>23.09</b>	<b>25.63</b>	<b>-28%</b>
Water Supply	40.00	25.47	40.00	+58%	25.81	28.83	-28%
Divergence		-1.33	-5.72	-430%	-3.67	-4.16	+27%
Comm. Risk Reduction	5.50					3.99	
Total Points		58.05	76.96	+33%	51.41	61.69	-20%
<b>ISO Rating</b>		<b>5/9</b>	<b>3/8</b>		<b>5/8B</b>	<b>4/4Y</b>	

ISO Rating Chart	
ISO Class	Points
1	90+
2	80.00-89.99
3	70.00-79.99
4	60.00-69.99
5	50.00-59.99
6	40.00-49.99
7	30.00-39.99
8	20.00-29.99
9	10.00-19.99
10	0.00-9.99



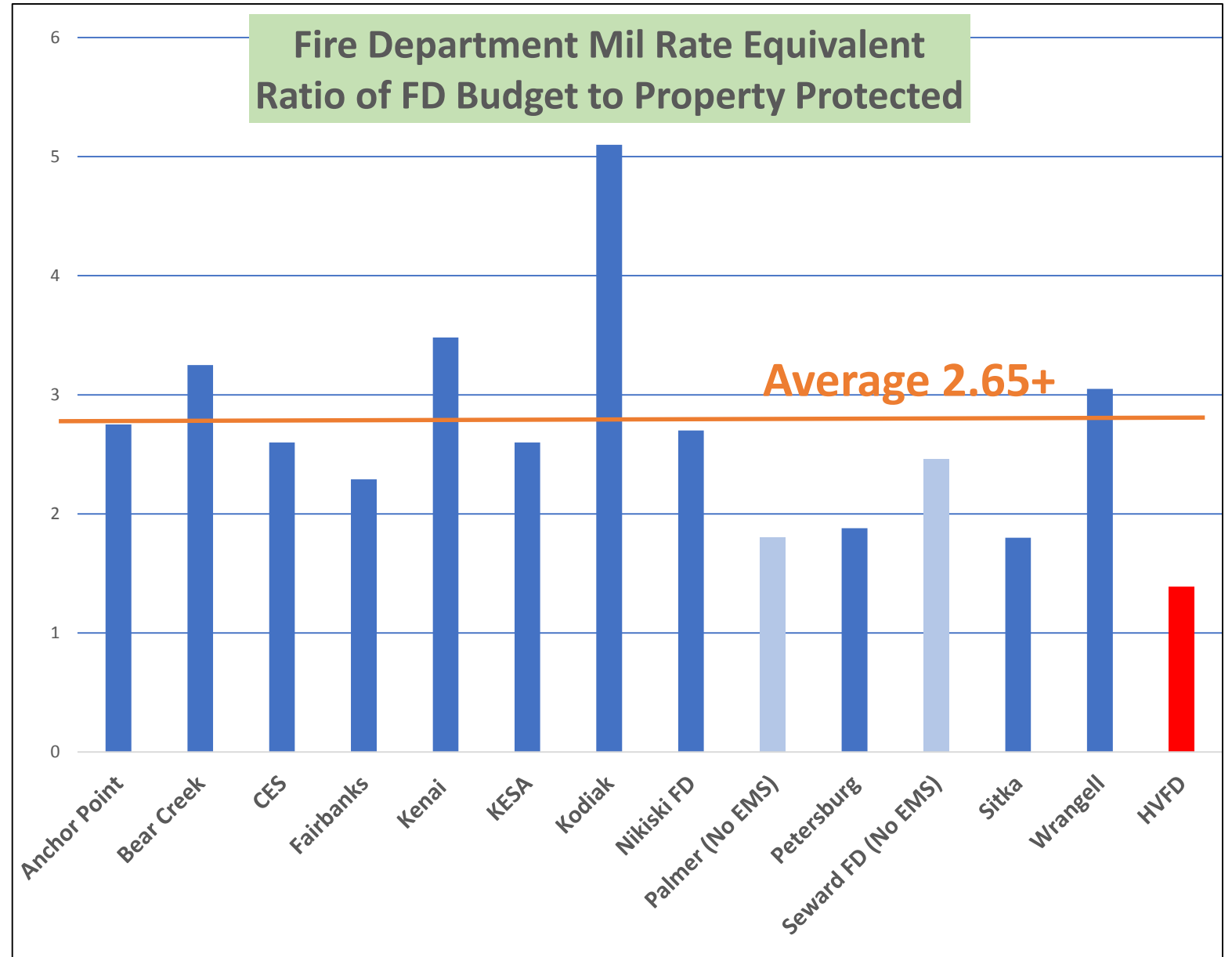


# Fire Department Comparisons

Fire Department	Pop	ISO	Mill Rate	Budget
Anchor Point FD	2700	5	2.75	\$1,094,500.00
Kachemak Emergency Service Area	4000	5	2.6	\$1,079,150.00
Homer Volunteer Fire Department	6123	4	1.39	\$1,059,435.00
Sitka FD	8830	4	1.83	\$2,095,133.00
Kenai FD	7745	3	3.48	\$3,103,848.00
Kodiak	6100	4	5.10	\$2,459,976.00



Fire Dept.	Mill Rate
Anchor Point	2.75
Bear Creek	3.25
CES / Soldotna	2.60
Fairbanks	2.29
Kenai	3.48
KESA	2.60
Kodiak	5.10
Nikiski FD	2.70
Palmer (No EMS)	1.80
Petersburg	1.88
Seward FD (No EMS)	2.46
Sitka	1.83
Wrangell	3.05
<b>HVFD</b>	<b>1.39</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.65</b>





