



2020

Annual Report



Message from the Fire Chief

2020 was a year which presented many challenges not experienced in recent times. The impact of COVID-19 was felt by all, and Brandon Fire & Emergency Services was no different. It is easy to focus on the negative impact that this pandemic has had, but we are proud to say we have met all of the challenges associated with delivering emergency services that have come forward during this difficult time.

Brandon Fire & Emergency Services personnel continued to plan and adapt to ensure the delivery of both fire and emergency medical services in a safe and effective manner to meet the needs of our community. This has all been accomplished through a team effort in working with all departments of the City of Brandon, our external partners in Shared Health, and most importantly all of our dedicated staff at Brandon Fire & Emergency Services.

On behalf of the staff of Brandon Fire & Emergency Services, it is my pleasure to submit to you the department's 2020 Annual Report.

Scott McDonald



Staffing Changes

Probationary Firefighter/ Paramedic New Hires

Willi Penner April 20
Austin Smith September 21

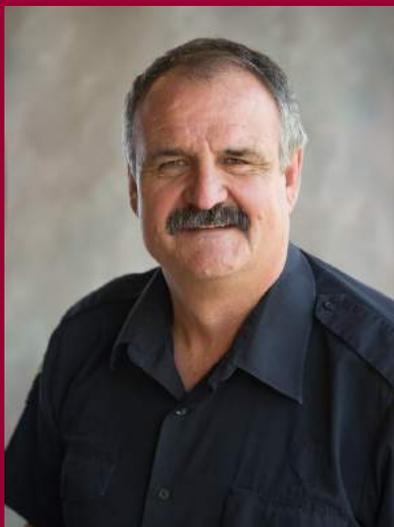
Promotions

Doug Wheatland	January 3	Lieutenant
Kevin Garrioch	January 3	Lieutenant
Robbie Brown	March 27	Acting Lieutenant I
Trevor Wowk	March 27	Acting Lieutenant II
Shane Wilton	March 29	Acting Lieutenant II
Sarah Peto	March 29	Acting Lieutenant I
Steve Sherb	October 1	Acting Lieutenant I

Retirements

Congratulations to each of you for a long career serving the citizens of Brandon and the surrounding area. Brandon Fire & Emergency Services wishes you the best of luck in your future endeavors.

Photos by Ken Frazer



Mike Ketcheson

Hired: May 18, 1979
Retired: January 5, 2021
Years of Service: 42



Bob Smit

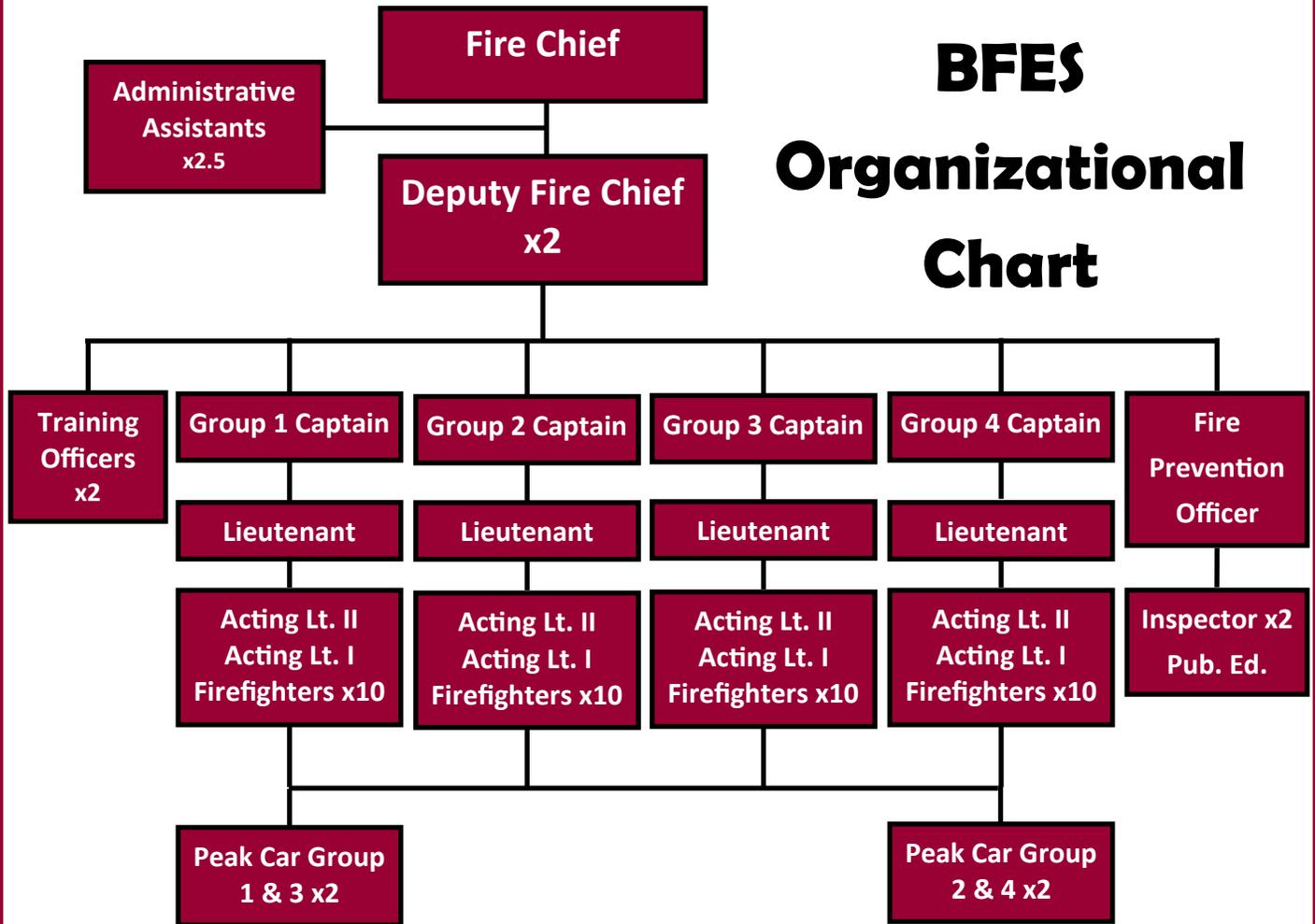
Hired: June 12, 1989
Retired: January 15, 2021
Years of Service: 32



