

2023

ANNUAL REPORT





Message from the **Chief Emergency Services**

On behalf of myself, and the staff of Brandon Fire & Emergency Services (BFES), it is my pleasure to submit to you the department's 2023 Annual Report.

In 2023 we saw Brandon Fire and Emergency Services grow to include the Brandon Public-Safety Communications Centre and Emergency Management.

Our main focus in 2023 was concentrating on our most important asset, our staff. We have been working hard to build a strong team and a positive culture, and with that in mind, we created the BFES vision statement that we believe captures who we are. "Serving Community Through Tradition, Pride and Teamwork". Some of the initiatives that took place in 2023 was the implementation of the department's Health and Wellness Committee, as well as continuing the amazing work done by our Peer Support Team who assist members in accessing much needed resources from time to time.

BFES was also excited to include our family members in many of our wellness initiatives in

2023. These included several evening speakers throughout the year who discussed many topics, such as dealing with stress and recognizing the signs of stress for family members and staff. Along with these evenings, we also had a family barbeque and yoga nights. We look forward to many more initiatives in 2024!

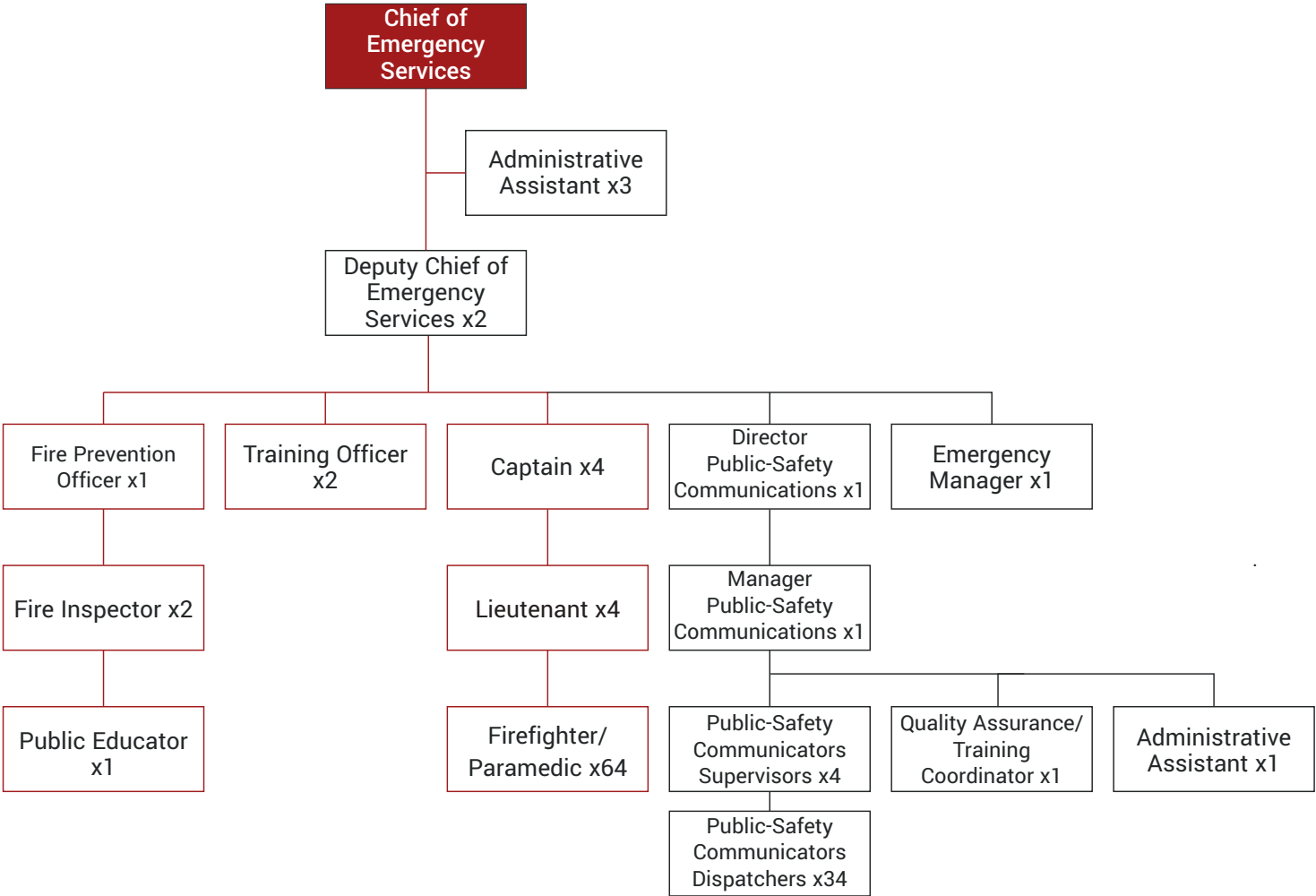
The most important change for BFES and the City of Brandon in 2023 was the increase to our staffing levels. Shared Health provided funding for fifteen staff members for BFES in order to staff a third primary ambulance and additional staff members for the Brandon Police Service Detention Unit. As well, the Public-Safety Communications Centre received additional funding from the Province of Manitoba for increased staffing for dispatching of Conservation Officers. This funding will allow BFES to ensure that the residents of Brandon and the Province of Manitoba continue to receive the highest level of care and service possible. Thank you to the Province of Manitoba and the City of Brandon!