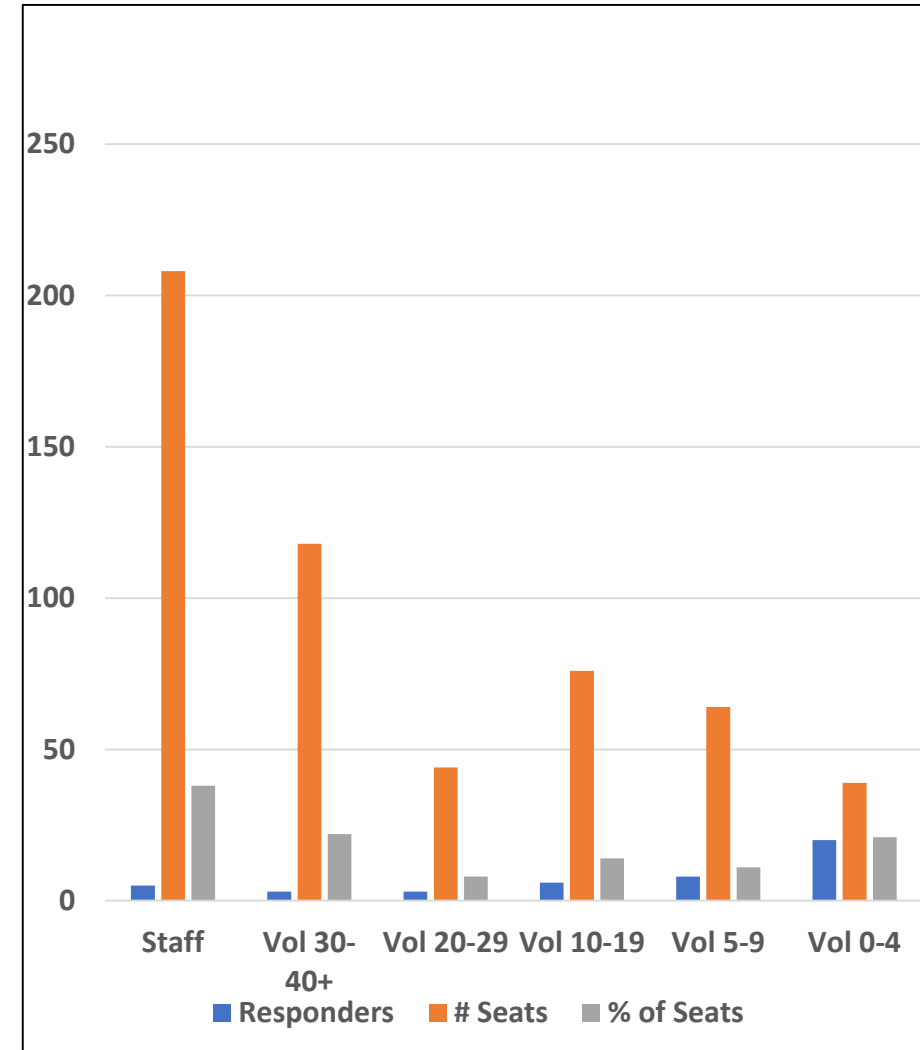
## **Fire Department at Risk**

- **ISO – 28% Reduction in FD Capacity to Need from 1997-2014**
- **ISO - 50% Reduction in the number of Firefighters responding to fire alarms since 1997**
- **Inadequate resources to meet the needs. Effectively a 30% cut to the budget since 2009.**
- **Inadequate 8/40 Staffing to support the volunteers**
- **Commercial Fire and Homeowners Insurance Rates have increased**
- **ISO Evaluations on an a targeted 5 year cycle. Last evaluation in 2014. City faces a potential for a drop to a Class-5**

## Jan-Mar 2019 Responses

Responders	Roster = 45 Responders	549 # Seats	% Seats
Staff	5	208	38%
Vol 30-40+	3	118	22%
<b>Sub-Group Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>60%</b>
Vol 20-29	3	44	8%
