BELLINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT

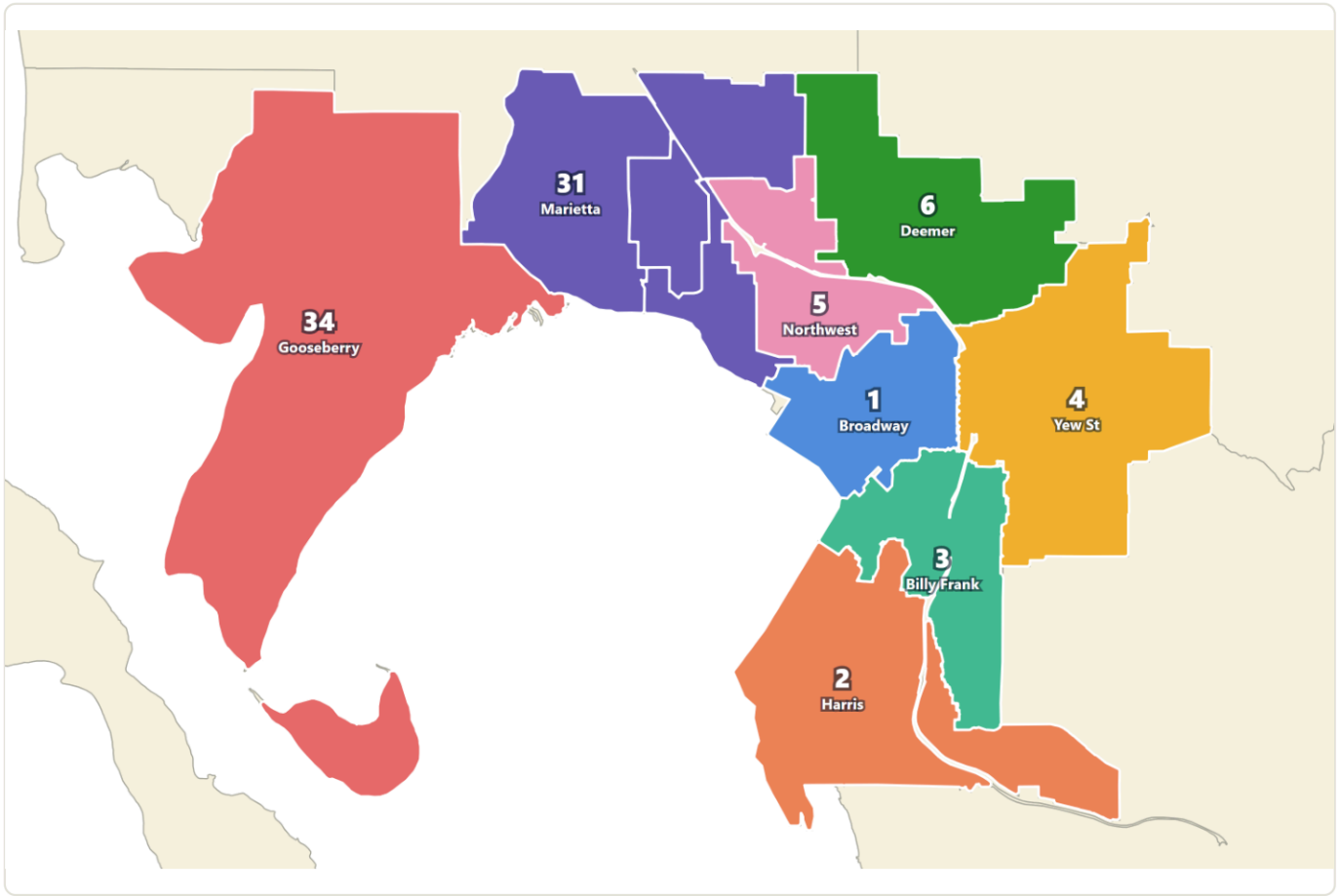
Annual Report 2025

Serving Bellingham, Marietta, and the Lummi Reservation

Prepared with Civic Informer

First Due Coverage Area

The Bellingham Fire Department primary coverage area for engine companies includes Bellingham city limits, Marietta, and the Lummi Reservation. Each area below is a station's first due zone, the territory where that station's units are dispatched first. Paramedic units respond throughout Whatcom County providing advanced life support.



FIRST DUE AREA	2025 CALLS
1 - Broadway	2,613
2 - Harris	2,114
3 - Billy Frank	4,020
4 - Yew Street	3,080
5 - Northwest	2,268
6 - Deemer	3,263
31 - Marietta	697
34 - Gooseberry	848