Kevin Holder

Hired: April 15, 1991
Retired: January 5, 2021
Years of Service: 30

BFES Organizational Chart



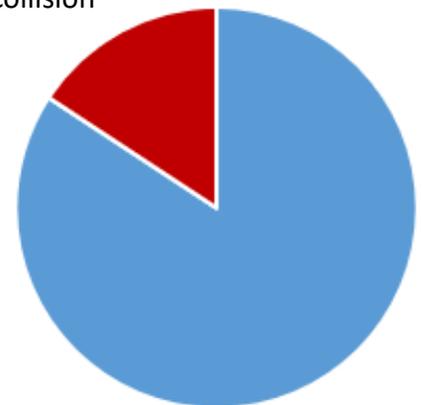
Calls for Service

EMS

2,639 Emergency Response
1,590 Non Emergency Response
599 Local Transfers
576 Long Distance Transfers
8 Assist Other Agencies
5,412 Total
84%

FIRE

380 Alarms
248 Rescue | Motor Vehicle Collision
149 Investigations
138 Fire Related Responses
51 CO Responses
46 Other
1,012 Total
16%



■ EMS ■ FIRE



70

People Receive Fire Extinguisher Training



903

Completed Fire Inspections



362

Fire Pit Permits Issued



56

People Attended the Fire Hall for a Tour



19

Schools Participated in the Learn Not to Burn Program



10

Students Graduated from the Babysitting Program

*These numbers were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions



3,500
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500

Fire Hall Responding

3,209

1,417

1,716

1 Hall

2 Hall

Both Halls

Radio Upgrade



2020 saw BFES transition to a new PSCS (Public Safety Communication Service) digital two-way radio system which provides better coverage over a more secure network. All staff were given formal training that included orientation on the new portable and mobile radios.

This new digital radio system replaces the outdated FleetNet system and will provide our firefighter/paramedics with

more reliable and clear radio communications for day-to-day operations.