I hope you enjoy the 2023 Annual Report.



Terry Parlow
Chief of Emergency Services

Our Team



72

Firefighters/
Paramedics



38

Public-Safety
Communication
Dispatchers



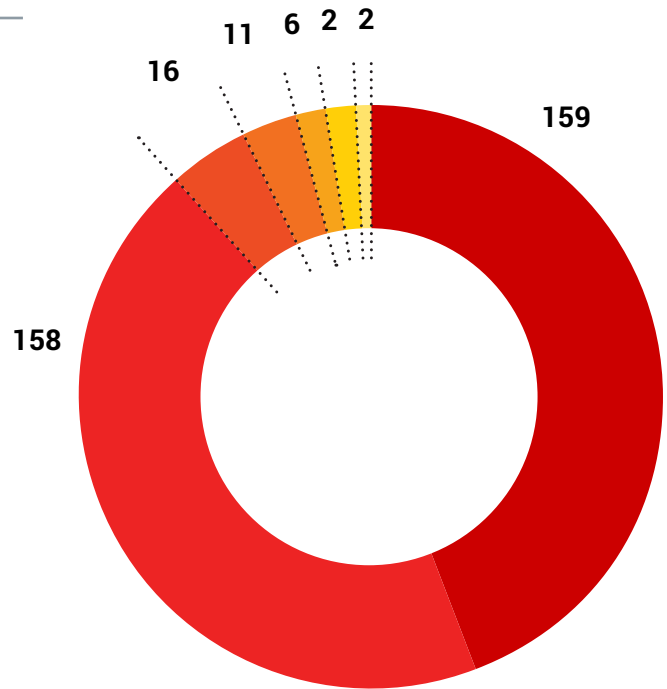
127

Total
Staff

Numbers

Types of Calls

Ambulance	7,064
Alarms	564
Motor Vehicle Collision	246
Investigation	159
Fire	158
Hydro	16
Rescue	11
Haz Mat	6
Other	6
Explosion	2
Total	8,232



