



Amherst NH Town Government



Amherst Fire Rescue Strategic Plan Update for FY24-FY25

September 25, 2023



Mission & Vision Statements

Mission

- *Provide skillful, prompt, and professional emergency response, public service and education, life safety code enforcement and all other community support.*

Vision

- *To continuously enhance capabilities as an all-hazards response department through community partnerships, professional relationships, and supporting constant growth of our greatest asset, our personnel.*



What AFR Does For The Community

☐ Amherst Fire Rescue

Provides:

- Emergency Medical Services
- Fire suppression
- All hazards mitigation
- Fire prevention, code enforcement and inspections
- Community public education
- Emergency management





Department Overview

☐ Amherst Fire Rescue personnel:

- 61 members:



3 Career officers

33 Per diem EMT's & firefighter EMT's

34 Call firefighters



1 Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)



13 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's)



14 Advanced EMT's



13 Paramedics



48 Firefighter Certified





Department Overview (cont.)

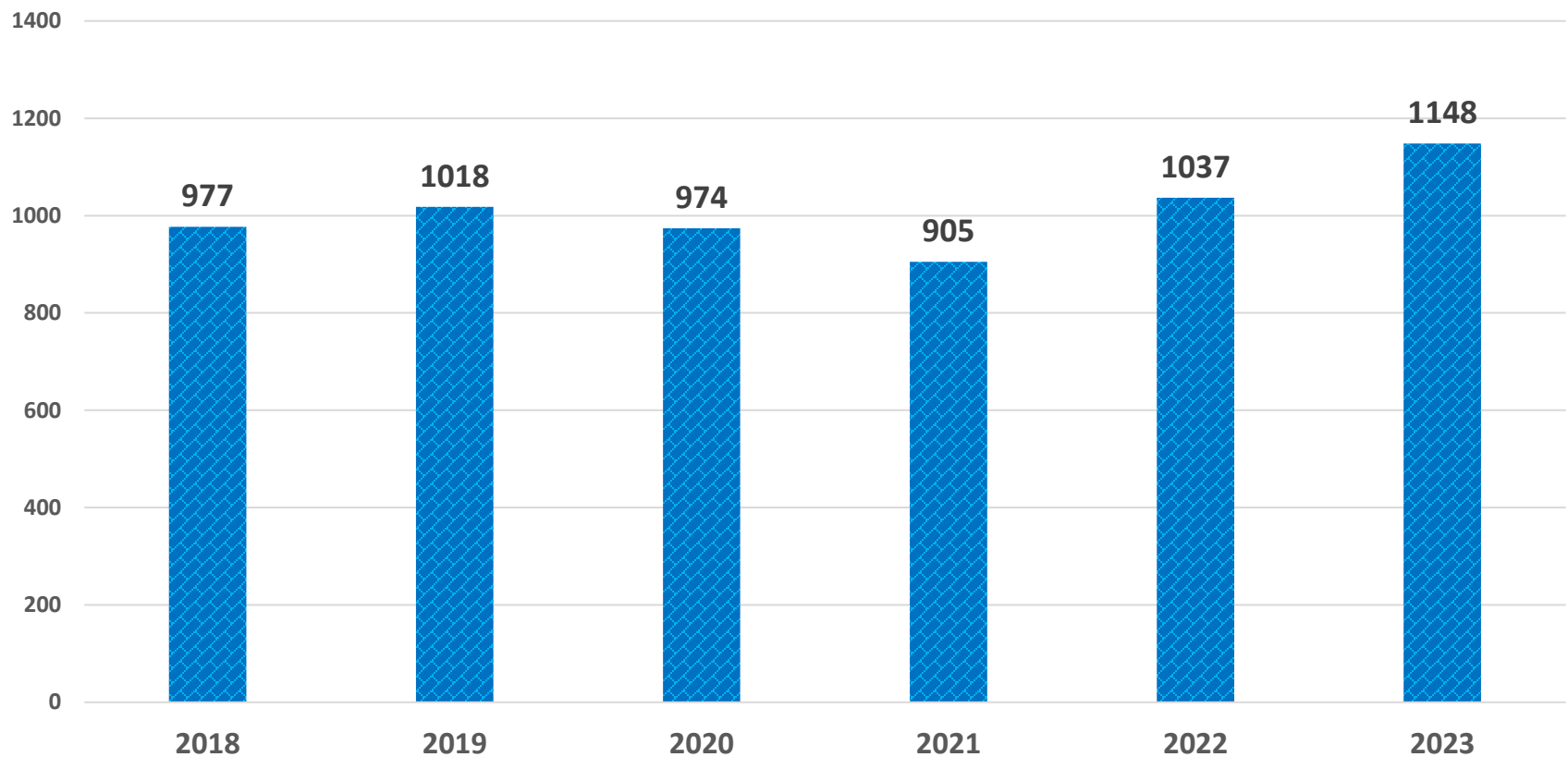
- Amherst Fire Rescue Apparatus:
- Three Type I Ambulances (2011, 2016, 2022)
- One Ford Explorer Paramedic SUV (2017)
- Four Class A Pumpers (1991, 2003, 2015, 2022)
- One Tower Ladder (1997)
- One Tanker (3000 gal), (2007)
- One Forestry Tanker (2002)
- One Forestry Pick-Up (four-wheel drive) (2006)
- One Pick-Up (command)(four-wheel drive) (2008)
- One Large SUV (command) (four-wheel drive)(2020)