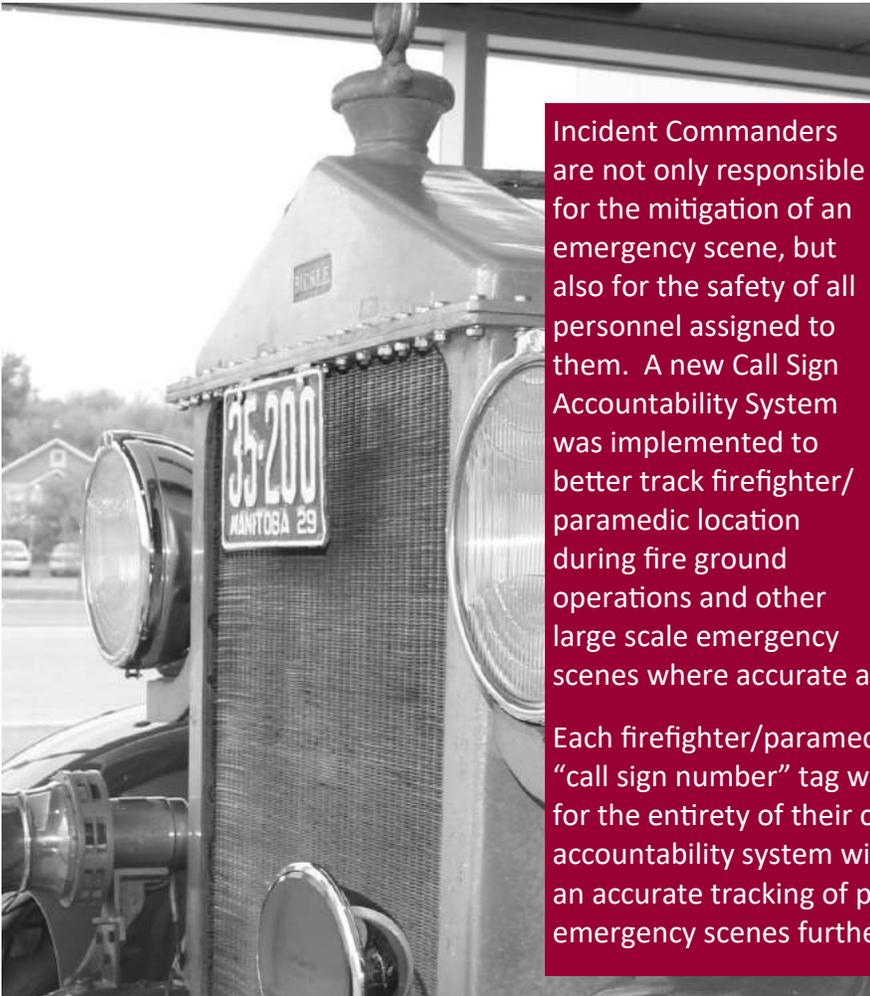
The FleetNet system was in place for approximately 30 years and was so outdated that, in some cases, replacement parts had to be ordered from eBay.



An orange button emergency alert feature is incorporated into the top of the new radios and one on the lapel mic that firefighter/paramedics can push to activate an emergency tone in the event they find themselves in a Mayday emergency.

This allows an uninterrupted call transmission to be placed from the firefighter/paramedic to the Incident Commander.





Incident Commanders are not only responsible for the mitigation of an emergency scene, but also for the safety of all personnel assigned to them. A new Call Sign Accountability System was implemented to better track firefighter/paramedic location during fire ground operations and other large scale emergency scenes where accurate accountability is required.

Each firefighter/paramedic is assigned a three digit "call sign number" tag which is their own "call sign" for the entirety of their career. This new accountability system will provide our officers with an accurate tracking of personnel while operating at emergency scenes further enhancing safety.

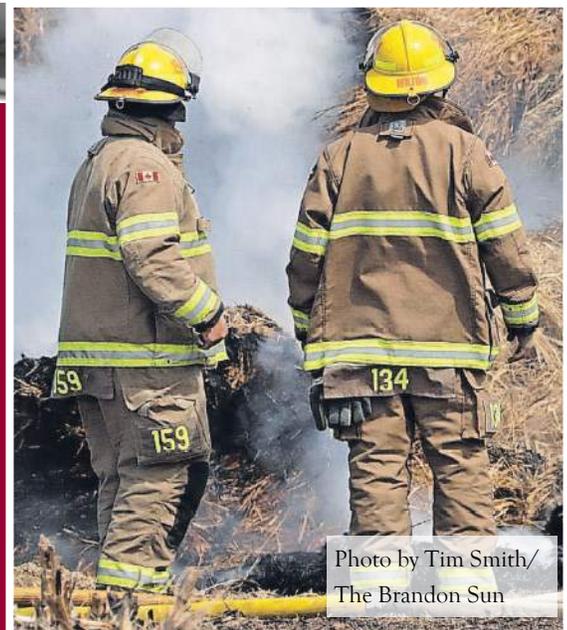


Photo by Tim Smith/
The Brandon Sun



BFES has incorporated several new props to conduct table top exercises. These props include a new Fire Studio 6 computer program that provides a projected image of a selected structure fire, satellite imagery mapping of the City of Brandon and small scale die cast type emergency vehicles.