835

fire inspections
conducted



65

public tours of
#1 Fire Hall



140

fire pit permits
issued



213

school
presentations



17

road shows
and rodeos



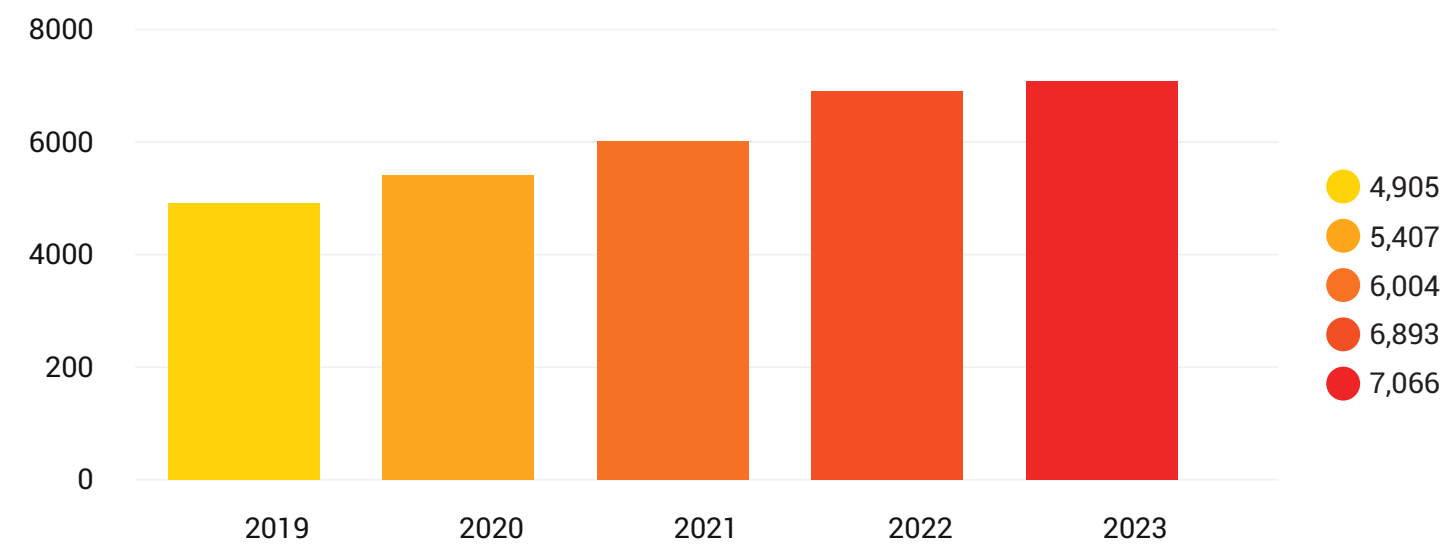
17

fire extinguisher
training sessions



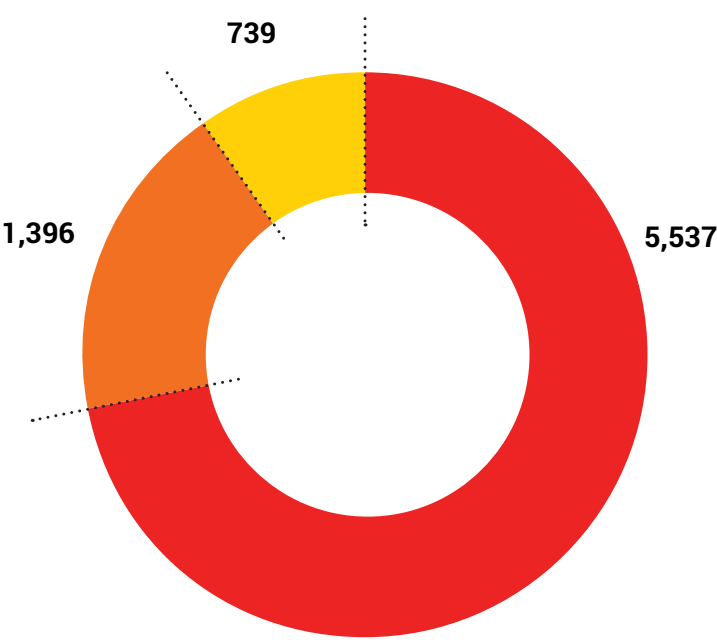
Ambulance

Ambulance Calls



Types of Ambulance Calls

Emergency Response	5,537
Local Tranfers	1,396
Long Distance Transfer	739



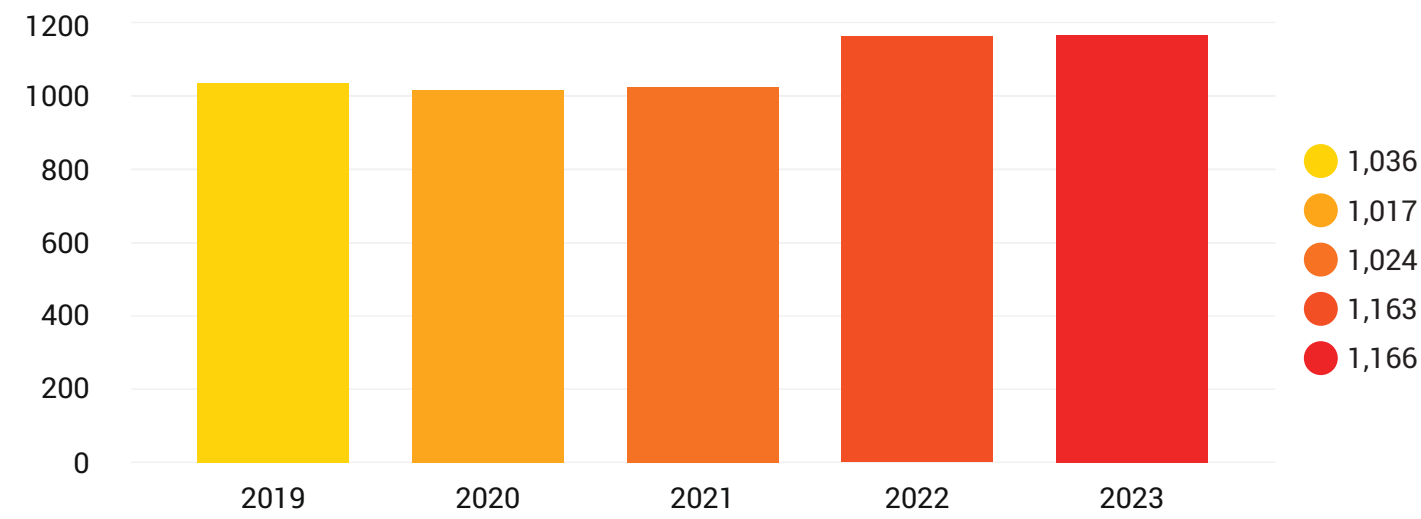
Brandon Fire & Emergency Services is an ambulance provider within the City of Brandon. We provide both emergency and routine services to not only Brandon, but also to the rural areas as needed.