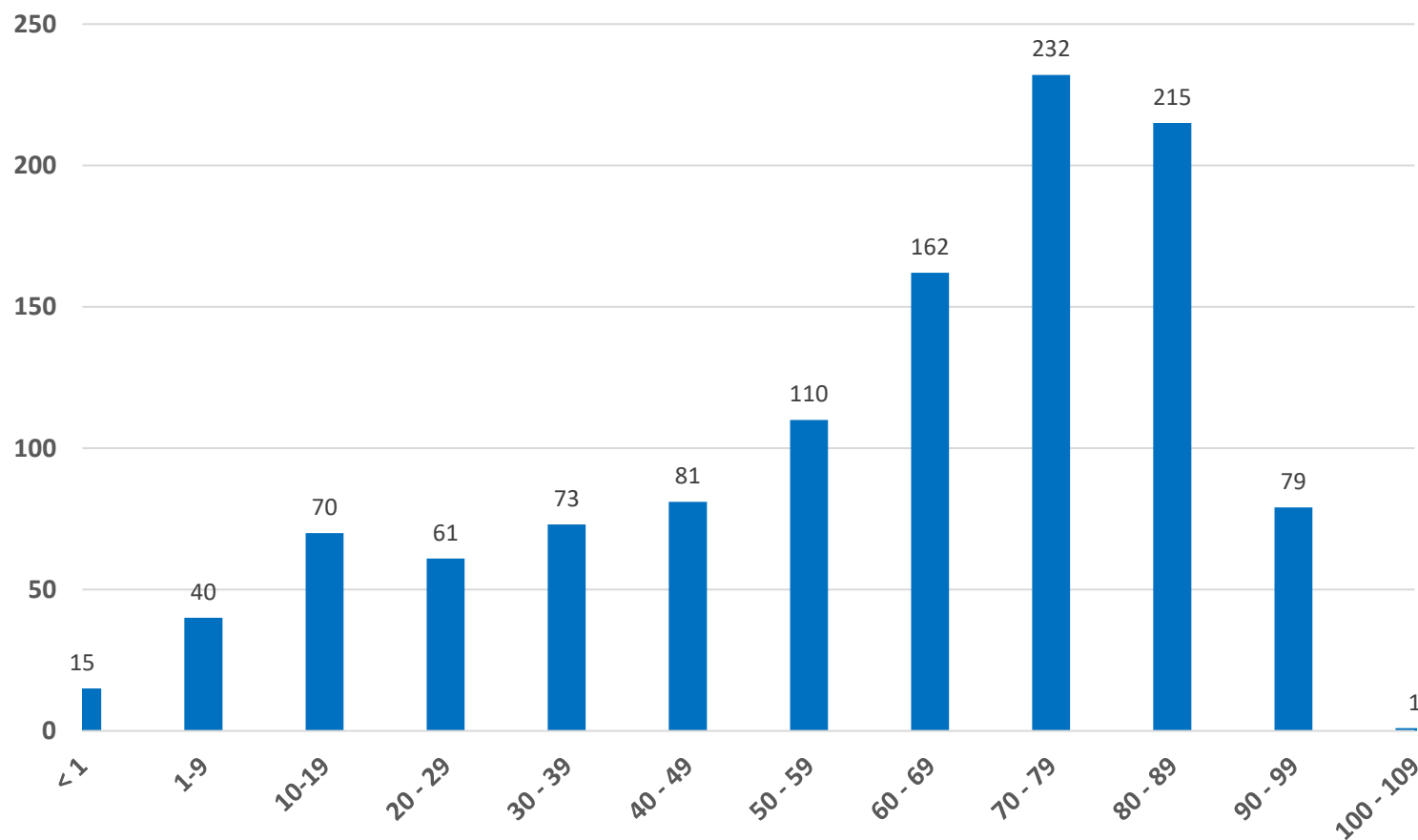
Historical Rescue Facts

EMS Calls

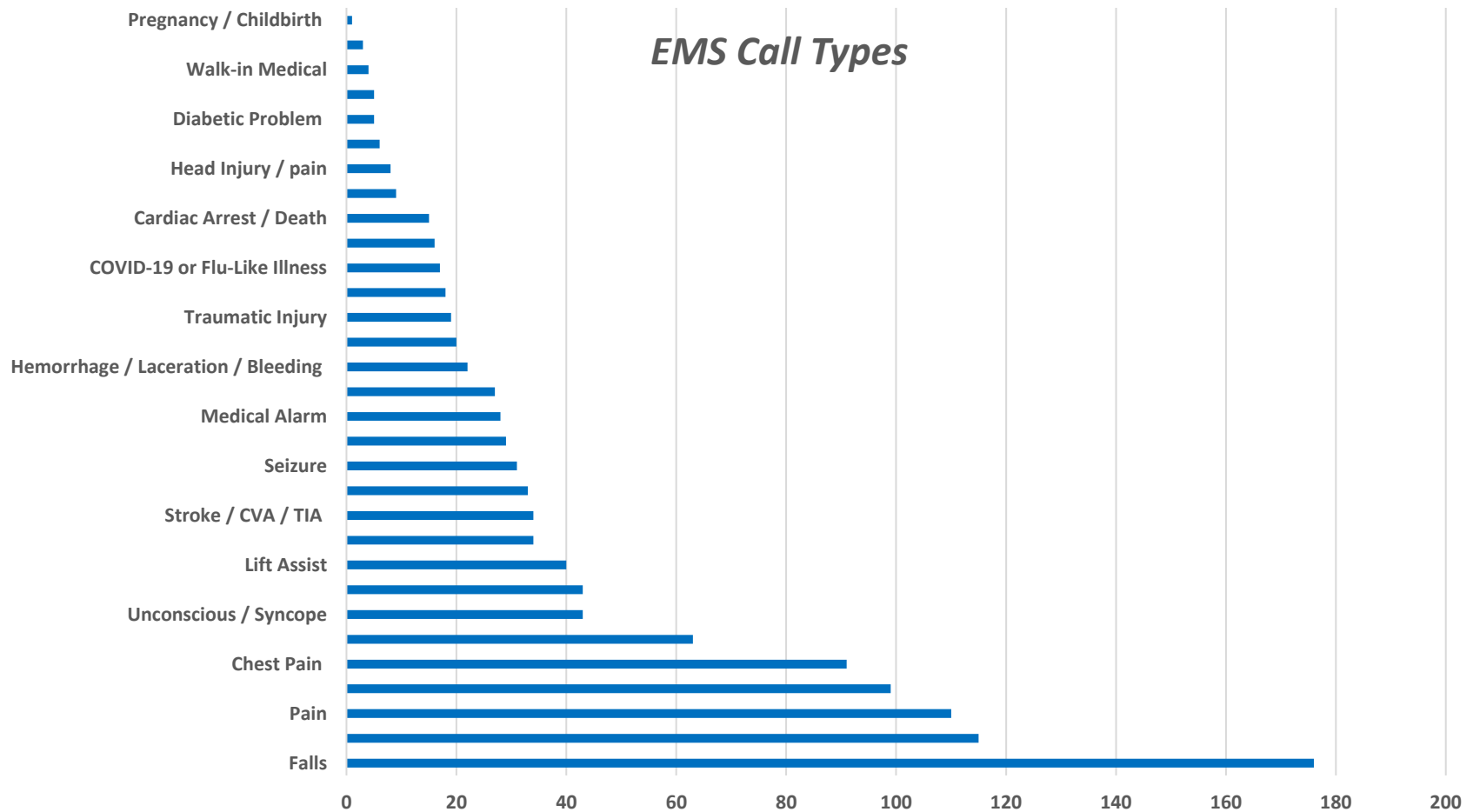