Call Volume in 2025

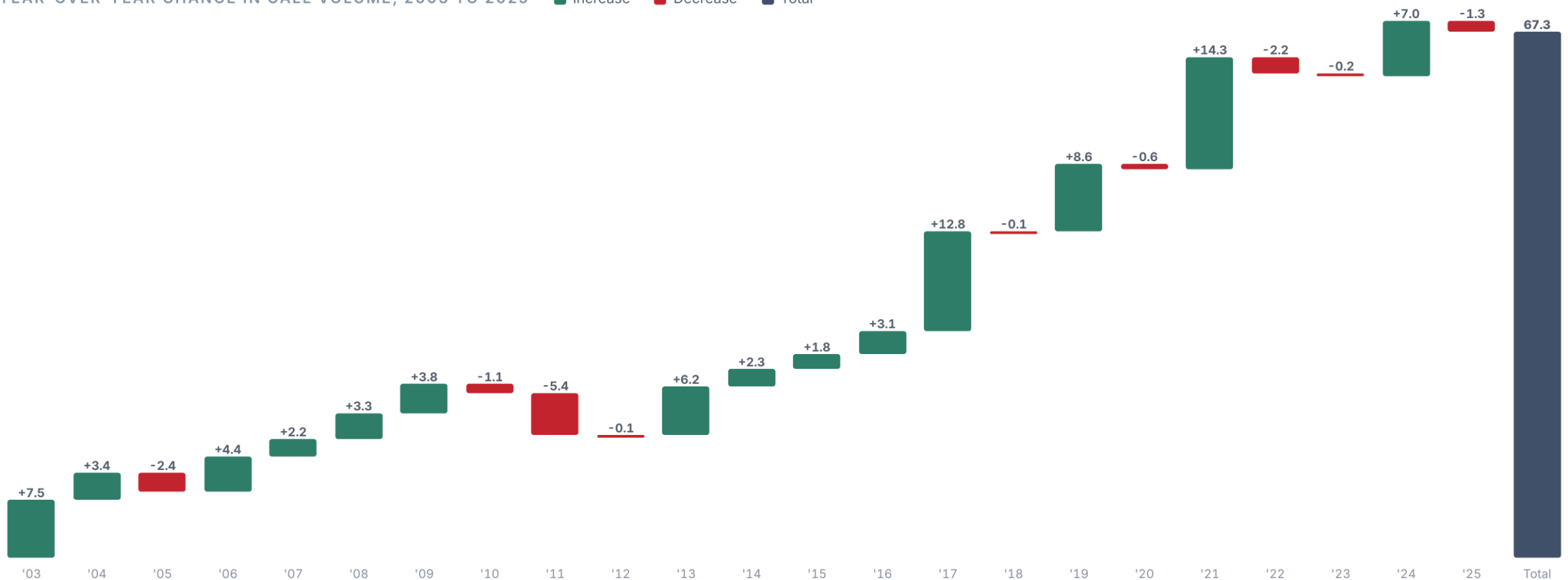
2025 TOTAL CALLS

24,249

CHANGE FROM 2024

▼ 1.3%

YEAR-OVER-YEAR CHANGE IN CALL VOLUME, 2003 TO 2025



The Bellingham Fire Clock

Each total below spread evenly across the year, expressed as the average interval between one call and the next.

EVERY

22 minutes

a 911 call, around the clock

24,249 calls in 2025

EVERY

30 minutes

an EMS dispatch

17,662 dispatches

EVERY

8.3 hours

a Community Paramedic visit

1,053 visits

EVERY

18 hours

a fire

484 fire incidents

EVERY

41 hours

a hazardous-condition incident

214 incidents

EVERY

3.2 days

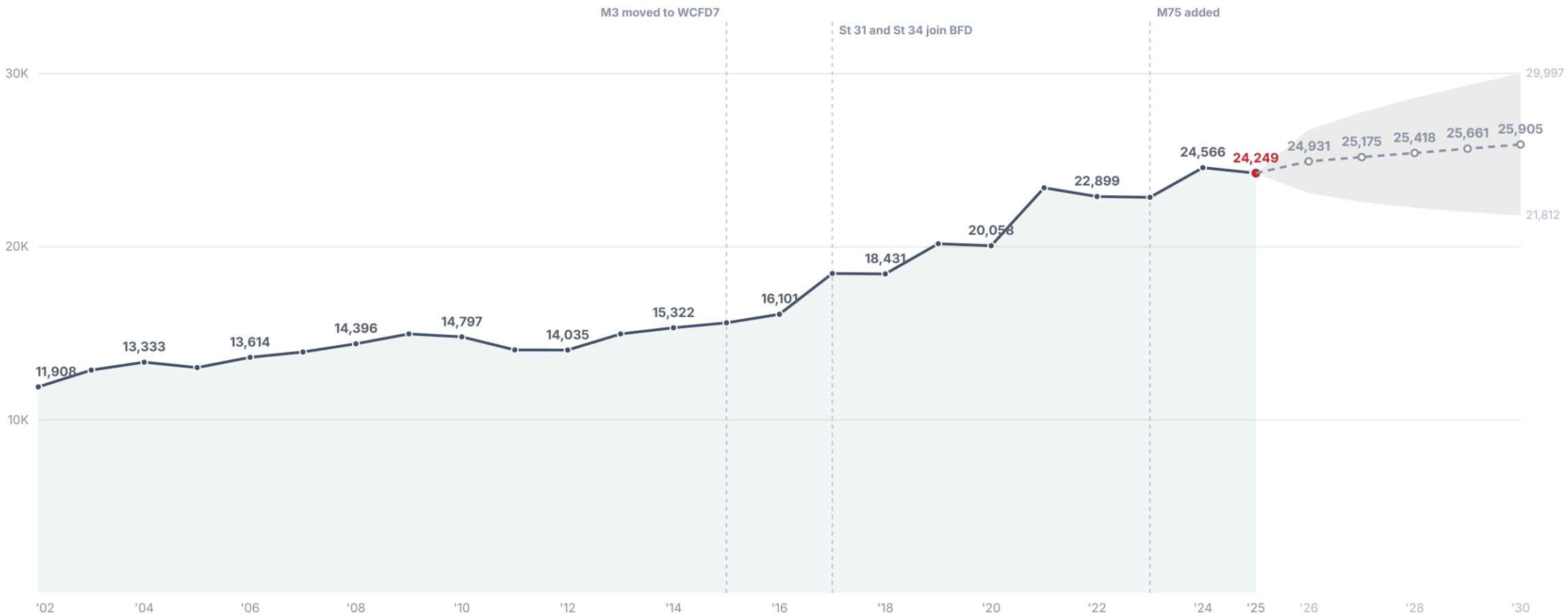
a structure fire in BFD first due areas

114, including confined fires

Call Volume by Year

The graph below represents the dispatches of all types from 2002 through 2025. It includes a forecast for call volume with a 95% confidence interval, fitted by exponential smoothing across the whole series. A projection continues a trend rather than setting a target.