The staff on board these ambulances are fully trained Firefighter/Paramedics. That's right, the Firefighters are also Paramedics. The City of Brandon is one of only a few cities in Canada that have a fully integrated Fire and Ambulance Service.

Brandon Fire and Emergency Services has been providing fire based ambulance services for over 107 years.

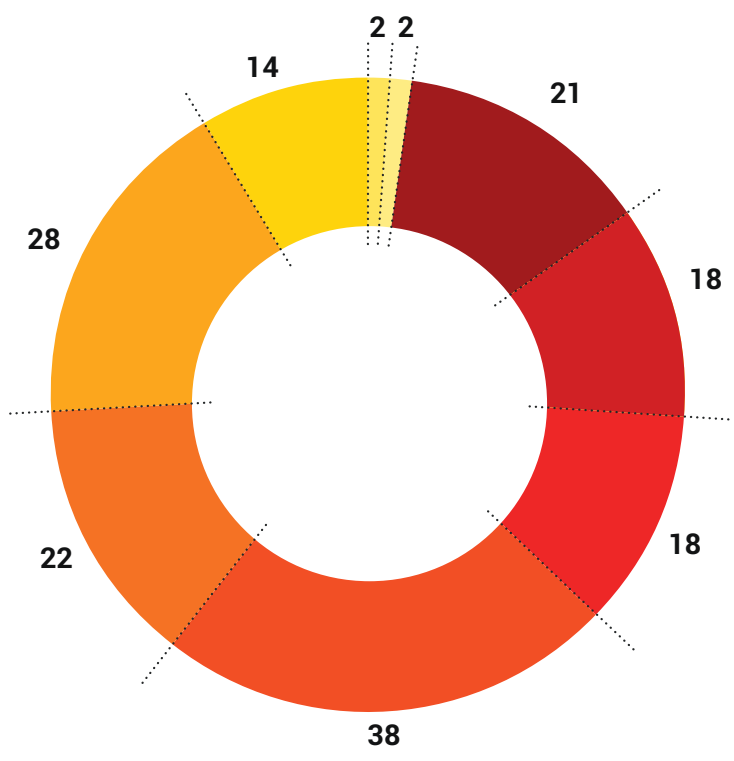
Fire

Fire Responses



Types of Fire Calls

Assist Other Agency	2
Explosion	2
Dumpster or Garbage Fire	21
Grass Fire	18
Fire In Structure	18
Other Fire	38
Outdoor Firepit	22
Structure Fire	28
Vehicle Fire	14
Total	159