Historical Rescue Facts (cont.)

EMS Calls by Age



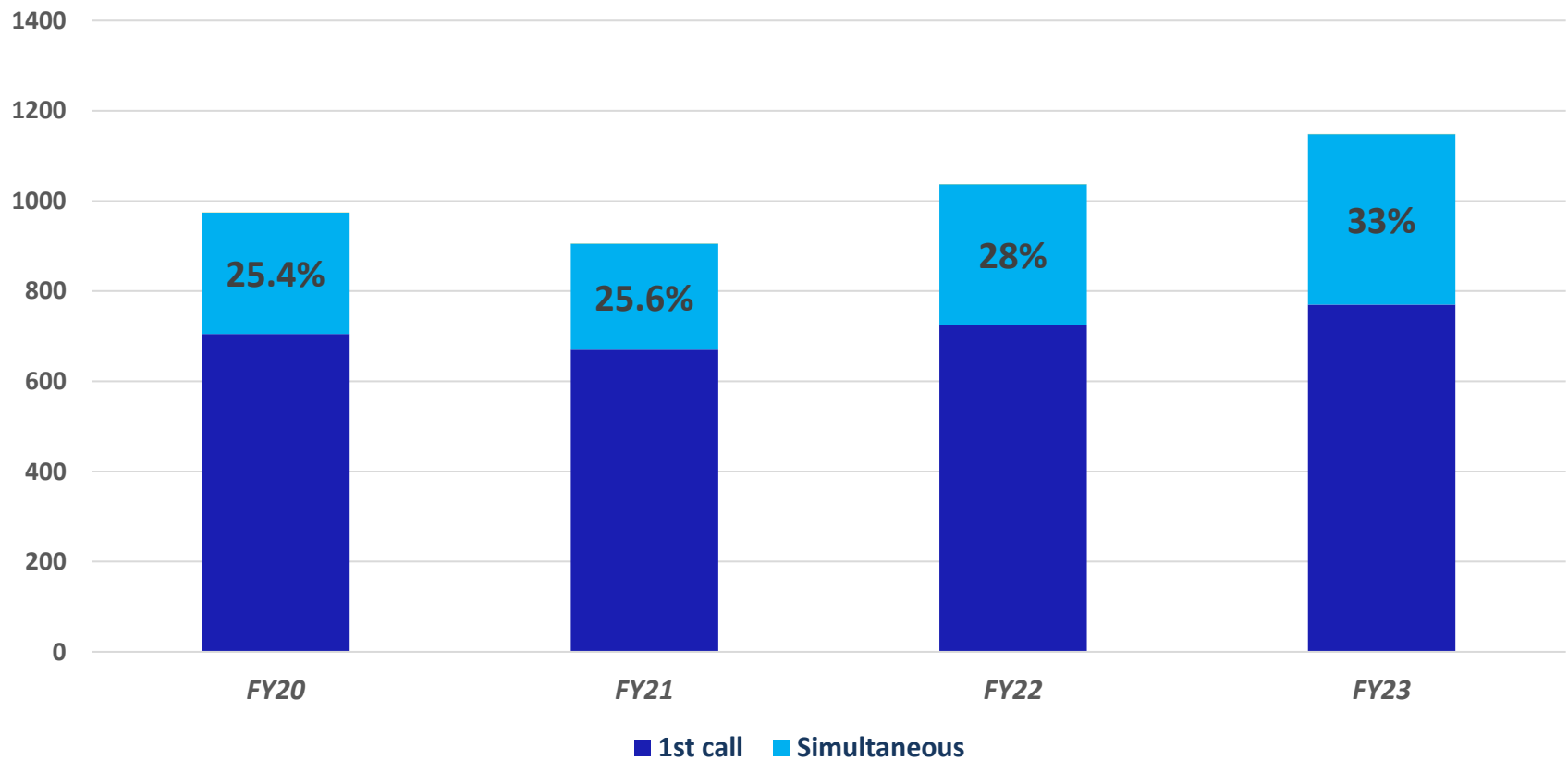
Historical Rescue Facts (cont.)





