



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the General Committee**

From: **Chris Snetsinger, Fire Chief
Peterborough Fire Services**

Meeting Date: **April 1, 2019**

Subject: **Report CAOFS19-004
Update on the Effectiveness of the 24 Hour Shift at Fire
Services**

Purpose

A report to update Council on the effectiveness of the 24 hour shift for suppression personnel at Fire Services.

Recommendation

That Council approves the recommendation outlined in Report CAOFS19-004 dated April 1, 2019 of the Fire Chief as follows:

That the update on the effectiveness of the 24 hour shift for suppression personnel at Fire Services be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

Savings, in the form of reduced call backs, have occurred as a result of the 24 hour shift becoming permanent for suppression.

Background

This report responds to the motion that Council approved at their meeting on January 28, 2019:

- That staff provide an update report on the effectiveness of the 24 hour shifts at Fire Services.

The Peterborough Professional Fire Fighters Association (PPFFA) has been working closely with the City over the past few years to improve working relationships.

Report CPHR16-005, PPFFA Local 169 Collective Bargaining Settlement was approved on December 12, 2016. The report recommended that the Minutes of Settlement between the City of Peterborough and PPFFA Local 169, covering the contract period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019 be approved. Part of that settlement included the permanent implementation of the 24 hour shift for suppression staff.

Overall impact of changing to 24 Hour Shift

There has been a positive impact of moving to the 24 hour shift in that the service is more efficient, suppression staff are able to spend more hours in training and the hours and costs attributed to call backs have decreased.

Effect on the Standards of Operation

Firefighters are required to complete job performance requirements to remain compliant with the Ministry of Labour. This requirement has increased in recent years. The 24 hour shift provides more available training time to complete these job performance requirements than the previous 14-10 hour shifts.

Since moving to 24 hour shifts, the Fire Services operation is more effective and efficient in the following ways:

- There is less time spent on operational checks as it only occurs once in a 24 hour period at the beginning of a shift rather than once in a 10 or 14 hour period. (This includes equipment, apparatus, communications, air monitoring and detector calibration, etc.) The process takes about two hours. As well, about an hour is spent at the end of a shift debriefing and doing checks. This frees up time for other tasks;
- There are more continuous hours available to complete training scenarios, including lectures, drills and certification updates, without interruption;
- Suppression staff has more time to assist fire prevention staff with community safety and compliance;
- Suppression staff has more time to assist the Public Educator, increasing service delivery without an increase in staffing;

- It has created a work culture that promotes attendance and positive morale, decreasing staff absences and improving job performance and service delivery;
- There is more time for debriefing, allowing a firefighter to adjust to the stresses involved with coping with trauma, reducing overtime costs in relation to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- There is an increase in the involvement of suppression staff in community programs and activities such as the arson prevention program for children.

Reduced Call Backs

One of the goals of the 24 hour shift was to reduce the number of call backs. Call backs must occur when fire fighters are absent, in order to maintain minimum staffing levels. Call back hours are paid at time and a half.

Chart 1 below is comparing the numbers for 2009 to the average of the trial from 2010 to 2016.

Chart 2 is comparing the numbers for 2009 to the average of the 24 hour shift being permanent in 2017-2018 including the average of the trial from 2010-2016.

Chart 1, 24 Hour Shift Trial 2010-2016

Benchmark	Year Prior to 24 Hr Shift Trial 2009 (Days)	Average During 24 Hr Shift Trial 2010-2016 (Days)	Reduction in Call Backs	Average Cost Savings
Call Backs	1,070	874	-196	\$148,372

Chart 2, Including 24 Hour Shift Trial and 24 Hour Shift Permanent 2010-2018

Benchmark	Year Prior to 24 Hr Shift Trial 2009 (Days)	Average During 24 Hr Shift Permanent 2010-2018 (Days)	Reduction in Call Backs	Average Cost Savings
Call Backs	1,070	791	-279	\$211,203

Since making the 24 hour shift permanent, there has been a further reduction in the number of call backs and the associated costs.

Summary

The change to a 24 hour shift schedule has proven to be beneficial for both employees and the City. There is evidence that the number of call backs has decreased and additional pay has been reduced since the 24 hour shift has been made permanent. Along with increased morale, efficiencies have been realized with increased productivity, increased time to complete training exercises, increased support to Fire Prevention staff and community programs, and more time for debriefing which assists in coping with trauma.

Submitted by,

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