This training will provide a relaxed controlled environment for crews to work through a prepared scenario and discuss command and control priorities such as building size-up, truck placement, fire tactic strategies, scene accountability, etc.

This new program offers a multitude of scenario options including structure fires, motor vehicle collisions, plane crashes, and hazardous materials response, just to name a few.



AMBULANCE

2020 started off business as usual for the BFES EMS program. The beginning of 2020 saw the inception of a new certification for the Intermediate Care Paramedics that serve our city.



Photo by Tyler Clarke/
The Brandon Sun

These 34 service members completed the certification course for Pediatric Advanced Life Support, or PALS, which allows them to perform various critical, life-saving interventions for the City of Brandon's youngest residents.



Photo by Colin Slark/
The Brandon Sun

Shortly after implementation of the PALS program the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a global pandemic. BFES began extensive training on new health measures, such as new procedures for Personal Protective Equipment paramedics would be wearing into medical situations to protect staff from the inherent dangers of providing health care during a pandemic.

Once the health care system had a chance to "know our enemy", many treatments and protocols had to be changed for the safety of the residents as well as the firefighter/paramedics.

The EMS program adopted many new and safer medication administration methods, new airway management techniques, and new Covid-19 screening protocols starting right at the point of dispatch.

This was a massive undertaking but was made easier by the relationships with our partners at Shared Health Emergency Health Services and the various departments within the City of Brandon.



AMBULANCE

Near the end of summer, the Province of Manitoba announced that all practicums for students of medical programs that had previously been put on pause could now proceed, as these soon to be graduates would be required on the frontlines of our public health system.

Once again, leadership within Brandon Fire and Emergency Services took the opportunity to assist the public health care system where they could. Working in close concert with Red River Community College as well as the Manitoba Emergency Services College, BFES welcomed paramedic students from both educational programs for their final practicums.



Photo by Tyler Clarke/
The Brandon Sun



Many BFES members volunteered to offer clinical oversight as students worked through the practical application of their paramedic skills in a real world setting.

What better environment for graduates to learn to provide patient care than in the midst of a pandemic and with our patient-centered team of firefighter/paramedics!

2020 may have been a challenging year, but Brandon Fire and Emergency Services found themselves poised to take the challenge head-on. Whether it was mitigating the near-constant changes to protocols and procedures, deploying paramedics to assist with outbreaks at personal care homes, helping with immunization clinics, or stepping up to the new demands on our health care system (like so many other health care providers in all areas of the global response), we are proud to say that we were up to the challenge in 2020 and will continue to be for years to come.



Fire Prevention



2020 was spent modernizing the public education program and keeping up to date with the ever changing COVID-19 restrictions.

Classroom fire safety presentations were on-going, using the Teams platform. New lesson plans, activities and hand-outs were created to accommodate the instructor being in a remote location.

The babysitting course implemented new videos into the course session. Graduates now receive a BFES drawstring bag to use as their babysitting kit to take on the job.

Virtual Library

In order to make fire safety resources more accessible to teachers and to the public, BFES has created a virtual library.

There are links to fire safety story books read aloud, videos, activities and websites.

Click [here](#) to access the library!



Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Week is an event where fire departments all over North America promote fire prevention initiatives.

This year's theme was **"Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen!"** The #1 cause

of home fires is unattended cooking, and this year's theme worked to educate people about the actions they can take to keep them safe in the kitchen.

The Fire Hall put together a cookbook which is loaded with delicious recipes and life-saving fire safety tips. Check it out [here](#)!

Specialized Rescue

Our Department has three specialized rescue teams—Water, Tech, and Haz-Mat. These teams each have 10 staff members and they participate in numerous training exercises throughout the year to ensure their skills are proficient in the case of any specialized rescue response.

Each team faced training challenges due to pandemic restrictions. This meant reduced training sessions, but each team member was able to share their knowledge and experience with their respective shifts. This was invaluable for the shift members as they were able to learn what the team capabilities are as well as how the team can be supported while on an actual response.



Haz-Mat Team

This team has the capability to respond to fuel spills, oil spills, and any other incident where there is a known or unknown hazardous substance.



Water Rescue Team

Members of the water rescue team were able to do a joint training session with the Wawanesa Fire Department at Pelican Lake. Thin ice and open water scenarios were done by both teams.



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brandon.ca/fire