Historical Rescue Facts

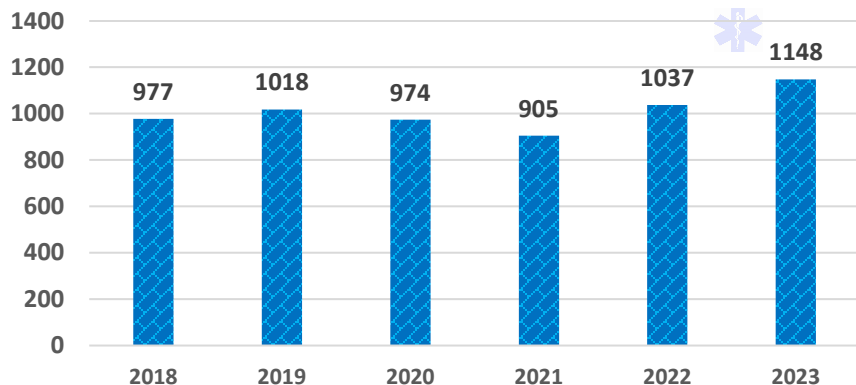
Simultaneous Calls



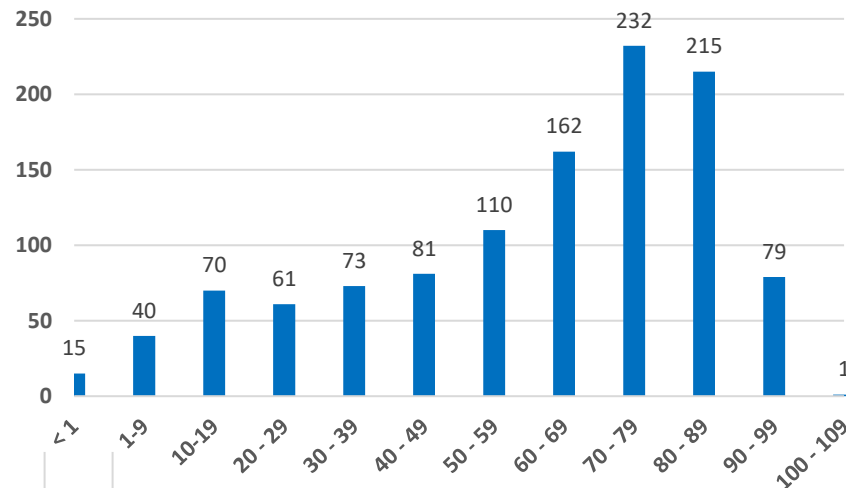


Historical Dashboard

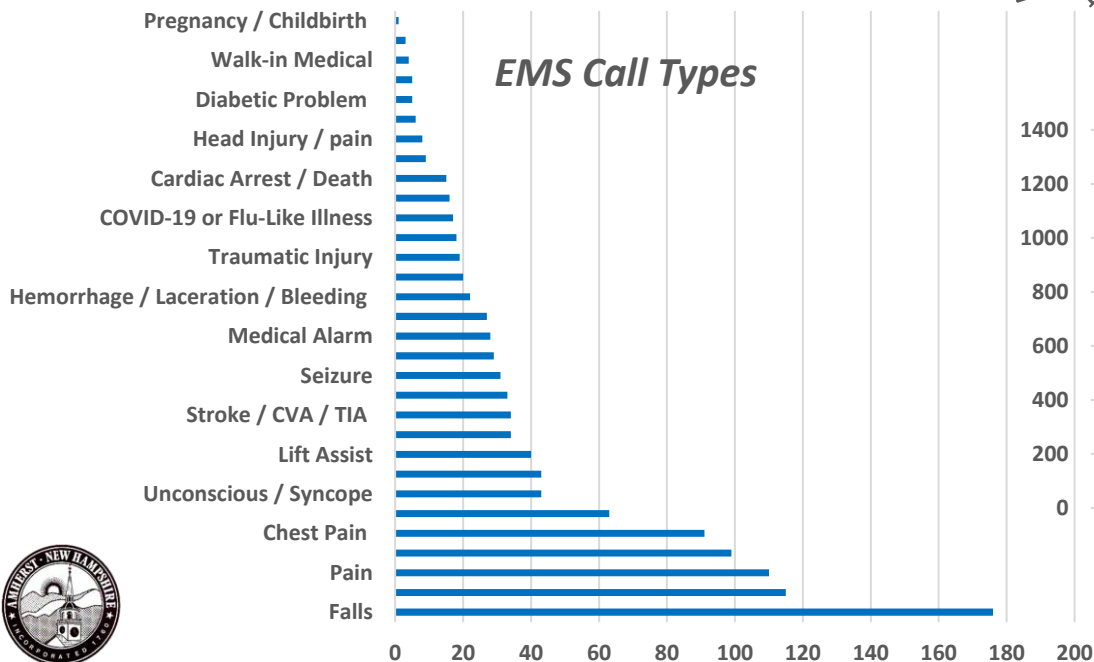
EMS Calls



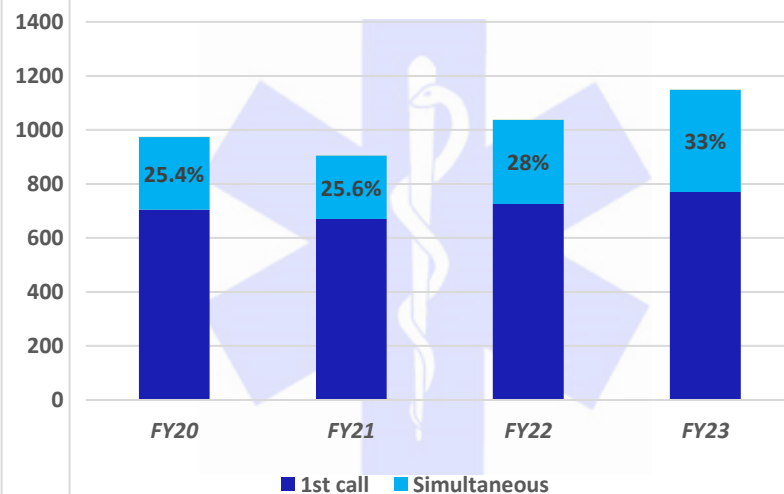