Staff Changes



New Hires

EFFECTIVE DATE

Jonathan Martinez	February 7
Conner Dobson	February 27
Corbin Mariash	February 27
Colbi Turnbull	March 13
Wiley Speiss	March 30
Robert Brown	April 17
Cody Young	August 8
Beth Rust	August 8
Brian Wenham	August 8
Julie Osis	September 5
Devin Gellatly	September 5
Thomas Law	October 16
Chaelynn Kitz	October 16
Kieran Moore	October 23
Zac Tétrault	October 23

Promotions

PROMOTED TO

EFFECTIVE DATE

Mike Hole	Acting Lieutenant I & II	Jan 25 & Sept 2
Joe Szabo	Fire Prevention Officer	February 21
Terry Parlow	Chief of Emergency Services	April 24
Michael Lees	Fire Inspector	April 24
Rob Brown	Lieutenant	August 15
Mark Ryback	Acting Lieutenant I	September 30

Retirements



Kevin Groff

July 15, 1985 - February 9, 2023

Kevin completed his long career with Brandon Fire and Emergency Services as the Fire Prevention Officer. He was hired as a firefighter/paramedic on July 15, 1985 and retired on Feb 9, 2023 after more than 37 years with the department. Groff was promoted to the position of Acting Lieutenant I in May 1995, to Lieutenant in October 1999, to Captain in June 2001 and his final promotion was to Fire Prevention Officer in April 2015.



Scott McDonald

Oct 15, 1985 - February 6, 2023

Scott completed his long career with Brandon Fire and Emergency Services as the Fire Chief. He was hired as a firefighter/paramedic on Oct 15, 1985, and retired on Feb 6, 2023, after 37 years with the department. McDonald was promoted to the position of Lieutenant in May 2001, to Captain in January 2009, to Deputy Chief in September 2014 and his final promotion was to Fire Chief in February 2019.

Significant Responses

Structure Fire - Frederick St.

February 21, 2023

Crews responded to reports of visible smoke and flames at a house located on the 100 block of Frederick St. BFES was informed of a possible victim in the house. An offensive attack was started and firefighters attempted to enter the structure, but were stopped due to explosions in the porch and front entrance. A transitional attack was started with a second line placed to start a possible means for second attack and search. Once the fire was knocked down enough to perform a search, a deceased victim and deceased dog were located. A large part of the main floor had collapsed and all interior operations ceased. Crews completed extinguishment of the fire and cooled any remaining hot spots in the structure. All units cleared after 12 hours and 37 minutes.

Structure Fire - Park Ave E

October 13, 2023

Staff responded to the report of a fire at a business located at 372 Park Ave E. There were visible flames coming from the overhead doors of the building. A defensive attack was initiated. Due to the nature of the business, there were concerns of dangerous gases generated from the incident. Once the loss had stopped and it became an overhaul situation, there were many small fires and smoldering piles of debris that needed to be extinguished. All units cleared after 12 hours and 58 minutes.

Explosion - Richmond Ave

September 7, 2023

Staff responded to the report of an explosion at a City owned building located at 900 Richmond Ave E on Sept 7, 2023. Initial reports were for a possible gas line explosion of a hot water tank. Audible alarms, as well as a moderate haze of smoke were coming from the building. A City employee was found conscious and ambulatory, but visibly injured with burns to their face and body. No fire was observed, but a light smokey haze was noted in the upper part of the building. The building received significant damage from the explosion, with parts of the building blown out, debris on the ground, as well as flooding water. Brandon Fire and Emergency Services cleared the scene after 3 hours and 30 minutes.







Structure Fire - 10th St

April 6, 2023

BFES responded to a report of a structure fire at a 3 suite apartment building located on the 400 block of 10th St. On arrival all tenants had evacuated. There was light, visible flame from the main level. Crews initiated a transitional attack and extinguished the main level fire from the front window and transitioned to offensive attack from the rear entrance. The second crew entered the basement area and found fire in the basement. A search was conducted in the basement and all three levels of the structure. A victim, who was not a tenant or visitor of the building, was found in the basement area and pronounced deceased on scene. Once crews completed extinguishment, all units cleared after 3 hours and 31 minutes.