Vol 10-19	6	76	14%
<b>Sub-Group Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>82%</b>
Vol 5-9	8	64	11%
Vol 0-4	20	39	7%
<b>Sub-Group Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Responder Participation



# The Path Best Not Taken

- When volunteers are unhappy, they drift away quietly, rarely complaining
- It is exceptionally hard to rebuild a successful volunteer fire department once it has failed
- Permitting a volunteer service to degrade results in the hiring of full-time employees at great cost

## ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Mat-Su

**Mat-Su adds 25 medics, 2 ambulances in major shift to full-time force**

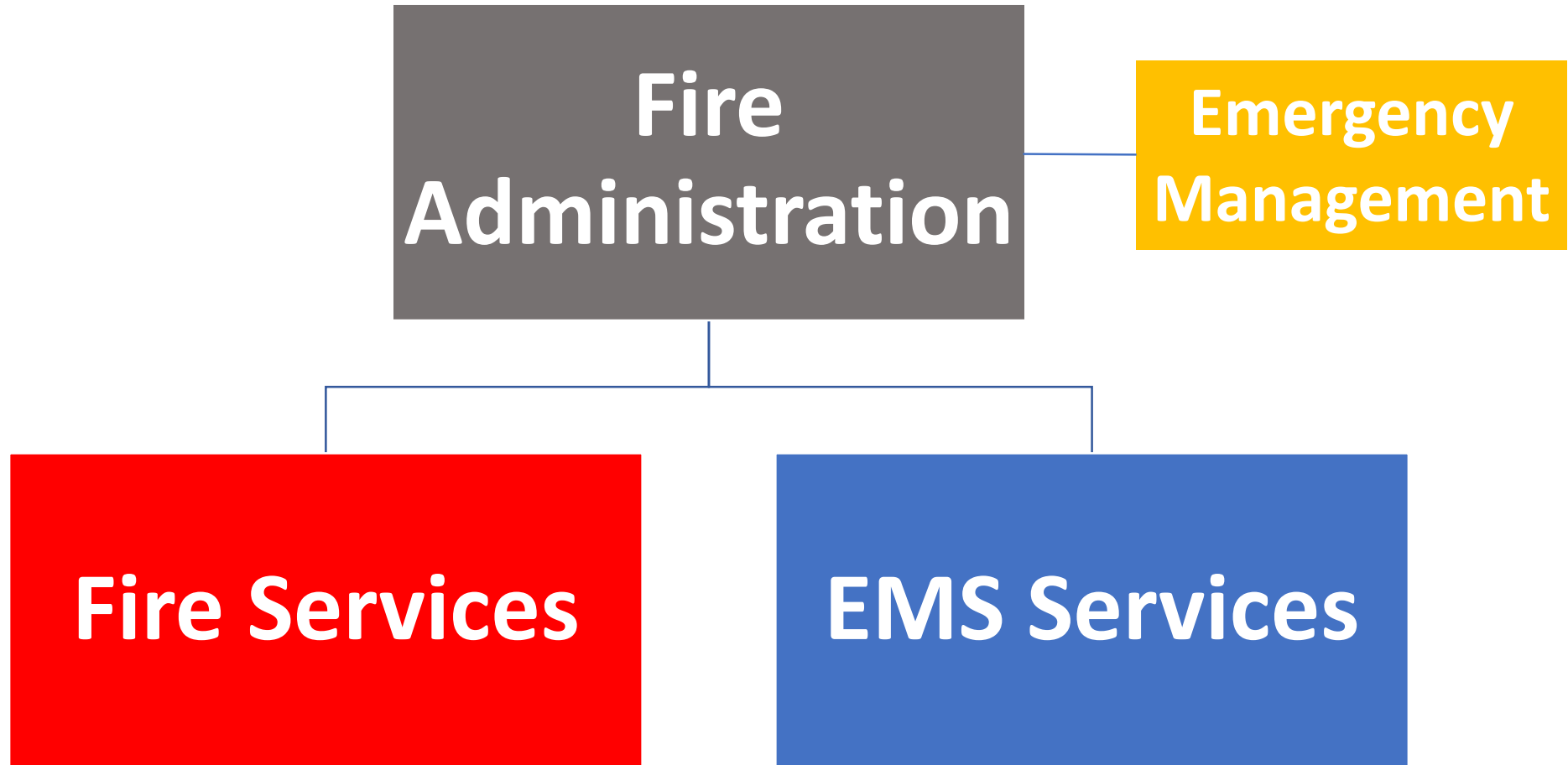
✍ Author: Zaz Hollander ⓘ Updated: 21 hours ago 📅 Published 21 hours ago