Call Volume by Year with Projection

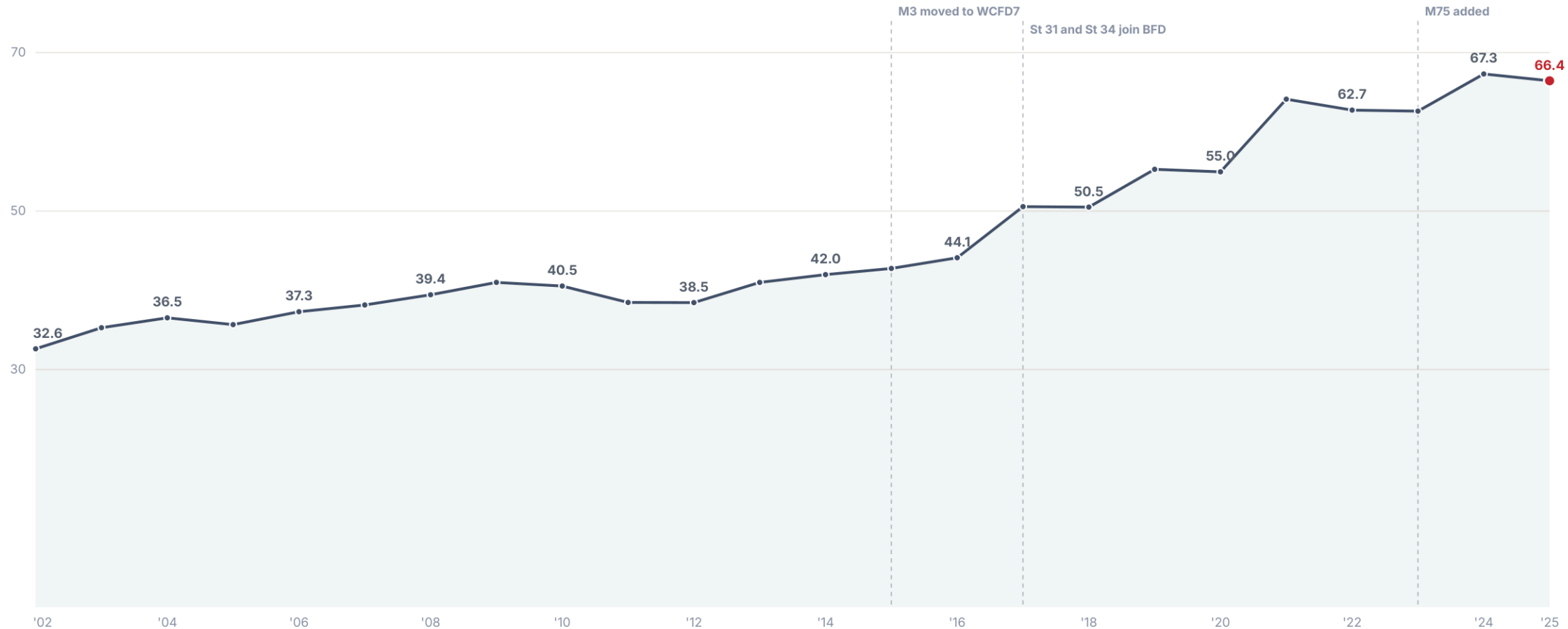


Average Calls Per Day

2025 DAILY AVERAGE

66.4

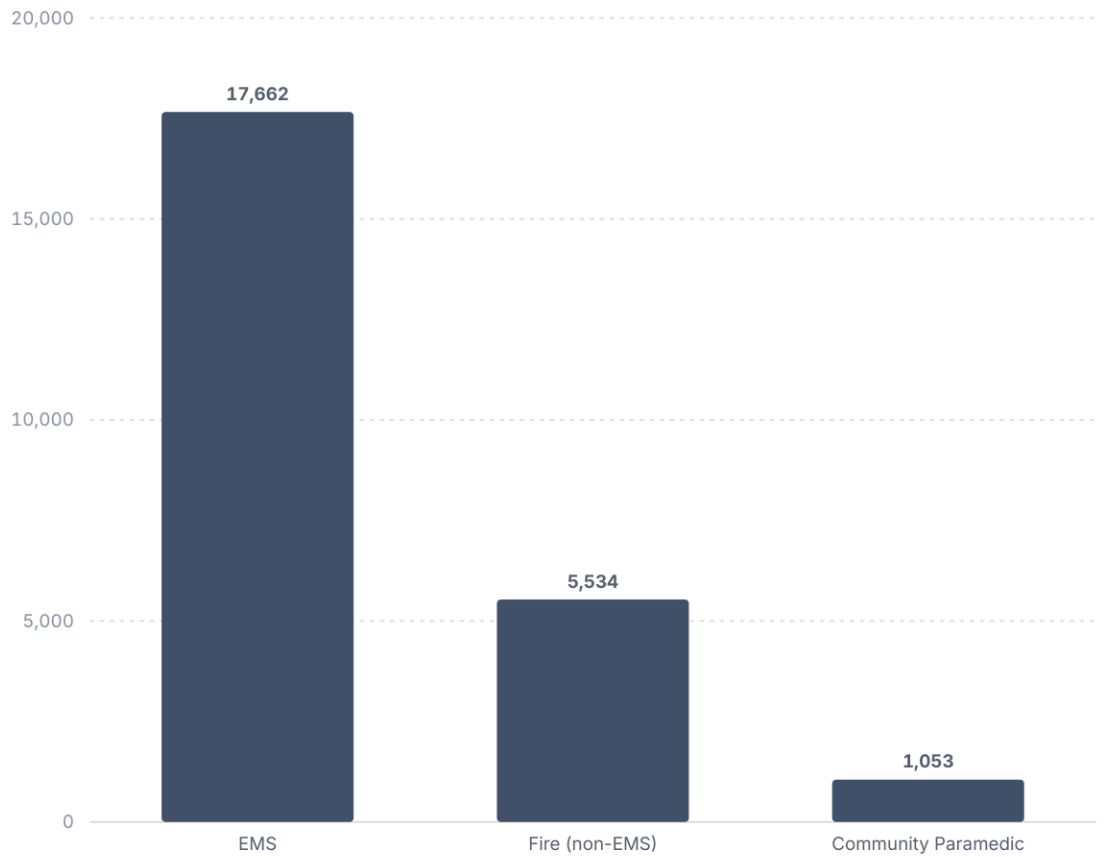
Average Calls Per Day by Year



Calls by Category

Calls are answered at the 911 center and dispatched into three broad categories: EMS, Fire (non-EMS), and Community Paramedic. As a call progresses, the final call type may change.

CALL VOLUME BY DISPATCH CATEGORY

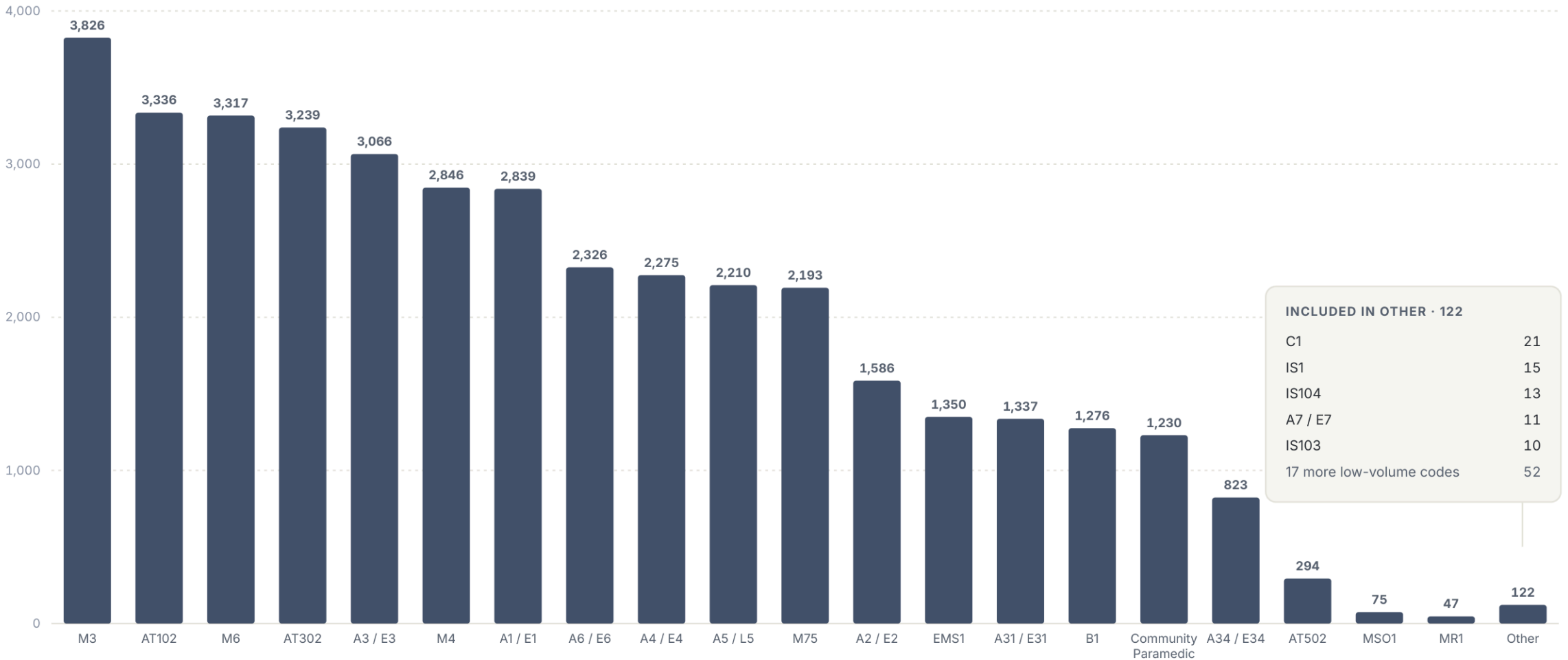


FINAL CALL TYPE (NFIRS SERIES)

CALL TYPE	# OF INCIDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF CALLS
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	18,317	75.54%
Good Intent Call	2,545	10.50%
Community Paramedic	1,056	4.35%
False Alarm & False Call	1,052	4.34%
Service Call	521	2.15%
Fire	484	2.00%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	214	0.88%
Report pending finalization	29	0.12%
Special Incident Type	19	0.08%
Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (No Fire)	10	0.04%
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	2	0.01%

Calls by Apparatus Company

UNIT RESPONSES, CROSS-STAFFED COMPANIES COMBINED



Front-Line Utilization

The previous page counts how often each company was dispatched. This one counts how long those calls held it. Committed time is the total time a company spends assigned to calls, from dispatch to clearing the scene, and utilization is that time as a share of the 8,760 hours in a year. Command and support units respond but are not rated for utilization.