Structure Fire - 12th St

November 20, 2023

BFES responded to the report of a fire at a mixed-use commercial and residential space building located at 144 12th St. There was smoke coming from the building but no visible flames. Everyone was able to evacuate from the building. More than 10 people were evacuated from the building. Crews found the fire and worked to extinguish fire, hot spots and any fire extension. As conditions were becoming progressively worse, crews switched to a defensive attack.

All units cleared the scene after 11 hours and 56 minutes. The location was patrolled by BFES regularly for the next several hours to ensure no flare-ups.

Specialized Rescue Teams





HAZMAT Response Team

After a potential hazardous materials call comes in, the on-duty shift will quickly confirm the existence of hazardous materials at an incident. This is done by consulting with the on-shift HAZMAT team members. Then the rest of the team is called out and responds to the scene. Once the HAZMAT team has arrived on scene, they are responsible for confirming the material involved, providing an assessment of the scene, the dangers that are present or possible and then mitigating the incident with as little danger to personnel and public as possible.

Two long-time members, Sarah Peto and Trevor Wowk, left the team at the start of the year. Two new members, Jonathon George and Kirk Dechka, joined the team. With that, the team went back to basics during training throughout the year to bring the new staff up to speed on how the HAZMAT team operates and what they can expect during any future incidents. Both members gained a lot of knowledge during our in-house training days last year and we are glad to have them as part of the team.

The team trained four times in 2023. At the end of August, a full scale scenario was run alongside Public-Safety Communications, Brandon Police Service (BPS) and the Brandon Emergency Support Team (BEST). The scenario was a great way to integrate the different teams that could be involved in hazardous materials responses.

Tech Rescue Team



In 2023, the Tech Rescue team replaced some of the old equipment and ropes and added some much-needed new equipment to their supply. The equipment and ropes used have a hard expiry date and need to be discarded and replaced on a regular schedule to ensure that all of the equipment is safe to use and in tip top condition. The cost of replacing good equipment can be costly, but safety is our top priority. Our gear is our lifeline.

Two long serving members, Mike Lees and Joel Yanick, took opportunities within our department that will see them in day staff positions, which meant that they had to leave their positions on the team. This loss of experience will be hard to replace but we were able to find two new recruits, Clark Whelpton and Kane Doran, to fill those positions.









Water Rescue

The water rescue team had a busy year in 2023. In April, Firefighter Klemick attended FDIC in Indianapolis and won a door prize called the Aqua Eye. It has become a useful tool for the location of victims submerged in the water. It uses a combination of Sonar and Artificial Intelligence to distinguish human bodies in the water. The team had three training days throughout the year, including the opportunity to train with educators from AquaEye.

The Water Rescue team was dispatched to four incidents in 2023. On June 17th, BPS requested the assistance of the team to locate a missing person in the river. On June 18th, BPS requested the team twice more. During the third search, the missing person was found.

On December 3rd, the team was dispatched to a report of a dog that had broken through the ice on the river. The dog was rescued without any injuries.



Members of the team include: Sean Klemick, Kyle Worrall, Eric Boudreault, Conrad Stott, Shane Wilton, Mark Ryback, Trevor Bell.

(Missing from picture are Trevor Falk and Jonathon Arndt).



Training Division

In the Training Division, there was extensive probationary training conducted with all the newly hired employees. This included apparatus and equipment training, operational procedure training and City of Brandon street familiarity training to prepare the new staff for their 1 year probationary testing.

Flex training was coordinated and completed including firefighting and vehicle extrication education and practical scenarios, emergency self-rescue procedures, mayday communication, utilization of our new lunar thermal imaging search and rescue devices and their integration with our existing SCBA's were subjects covered in this training as well.

External courses that were taken by all members included Fire Ground Survival Awareness, Before Operational Stress, and 4 Seasons of Reconciliation.

Information on emergency firefighting escape procedures was distributed to all members and a prop to practice these procedures was built for training and maintenance of these skills. Ongoing training was completed with the various specialty rescue teams at BFES. A joint exercise was conducted including Brandon Fire & Emergency Services, Brandon Police Service, Brandon Public-Safety Communication Centre, various City of Brandon department heads, and Emergency Manager, which included opening the Brandon EOC and coordination/communication between city departments.