EMS Calls by Age



EMS Call Types



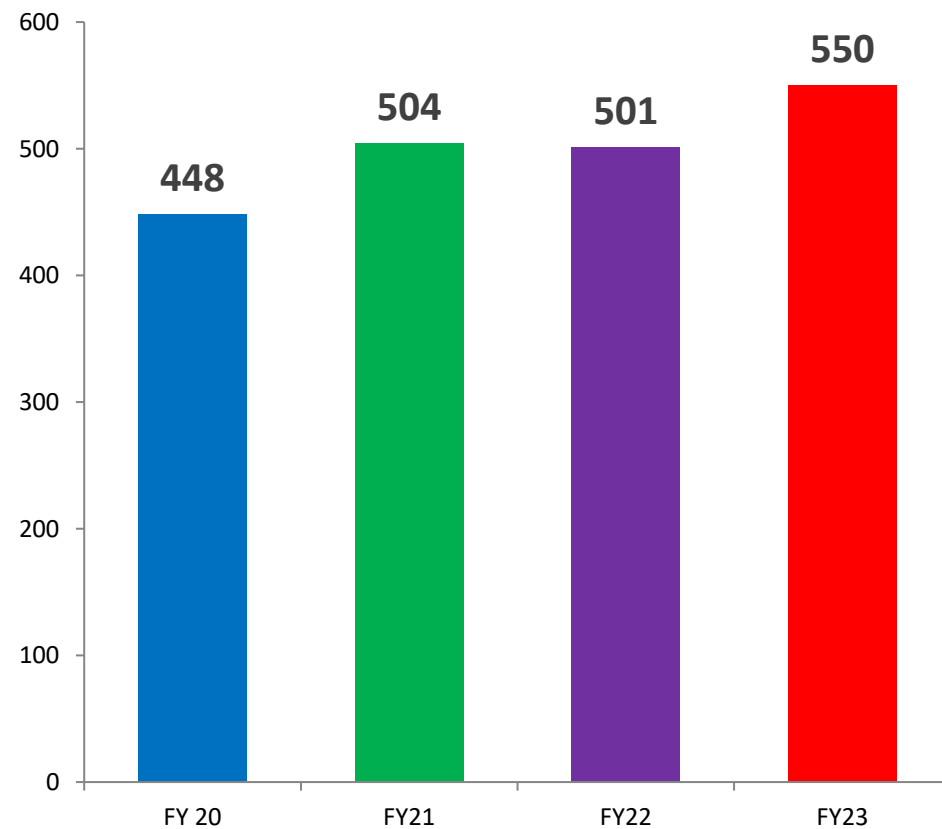
Simultaneous Calls



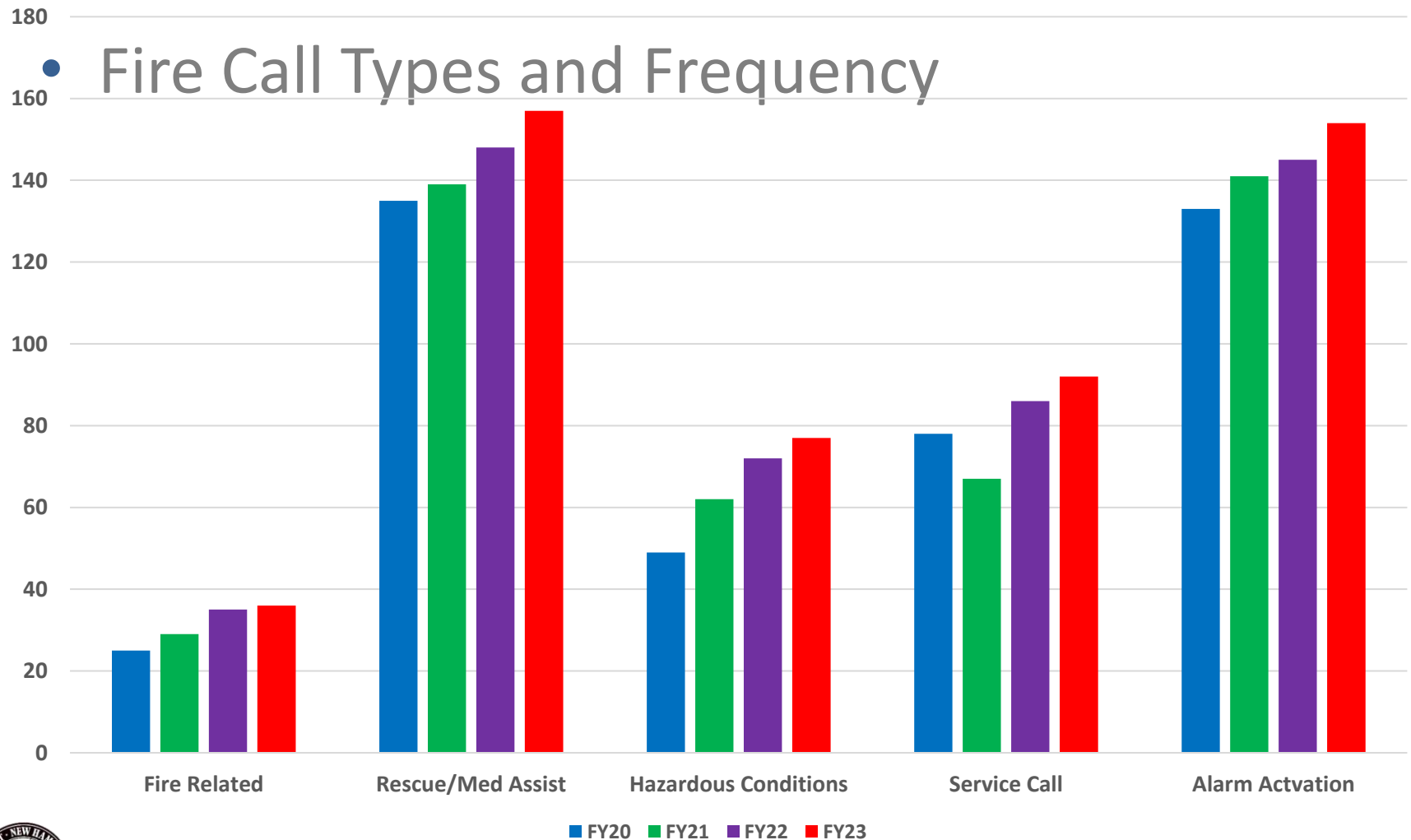


Historical Fire facts

- Fire Calls



Historical Fire Facts (cont.)