COMPANY	RESPONSES	COMMITTED HOURS	UTILIZATION
AT102	3,336	1,818	20.8%
AT302	3,239	1,630	18.6%
M3	3,826	1,473	16.8%
M6	3,317	1,354	15.5%
M4	2,846	1,289	14.7%
M75	2,193	1,225	14.0%
A3 / E3	3,066	1,000	11.4%
A6 / E6	2,326	962	11.0%
A1 / E1	2,839	885	10.1%
A4 / E4	2,275	741	8.5%
A5 / L5	2,210	740	8.4%
A2 / E2	1,586	606	6.9%
A31 / E31	1,337	525	6.0%
A34 / E34	823	473	5.4%
AT502	294	162	1.8%

COMMITTED HOURS, FRONT LINE

14,883

across the fifteen front-line companies

HIGHEST UTILIZATION

20.8%

AT102, 1,818 committed hours

FRONT-LINE RESPONSES

35,513

unit responses by the fifteen companies

Concurrent Calls

An incident is concurrent when it begins before an earlier incident has cleared. An incident counts as open from the moment its call is received until its last unit clears the scene.

ONE OR MORE ALREADY OPEN

78.4%

of 22,623 measured incidents

TWO OR MORE ALREADY OPEN

48.5%

of 22,623 measured incidents

THREE OR MORE ALREADY OPEN

24.4%

of 22,623 measured incidents

NO MEDIC AVAILABLE

70

times dispatch recorded no medic free to assign

Fractile Times for Critical Calls

A 90% fractile time means nine of ten incidents were at or below the stated time; fractiles are the standard emergency-services measure and are never averages. Critical calls are Echo and Delta level responses, across both EMS and fire calls, triaged as requiring the highest priority response. The times below are measured within the department's first due areas.

Turnout Time is the amount of time between an apparatus being dispatched and that apparatus being en route.

MEDIAN TURNOUT
1:27

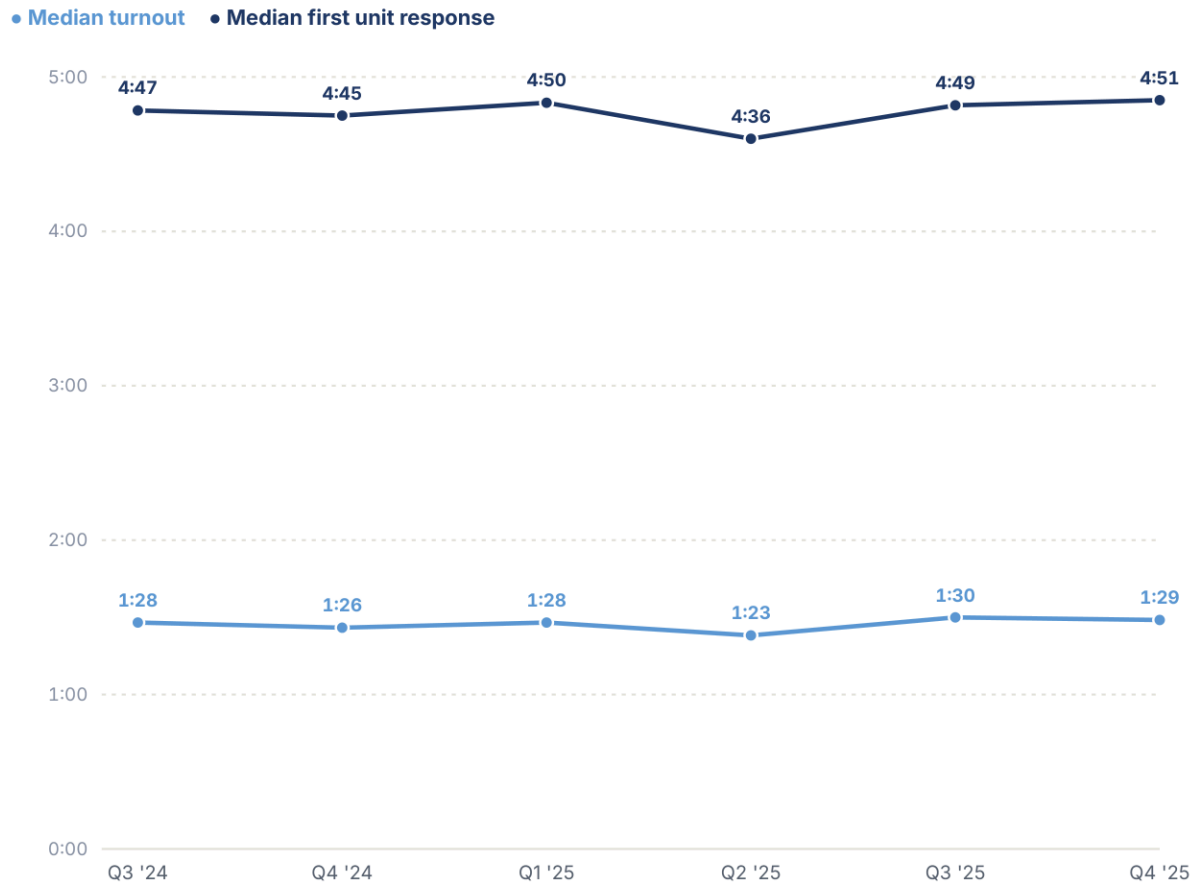
90% TURNOUT
2:29

Response Time is the amount of time taken from dispatch to arrival on scene. First Unit Response is the time of the first unit to arrive to a call.