World Police and Fire Games

The World Police and Fire Games were held in Winnipeg during July 28-August 6, 2023. It was the largest sporting event ever hosted in the province of Manitoba.

The games are held biennially. The World Police and Fire Games is an Olympic-style competition with more than 8,500 athletes representing law enforcement, firefighters, and police officers from more than 50 countries across the world. Athletes compete in more than 60 unique sports. Other host countries have been United States, Australia, Canada, China, Northern Ireland, Spain, and Sweden.

BFES had twenty-four members of the department taking part in the games. Some of the activities Brandon Fire and Emergency Services members participated in were Crossfit, Swimming, Lacrosse, Triathlon, Dodgeball, Cornhole, Pickleball, Pistol Shooting, Rifle Shooting, Slo-Pitch and the Half Marathon.

There were 5,312 athletes that attended the Police & Fire Games from 67 countries around the world including Brazil, China, India, Australia, the United States of America and the Philippines.

Canada led in medals with 682, US with 680 and India with 375.





Sarah Peto won gold competing in Crossfit.

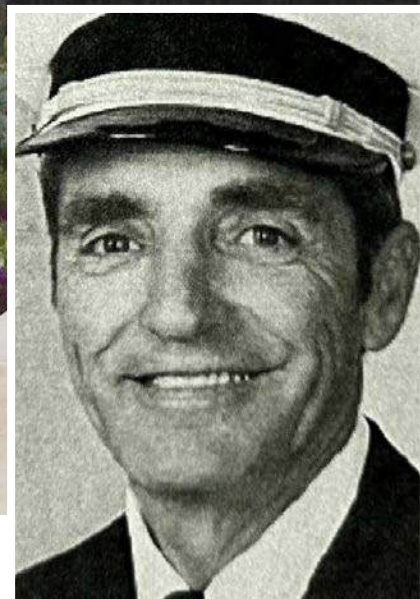
Kyle Patterson won two gold medals competing in long range shooting events.

Clark Whelpton and **Austin Smith** were part of the Northern Nightmare softball team that won silver.

Matt Tannas won two bronze medals in swimming.

The dodgeball team of **Adam Desjardin**, **Gage Wood**, **Rob Wilson**, **Corbin Mariash**, **Kole Murkin**, **Paul Bonar**, **Scott Ryan** and **Will Hicks** won bronze.

Terry Browett and **John Houlihan** won bronze in pickleball for men's doubles. **Browett** also won silver in mixed doubles.



Jim Ryan

July 23, 1960 –
January 16, 1991

Retired as Inspector

Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial Service

In September 2023, a past firefighter of the Brandon Fire Department, Arthur James Ryan, was one of the first responders who was recognized during the International Association of Fire Fighters' (IAFF) 37th Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial service.

Jim Ryan worked at the Brandon Fire Department from July 1960 to January 1991. Due to carcinogens he was exposed to on the job, he passed away in 1994 from pancreatic cancer.

Jim Ryan was honoured at the International Association of Fire Fighters' Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial Service in Colorado. Family members and members of the Brandon Firefighter Paramedics Local 803 attended the service.

Jim Ryan's grandson, Scott Ryan, joined Brandon Fire and Emergency Services in June 2021. One of the reasons Scott wanted to become a firefighter was because of his grandfather.



Scott Ryan

June 14, 2021 –
Present

Firefighter / Paramedic



Funding from the Government

In October 2023, Brandon Fire and Emergency Services received \$2.2 million dollars in funding from Shared Health to put a third ambulance into service and allow for 15 paramedics to be hired. The funding will also cover the costs of training staff and purchasing new equipment.

Five paramedics will be assigned to the holding cells at BPS headquarters and the other ten paramedics will assist in the ability to operate a third ambulance within the City of Brandon. Brandon Fire and Emergency Services now has six ambulances in their fleet.

Beyond the improved service, the additional staff will enable the department to share the workload across more staff. This will reduce the amount of workplace fatigue that we have seen over the years.

As of the end of 2023, four of the new paramedics have been hired. The remaining eleven staff and the third ambulance should be up and running by the end of 2024.





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120 19th Street North
Brandon, MB R7B 3X6
brandon.ca/fire