Matanuska-Susitna Borough paramedic April Yost in Central Ambulance 1 on Wednesday, March 20, 2019. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough assembly approved adding 25 EMT's and paramedics. (Bill

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# Fire Department Org Chart



## Scope of Services

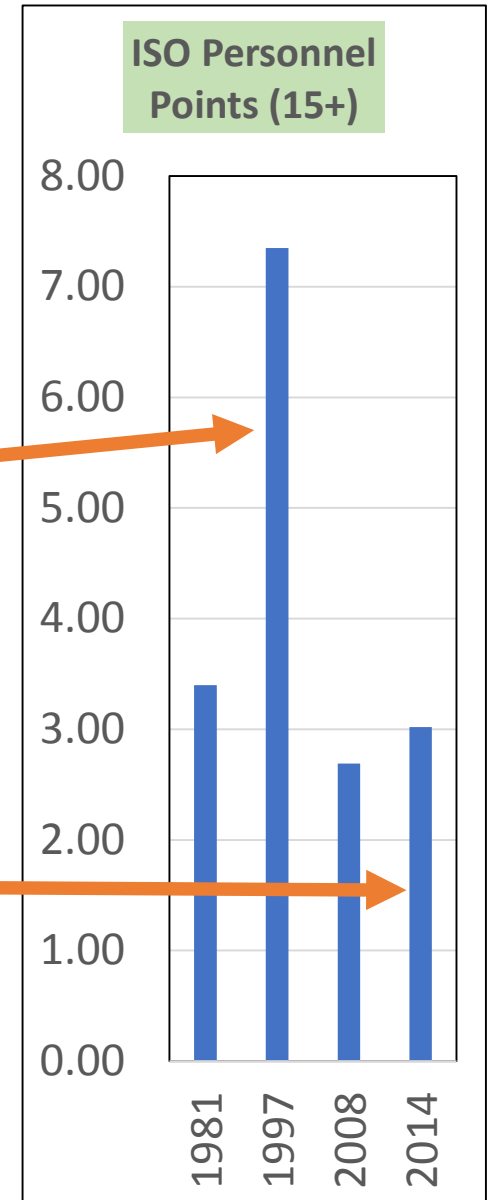
- Fire Services - Structural Fire Suppression, Motor Vehicle Firefighting, Wildland Firefighting, Marine Firefighting, Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting
- EMS - Basic and Advanced Life Support Ambulance Services
- Rescue Services - Vehicle Extrication, Rope Rescue, Water Rescue, Confined Space Rescue
- Hazardous Materials Operations
- Disaster Response and Management
- Public Education, Prevention and Preparedness
- Plan Reviews and Code Consultations

## Training

- Every Emergency Service above has a course and continuing education requirements
- In addition we provide Firefighter-I, Firefighter-II, Officer-I, Emergency Vehicle Operations, Fire Apparatus Engineer, Fire Service Hydraulics, etc.
- EMT-I, EMT-II, EMT-III, Paramedic, ACLS, Ambulance Driver, etc.
- Methods of Instruction and Train-the-Trainer

# Staffing Distribution

		Fire	EMS	DSS		
Year	Chief	AC	AC	/DSC	ESS	P.T.-ESS
Thru						
1999	1	1	1	1		
2000	1	1		1	1	
2010	1			1	3	
2115	1			1	3	2 p.t.
2017	1	1		1	3	2 p.t.
2019	1	1	Add 1		Add 1	2 p.t.