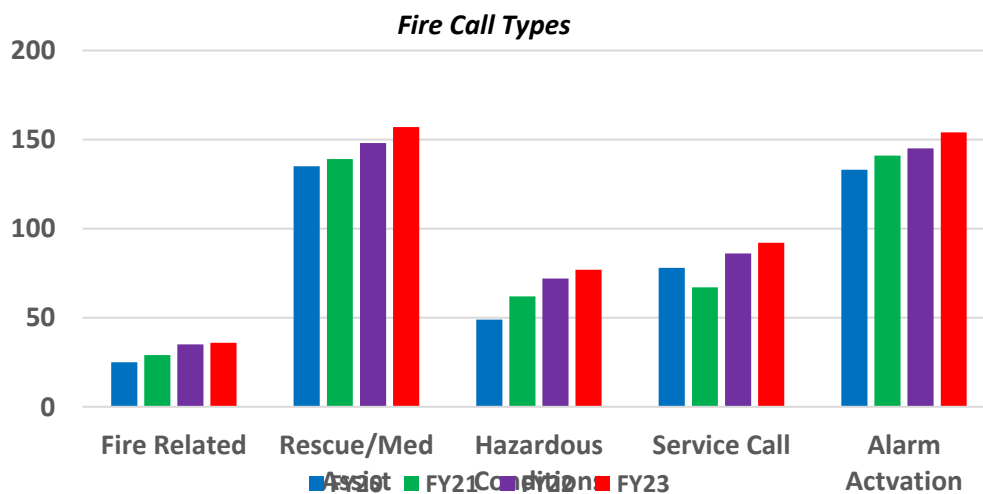
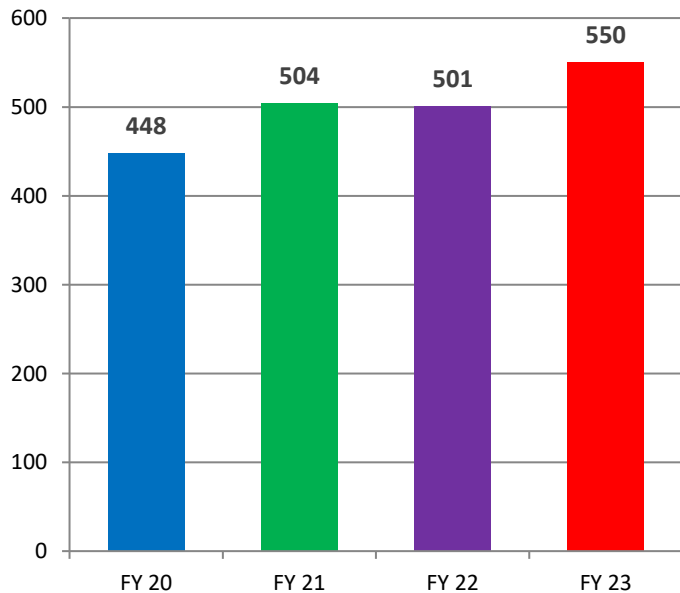


Historical Fire Facts (cont.)





Historical Dashboard





Fire Prevention

☐ Code Enforcement:

- ❖ Building Plan review
- ❖ Site Plan review
- ❖ Inspections
- ❖ Project Consultation
- ❖ Technical Advisory
- ❖ Interagency facilitation

☐ Educating the community:

- ❖ Contact during call responses
- ❖ Inspections
- ❖ Fire Drills
- ❖ Fire/Safety interactive lessons in schools
- ❖ Public safety discussions
- ❖ Station tours





SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- ❖ Diverse work force with well-rounded skills and backgrounds.
- ❖ Excellent working relationship with neighboring communities.
- ❖ Provide service for an extremely low cost.
- ❖ Fire prevention.

Weaknesses

- ❖ Average age of our apparatus.
- ❖ Change in our response time due to current fire protection strategy.
- ❖ On the low end of staffing for size of town, call volume, hazard load.
- ❖ Resource limitations based on staffing.





Opportunities

- ❖ Grant funding
 - Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER).
 - Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG).
- ❖ Aggressive pursuit of missed cost recovery opportunities.
- ❖ Improved productivity through appropriate staffing.

Threats

- ❖ Failing to provide an adequate response.
- ❖ Injury or loss of a firefighter due to inadequate staffing or equipment failure.
- ❖ Catastrophic failures caused by inaction.
- ❖ Loss of public trust.





Goals & Initiatives

- Goal #1

- ❖ Hard look at department resource limitations

- Current staffing model is insufficient for operational needs.

- ❖ Per diem staffing limitations.

- Pay
 - Limited last-minute availability.

- ❖ Call member response difficulties.

- Limited availability.
 - Inadequate response to varying call/run times.

- ❖ Inadequate administrative assistance.

- Executive assistant to the department





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

□ Initiatives for goal #1

❖ Encourage time & credential pay scale.

- Competitive with market.
- Rewards longevity in field and AFR.
- Attracts higher caliber professionals.
- Recommendation of 4th provider (FF/EMT) day & night.
 - Greater guarantee of 2 ambulances being staffed.
 - Earlier fire apparatus response with 2 FF/EMT's in-house.
 - Increased call volume increases overlap of calls.
 - Less dependence on administration, improving availability to manage/oversee serious and/or multiple incidents.
 - Assistance with Fire Prevention inspections, improved safety from additional commercial site "pre-plans".





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

❑ Initiatives for goal #1

- ❖ Continue call member recruitment.
- ❖ Additional (4th) provider on duty will contribute to better staffing for incident response.
- ❖ Increase shared use of and move the Community Development (CD) specialist to Amherst Fire Rescue.
 - Increased Fire Prevention efficiency with CD in-house managing calls/scheduling.
 - Payroll, phones, written/electronic communications, etc.
 - Improved focus on specific items / currently competing for attention.





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

□ Goal #2

- ❖ Plug financial holes and pursue cost recovery

□ Initiatives for goal #2

- ❖ Encourage self-funding solutions to for protection shortages.
 - 4th provider daily (FF/EMT) to assist with annual inspections and cross use for emergency calls.
 - ❖ Added safety from touring occupancies annually.
 - Ability to manage correctable hazards prior to emergency response.
 - ❖ Additional public interaction.
 - ❖ Cost recovery opportunity through inspection fees.
 - Adjust the current fees in the Fire Prevention Ordinance.





