

**SALT LAKE CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**  
**BUDGET ANALYSIS – FISCAL YEAR 2003-04**

**DATE:** May 9, 2003

**BUDGET FOR:** **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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**cc:** Rocky Fluhart, David Nimkin, Chuck Querry, John Vuyk, Steve Fawcett, Laurie Dillon, DJ Baxter

The proposed fiscal year 2003-2004 budget for the Fire Department is \$27,528,366. This represents an increase of \$1,157,820, or 4.39% over fiscal year 2002-2003. Total staffing for the department is proposed to decrease by 2.50 FTE over the adopted fiscal year 2002-2003 budget.

<b>FIRE DEPARTMENT PROPOSED BUDGETS</b>				
	Adopted 2002-2003	Proposed 2003-2004	Difference	Percent Change
Administration (including financial management, payroll, purchasing, inventory, research, human resource management, facility maintenance)	\$1,598,077	\$1,700,650	\$102,573	6.42%
Operations (fire companies)	20,058,529	21,080,612	\$1,022,083	5.10%
Special Operations (including hazardous material incidents, water rescues, high-rise rescues, trench rescues)	109,837	189,528	\$79,691	72.55%
Communications (dispatch, equipment maintenance & repair, technical support, records management)	1,549,513	1,542,746	(\$6,767)	(0.44%)
Training (including managing fleet acquisitions, maintenance and supplies activities)	1,439,290	1,362,400	(\$76,890)	(5.34%)
Fire Prevention (business inspections, hazardous materials permits, new construction, special events, community training, public education)	1,054,842	1,044,690	(\$10,152)	(0.96%)
Medical (including medical training, certification, quality assurance)	560,458	607,740	\$47,282	8.44%
Total	<b>\$26,370,546</b>	<b>\$27,528,366</b>	\$1,157,820	4.39%

**POTENTIAL MATTERS AT ISSUE**

Some of the major changes reflected in the proposed budgets include:

- Elimination of positions – The Fire Department is recommending the elimination of the Tech Support Services Manager in the Communications Division. (This position was eliminated during fiscal year 2002-2003 to address revenue shortfalls) The department is also recommending that 1.50 FTE Fire Prevention Specialist positions be eliminated from the Fire Prevention/Community Education Division. This will result in the layoff of the fire education specialist position.
- Attrition – The Fire Department is showing attrition expense increases of \$642,236. The Administration is reviewing this amount and will be providing additional information during the briefing. There is a possibility that the City's accounting/staffing software incorrectly duplicated salary information.
- Pension/Insurance rate changes – The Fire Department is recommending increase to the pension rate and insurance rate expenditure categories due to higher costs to the City. Health insurance is projected to increase by 2%. Pension expenses are expected to increase 8.7% and 10.7%, firefighter pension expenses will remain at the same rate.
- 4 Handed Crews – The Fire Department is recommending the continuation of the 4 handed crew staffing arrangement. The department indicates that on 99% of the City there are 4 handed staffing crews. The Council may wish to consider the effectiveness of the 4 handed crew concept and confirm that the proposed staffing will be sufficient to maintain 4 handed crews on all of the apparatus. The Council may also wish to request information on the extent to which the Fire Department needed to rely on overtime to achieve the 4 handed status, and information on whether there are increased administrative costs with managing the program.
- Salary Increases – The Fire Department is recommending an increase of \$667,623 in salary expenses. This increase is approximately half of the department budget increase. The Council may wish to review the overtime expenses of the department in relation to the 4 handed crew concept and the proposed salary increases. The proposed personal service cost increase assumes a 3% increase in base salaries plus merit increases for employees covered by union contracts.

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*Additional Information*

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**FIVE-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN** (Goals and measurable results)

The Fire Department prepared a five-year business plan in fiscal year 2000-01 to help guide the budgeting process and provide a means for management to better evaluate overall Department performance. The business plan identifies goals and objectives of the Fire Department. The plan was updated for fiscal year 2003-2004 to include department targets through fiscal year 2008-2009. In order to assist the Council in evaluating progress, Council staff summarized the goals and noted the results or steps taken by the Department during the fiscal year 2002-2003.