# Staffing Recommendations 8/40

- ✓ The Fire and EMS Assistant Chief positions were the key to the high performance of the Fire Department through 2000
  - ✓ The complexity of the Fire Service and EMS have both grown substantially since then, as has the volume of calls and work
  - ✓ The Fire Department currently has 2 Divisions, Fire Services and Emergency Medical Services without Division Leadership
  - ✓ The Fire Department is the largest City Department with 50+ personnel
- 
- ☐ Add an EMS Assistant Chief to provide adequate support to maintain an effective volunteer emergency service – 2 Divisions Fire & EMS
    - ☐ EMS Asst. Chief - EMS SME, Training Officer, Operations
    - ☐ Fire Asst. Chief - Fire Service SME, Training Officer, and Operations



# Staffing requirements for 24/365 ESS coverage

Hours in a Year	8,760.00 hours
Total Annual Hours per Employee	2,112.50 hours
Estimated Avg. Leave per Employee per Year	-200.00 hours
Estimated Working Hours per Employee	1,912.50 hours
Hours in a Year / Working Hours =	4.6 positions

**24 Hour Staffing Requires 4.6 positions - Current Staffing is 3.6 or 80% Coverage**

- ☐ **Add 1 Emergency Service Specialist (ESS) to complete staffing of the ESS capability and to provide staff resources to support a wide range of fire department operations**
  - ☐ **4 ESS with temp hires is the minimum 4.6 positions required to provide consistent expedited responses 24/365**
  - ☐ **The ESS program has had a significant impact, reducing response times by as much as 5-8 minutes, which can be lifesaving.**

# Immediate Intervention

## **Fund and Hire an EMS Assistant Chief to Restore and Sustain a Successful Volunteer Fire Department and EMS Service - Appropriation Request:**

- EMS Assistant Fire Chief (Budgeted at 50/50 to Range 20I and 20J)
- Salary & Wages: \$77,028.00 Total, Benefits: \$44,021.00      **Total: \$121,049.00**

## **Fund and Hire a 4th Emergency Service Specialist to complete 24/365 Coverage to Support Consistently Shorter Response Times and Fully Support Daily Operations - Appropriation Request:**

- ESS-II (Budgeted at Range 14A)
- Salary & Wages: \$51,243.00 Total Benefits: \$34,949.00 **Total: \$86,193.00**
- **Estimated Annual Cost \$207,242.00**
- Total FY2019 Special Appropriation Requested: \$120,891.00**

# Core Fire Department Strengths

- **New Leadership is Coming to Lead the Organization**
- **Core Group of Dedicated Volunteers Responding to Calls**
- **Volunteers Ready to Support the Rebuilding of the Fire Department**
- **3 Highly Competent Staff Members**
- **Community Support for the Volunteers**
- **Volunteer Oriented Community to Draw New Recruits From**
- **Wide Community Support and for Fire and EMS as Priority Services**
- **Mutual Aid from KESA and Anchor Point for Major Incidents**

# Goal & Benefits

- The Fire Department's Trend Line has been Downwards for Years, it is Essential to Bend the Curve Upwards and Begin the Recovery  
**"Volunteers are not free, just less expensive"**
- Over time, insurance savings will more than offset the investment in the Fire Department
- The Additional Staff will fully support both the Fire Service and EMS Divisions and complete the 24 Hour Rapid Response Capability.
- An Adequate Budget will support the work and resources required to assure the HVFD volunteers are successful
- Effective Fleet Management will increase reliability and safety, while providing for predictable stable Fleet Expenditures
- This will sustain a Responsive, High Quality, Cost-Effective, Viable Volunteer Fire Department well into the future