MEDIAN FIRST UNIT RESPONSE
4:46

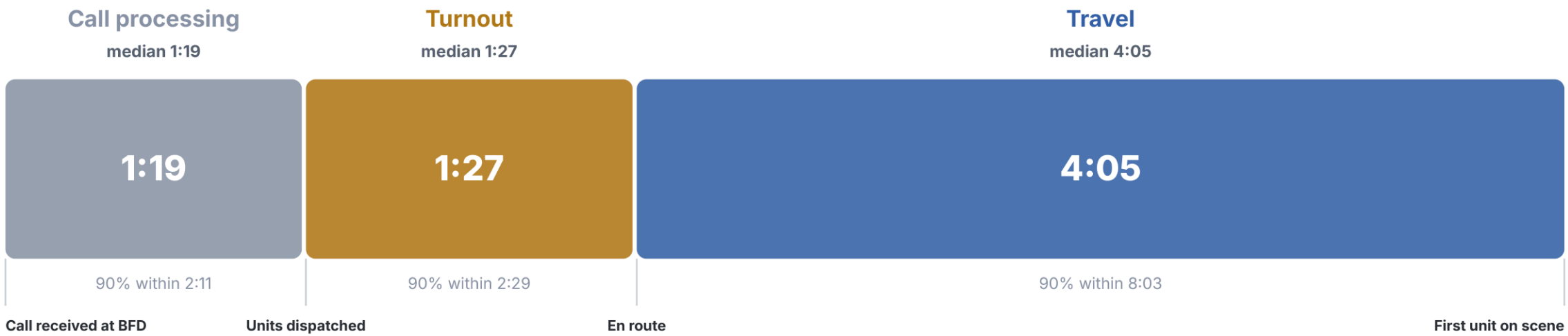
90% FIRST UNIT RESPONSE
7:50

MEDIAN TURNOUT AND RESPONSE TIME BY QUARTER



Anatomy of a 911 Call

A response divides into legs. Call Processing is the time between the call record reaching Bellingham Fire dispatch and units being dispatched. Turnout, defined on the previous page, follows it, and Travel is the time from en route to arrival on scene. Each leg is measured on its own, so the times below do not add up to the end-to-end figure. The calls are the same critical calls timed on the previous page.



EACH FIGURE BELOW: MEDIAN / 90TH PERCENTILE

CALL PROCESSING	TURNOUT	TRAVEL	CALL RECEIPT TO ON SCENE	TIME ON SCENE
1:19 / 2:11	1:27 / 2:29	4:05 / 8:03	6:10 / 9:29	17:55 / 41:45

Response by First Due Area

The critical call response times shown earlier, broken out by the first due area each call fell in. Every timed critical call is attributed to one area, so the eight rows below account for the same calls as the department-wide figures.

FIRST DUE AREA	MEDIAN	90TH PERCENTILE	TIMED CRITICAL CALLS
Station 1 - Broadway	4:19	6:14	628
Station 2 - Harris	5:23	8:23	414
Station 3 - Billy Frank	4:03	6:50	1,055
Station 4 - Yew Street	4:53	7:21	696
Station 5 - Northwest	4:35	6:35	589
Station 6 - Deemer	5:22	8:03	756
Station 31 - Marietta	6:00	9:30	159
Area 34 - Gooseberry	8:27	13:20	217



Fire Response

Calls that are given a final call type of Fire are categorized below. Structure fires are broken out separately on the next page.