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

□ Initiatives for goal #2

- ❖ Encourage revision of fire prevention permit fee schedule.
 - Currently, inadequate for cost-efficiency.
 - Cost recovery opportunity.
 - Fire prevention revenue to substantially grow with an adjustment to the fees associated with the Fire Prevention Ordinance.

- ❖ Encourage SAFER grant opportunities for staffing.
 - ❖ Staffing for Adequate Fire & EMS Response.
 - Personnel expenses paid by federal dollars for multiple years.
 - Responsible use of funds to achieve demonstrated coverage need.
 - Ability to evolve budget over multiple years to encompass future costs.





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

❑ Initiatives for goal #2

❖ Encourage creation and use of AFR revolving fund

- Channel for transport revenue to fund CRF
- Alternative to tax-based funding of CRF
 - Discontinue future warrant articles used as funding source.

❖ Encouraging implementation of updated EMS contract with Mont Vernon

- Call percentage assessment determines contract fee.
 - Cost recovery opportunity based on call volume.
- Contract wording to better capture financial needs of today.





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

❑ Initiatives for goal #2

EMS Agreement – Mont Vernon

- ❖ Contract EMS coverage with neighboring community.
- ❖ Resource operational costs recovered based on call volume.
- ❖ Reduce burden on Amherst residents through efficient use of resources (cost sharing).
- ❖ Concept is utilized by many municipalities across state
 - Percentage of call volume determines percentage of department operating budget.





Goals & Initiatives (cont.)

□ Initiatives for Goal #2

EMS Agreement – Mont Vernon

- ❖ 120-140 calls per year.
- ❖ 10-12% of Amherst Fire Rescue call volume (EMS).
- ❖ Consumes any necessary personnel for EMS calls.
 - First (A1) calls – use of daily EMS staffing (3).
 - Additional (A2, A3) calls – use of remaining EMS, Admin, call force.
 - Use of all AFR transport vehicles in honoring commitment.
- ❖ \$17,000 current annual payment for Amherst availability.
 - \$46.57 per day.
 - Extremely disproportionate to cost & consumption of resources.