1. Goal/Objective: Maintain an average time from dispatch to arrival on life-threatening emergencies of less than or equal to 5 minutes.

Results/steps taken: The Department has continued exceed this standard by maintaining an average response time of less than *four* minutes for each month in Fiscal Year 2003. With the proposed budget the department should be able to maintain a response time of less than five minutes.

2. Goal/Objective: Dispatch center will conduct quality assurance reviews and assign appropriate responders with 95% or higher compliance with the guidelines of the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatchers.

Results/steps taken: The Department has completed the quality assurance reviews for the first three quarters of Fiscal Year 2003 and has maintained a standard higher than 95% compliance with the medical dispatch priorities. The NAEMD has recently instituted a standard for fire calls which the Salt Lake City fire dispatch center has adopted. The department has begun quality assurance reviews for all fire calls and will strive to reach 95% compliance with those standards also. Because this is a new standard it will take time to adjust and bring our dispatchers up to the 95% level. For 2003 the dispatchers have reached 89.7% for January, 94.4% for February and 92.9% for March.

3. Goal/Objective: Fire Prevention Bureau inspectors will complete 6500 fire inspections annually.

Results/steps taken: The department has been unable to reach the total number of inspection for this Fiscal Year because of the demands of the Hazardous Material Permit licensing. The department is working to reach the goal and has assigned personnel unable to perform combat duty to assist the inspectors in the Fire Prevention Bureau to reach the goal.

4. Goal/Objective: Fire companies will complete 1,800 fire inspections/building preplans annually.

Results/steps taken: Fire companies have far exceeded the standard and have completed more than 4,000 inspections/building preplans for Fiscal Year 2003.

The Department has made an effort to utilize the fire companies in inspections to ensure they are ready to for any possible emergency.

5. Goal/Objective: Total monthly training time per emergency responder will average 20 hours or more.

Results/steps taken: The department has averaged 21.8 hours of training per month per emergency responder. The department is taking steps to ensure that it will exceed 20 hours of training per firefighter so that they will be prepared to handle an emergency.

6. Goal/Objective: The number of successful EMT and Paramedic re-certifications will exceed the prior year.

Results/steps taken: Each paramedic and EMT has recertified in their respective standard. Also each new firefighter recruit has been able to reach at least the standard of EMT. The department has had four firefighters complete paramedic training this fiscal year and has hired four fighters with paramedic training.

7. Goal/Objective: Improve fire injury rate in comparison to benchmark cities.

Results/steps taken: The Department has not completed a study of its fire injury rate at this time. When the study is completed the information will be forwarded to the council

## **LEGISLATIVE INTENT STATEMENTS**

The Council issued the following legislative intent statement in June 2002 that relates to the Fire Department.

**Community Education in the Fire Department** - It is the intent of the City Council that the Administration explores the feasibility of training non-sworn civilian staff or volunteers to perform community education services to Salt Lake City schools.

Results/Steps Taken For fiscal year 2002-2003 the Department has one non-sworn individual who is responsible for teaching fire safety within the schools; this position will be eliminated in fiscal year 2003-2004. The Department also employed a retired firefighter on a per class basis to teach other classes, but funding for this has been eliminated. The Department will continue to look for more cost effective ways to provide community education to the citizens of Salt Lake City. The Department is pursuing the option of having on-duty firefighters perform public education to the schools to fill the need created in fiscal year 2003-2004.

**Overtime within the Fire Department** - It is the intent of the City Council that the Fire Department continues to take measures to reduce the reliance on overtime and submit quarterly reports to the Council outlining total amount spent for constant staffing at a straight-time rate and amount spent at an overtime rate.

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Results/Steps Taken: The Department has implemented full staffing using a combination of straight-time pay and overtime pay. During fiscal year 2002-2003 the Department has maintained full staffing on 99.1% of all apparatus while approximately 85% of the Department's overtime has been at the straight-time rate.

*During the briefing on the proposed budget, the Council may wish to identify legislative intents relating to the Fire Department.*

*During the briefing, the Council may wish to identify potential programs or functions to be added to the Council's list for future audits.*