FIRE INCIDENTS

484

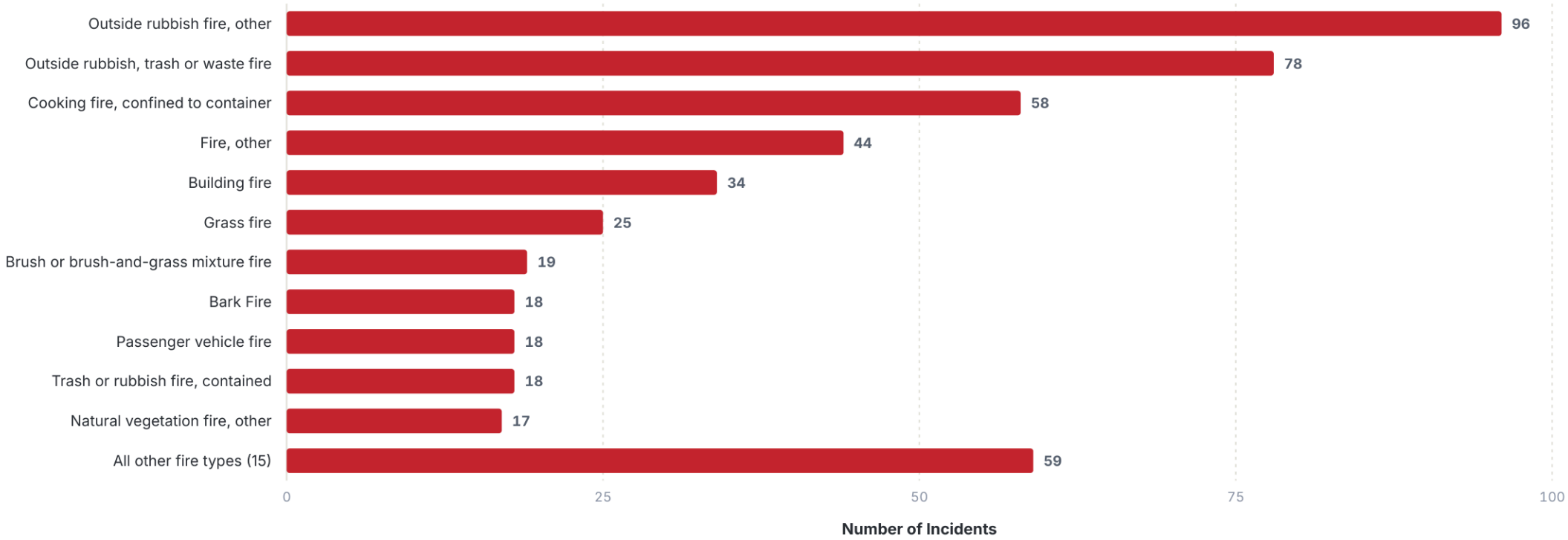
coded by final call type

AID GIVEN

27

BFD responses on neighboring agencies' fire incidents

FIRE INCIDENTS BY TYPE (NFIRS)



Structure Fires

Structure fires are fires within the Bellingham Fire Department first due area, including fires in buildings and in mobile property used as a fixed structure, plus confined fires such as cooking, chimney and contained trash fires inside a structure.

TOTAL STRUCTURE FIRES
114
33 structural + 81 confined

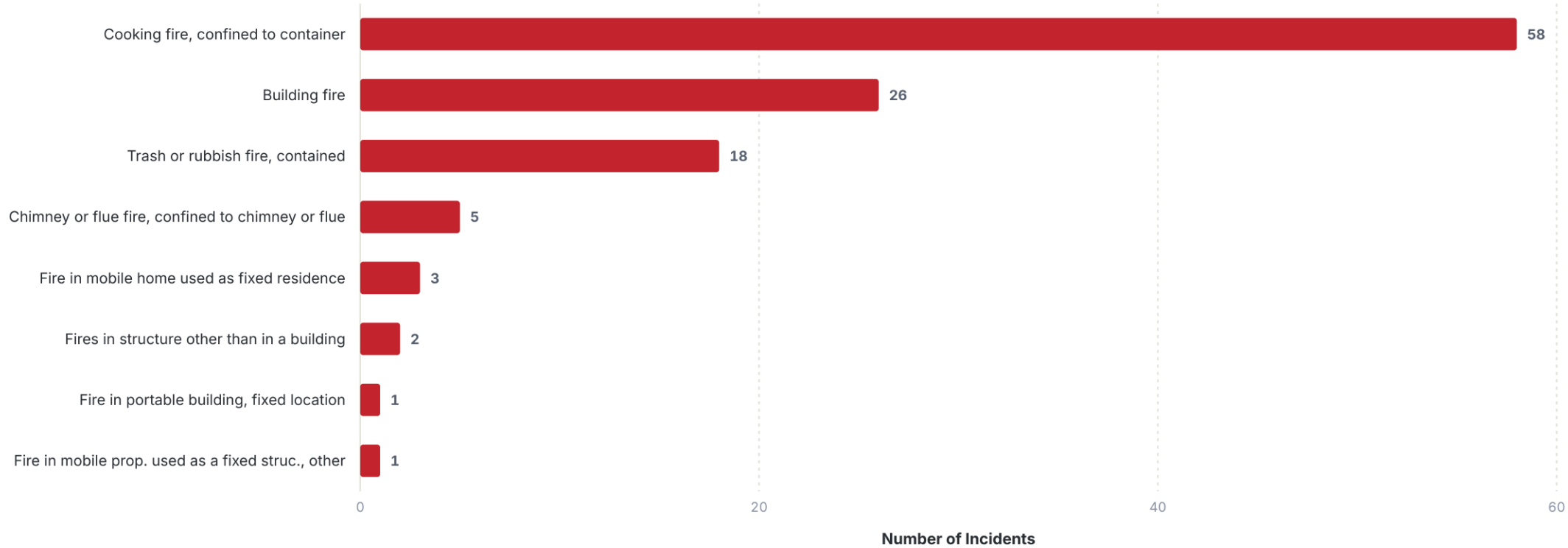
MEDIAN TURNOUT
1:56
critical structure fires, per apparatus

90% TURNOUT
2:55
9 of 10 calls at or below

MEDIAN FIRST UNIT RESPONSE
4:45
critical structure fires

90% FIRST UNIT RESPONSE
8:08
9 of 10 calls at or below

STRUCTURE FIRE INCIDENTS BY TYPE (NFIRS)



Bellingham Fires Against the State

The 484 fire incidents reported on the preceding pages are grouped here into the fire families the Washington State Fire Marshal's Office uses in *Fire in Washington 2025*, beside the statewide mix it published. A share is the composition of the fires fought in each place, not how many of them there were.

The Fire Marshal's Office recorded no fire deaths in Whatcom County in 2025. Statewide it recorded 79, and in 51 of those no working smoke alarm was known to be present.