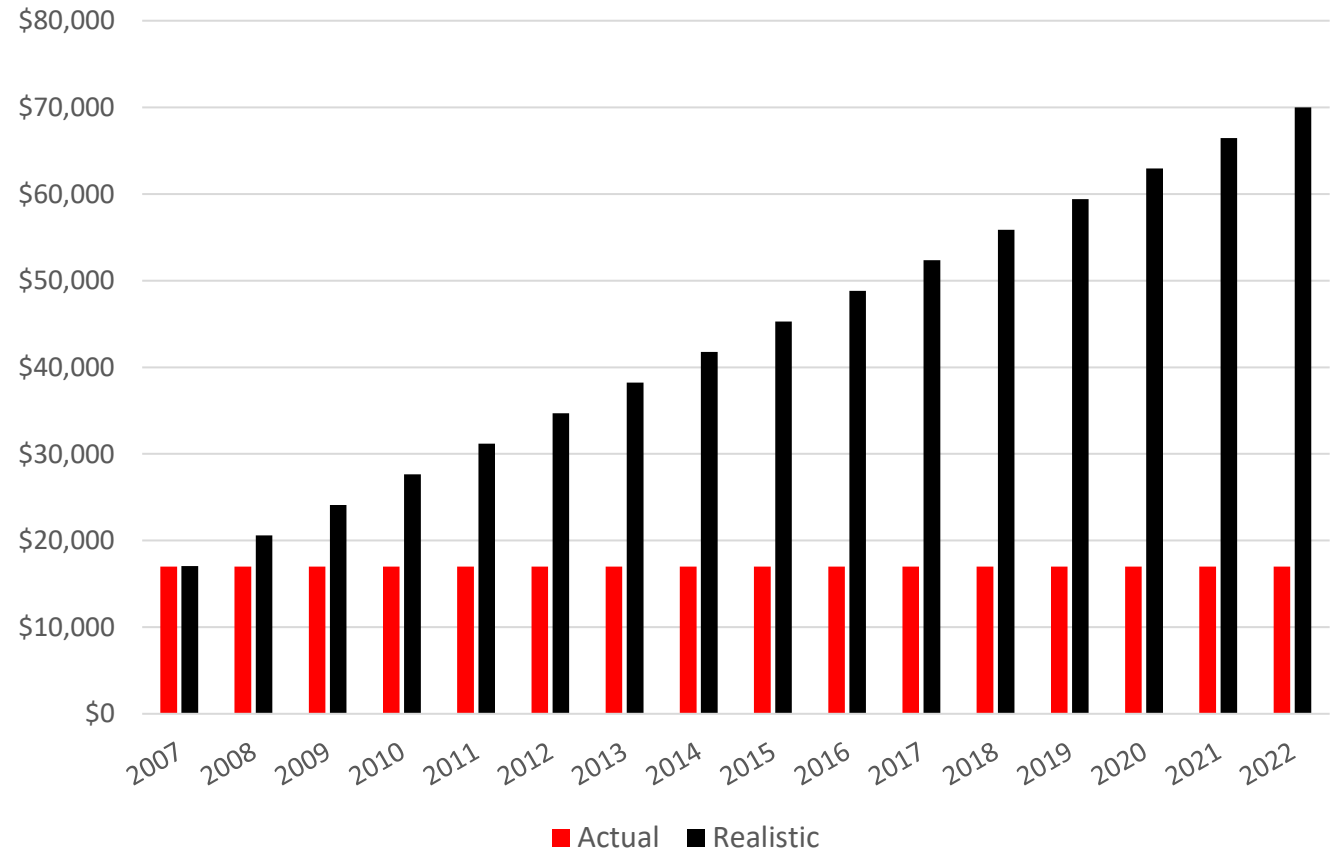


Intermunicipal Agreement

- Amherst/Mont Vernon

Actual
Revenue
compared
to
Realistic
or
Appropriate
Assesment

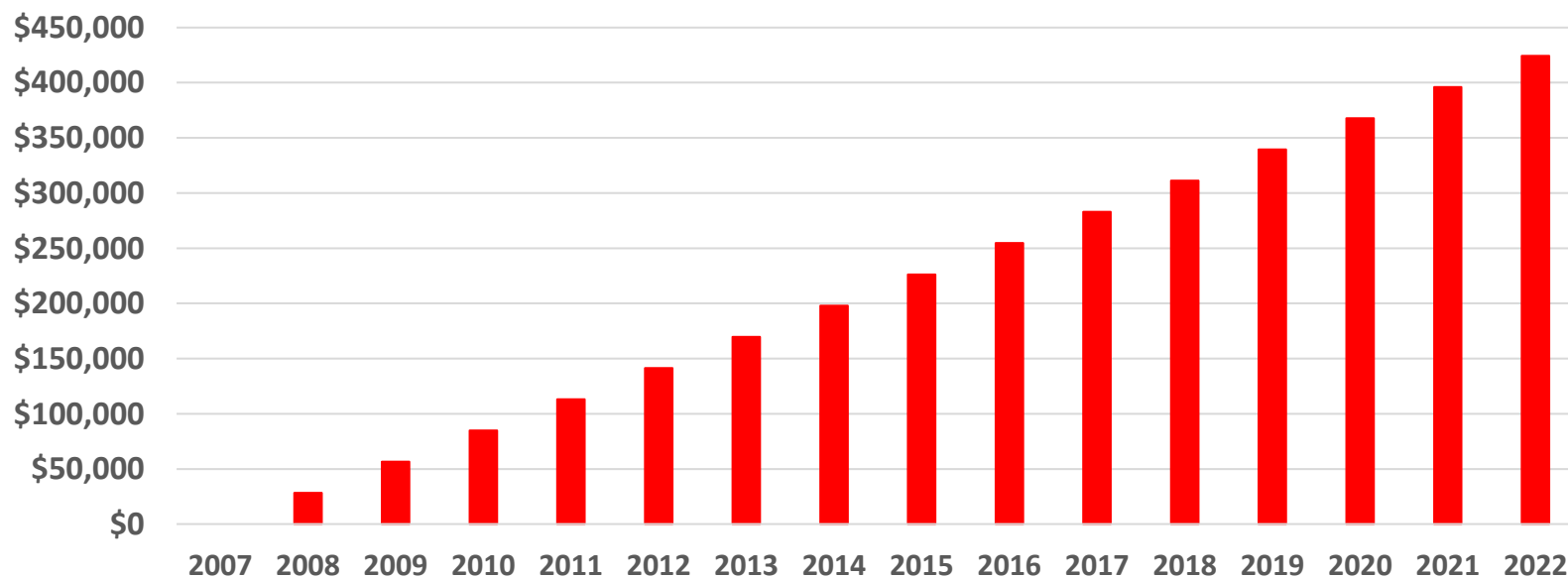
Actual vs Realistic



Intermunicipal Agreement (cont.)

- Amherst / Mont Vernon

Cumulative Revenue Potential



Minimum cost of missed opportunity with contract updates.





Intermunicipal Agreement (cont.)

❖ Recommendation:

- Address inadequate contract fee with Mont Vernon.
- Actively pursue appropriate contract agreement.
 - ❖ Calculation based on call percentage as directly linked to AFR operational cost percentage.
 - ❖ **\$70,000** annual contract fee, evaluated every 3 years.
 - Significant savings to Mont Vernon over a population-based contract (2,793 or 19.5% of total population served).
 - Consistency with statewide trends.
 - Appropriate fee for operational readiness.





□ Goal #3

- ❖ Decrease fleet vulnerability.

- ❖ Emergency vehicles surpassing useful life increase risk.

□ Initiatives for goal #3

- ❖ Adhere to industry recommendations on capital replacement.

- ❖ Adapt to lengthened vehicle build times with planning and approval processes that deliver vehicles in scheduled timeline.

- ❖ Avoidable delays increase risk of critical breakdowns.

- Vehicle cost increases are higher than returns on savings/investments, making purchase delays more costly.



Goals & Initiatives (cont.)



Goals & Initiatives

Vehicle/Equipment	Type	Model	Useful	Replacement	Rep Year	Capital Reserve	Capital Reserve
		Year	Life	Cost	(FY)	Additions	Balance
							\$734,613
					2024	\$257,000	\$991,613
					2025	\$297,000	\$1,288,613
Forestry 2	Pickup	2006	15	\$70,000	2026	\$297,000	\$1,515,613
Lucas Device	Auto CPR	2016	10	\$42,000	2026		\$1,473,613
Car 4	Paramedic SUV	2016	10	\$60,000	2026		\$1,413,613
Car 3	Passenger Car	2016	10	\$0	2026		\$1,413,613
Tower 1	Tower/Ladder	1997	30	\$0	2027	\$297,000	\$1,710,613
Ambulance 1	Ambulance	2016	12	\$375,000	2027		\$1,335,613
Engine 3	Class A Pump	2003	20	\$800,000	2028	\$297,000	\$832,613
*Eng 2 Refurbish	Class A Pump	2015	20	\$50,000	*2028		\$782,613
Car 1	SUV/Command	2019	12	\$70,000	2029	\$297,000	\$1,009,613
Washer Extractor	Gear Washer	2003	25	\$12,000	2029		\$997,613
Cardiac Monitors	Defibrillators	2019	10	\$42,000	2029		\$955,613
SCBA Fill Station	Air Compressor	2004	25	\$14,000	2029		\$941,613
					2030	\$297,000	\$1,238,613
Ambulance 2	Ambulance	2016	12	\$375,000	2031	\$297,000	\$1,160,613
Dryer	Gear Dryer	2019	10	\$10,085	2032	\$297,000	\$1,447,528
Tanker 1	Tanker	2007	25	\$701,646	2033	\$297,000	\$1,042,882
Car 2	SUV/Command	2023	12	\$70,165	2033	\$297,000	\$1,269,717
*Eng 1 Refurbish	Class A Pump	2021	20	\$50,000	*2033		\$1,219,717





AFR Strategic Plan

Discussion