WHATCOM COUNTY FIRE DEATHS

0

none reported to the Fire Marshal's Office

WASHINGTON STATE FIRE DEATHS

79

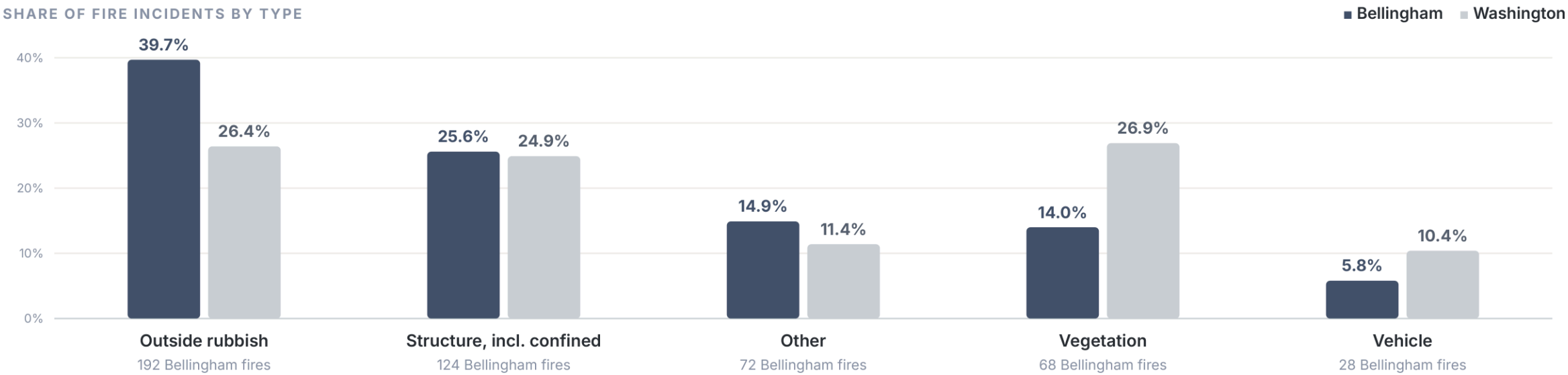
reported to the Fire Marshal's Office

NO WORKING SMOKE ALARM

51 of 79

statewide deaths where none was known to be present

SHARE OF FIRE INCIDENTS BY TYPE



Other includes 18 bark fires, a local type with no standard NFIRS category.

Emergency Medical Services

Calls dispatched as EMS are the department's largest workload. Times below are measured from dispatch records: turnout from dispatch to en route, and arrival from dispatch to the first unit on scene.

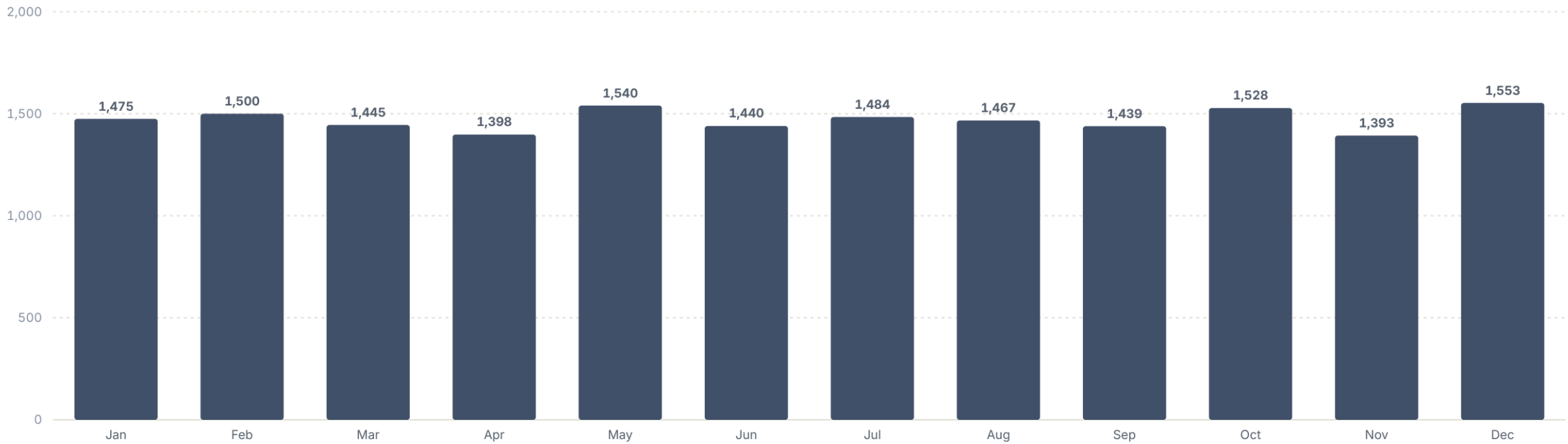
EMS DISPATCHES
17,662
73% of all calls, department-wide

FIRST-UNIT ARRIVAL
4:45 / 7:50
median / 90th, critical EMS calls in first due areas

TURNOUT, EMS
1:23 / 2:26
median / 90th per apparatus, first due areas

CALL CADENCE
Every 30 min
one EMS dispatch around the clock, all year

EMS Dispatches by Month



Paramedic and ALS Service

As part of the Whatcom County EMS system, BFD paramedic units provide advanced life support to the department's first due area and to the entire county.

MEDIC-UNIT INCIDENTS
11,775
all acuities, city and county

INSIDE FIRST DUE
7,636
65% of medic incidents

OUTSIDE FIRST DUE
4,139
35% of medic incidents

MEDIAN ARRIVAL, OUTSIDE
10:49
dispatch to on scene

90% ARRIVAL, OUTSIDE
21:58
9 of 10 calls at or below

MEDIC RESPONSES BY UNIT ■ INSIDE BFD FIRST DUE ■ OUTSIDE

