

INCREASE IN STAFFING REQUEST FORM

DATE OF REQUEST: 2025 Budget
POSITION TITLE: Training Officer
CLASSIFICATION: Non-Union
DIVISION: CAO
DEPARTMENT: Fire
LOCATION: St. Jacobs Fire Hall
REPORTS TO: Deputy Fire Chief
STATUS: Full-time (35 hours per week)
SUPERVISION: Station Training Officers

General Purpose:

This position assumes responsibility for coordinating all training activities within the fire department and stations. Duties include the development of instruction plans, training materials, and evaluation methodologies. The Training Officer oversees a broad spectrum of training areas, encompassing driver training, pumper operations, firefighter and recruit training, fire officer, fire inspector, fire investigator, public education and prevention, vehicle rescue and extrication, emergency first aid, hazardous materials response, industrial firefighting programs, and other specialty courses. Additionally, the role involves ensuring compliance with Mandatory Firefighter Certification regulations, acting as a Certified Incident Safety Officer during large-scale incidents, delivering corporate training to other departments, and serving as the Designated Officer for the department.

Primary Responsibilities:

1. Develop, coordinate, and lead the training programs of the Fire Suppression Division. Create and assist Station Trainers with lesson plan development and delivery of all training.
2. Maintain the training schedule created by the Fire Chiefs office and Station Chiefs
3. Develop and deliver training programs, manuals, lesson plans, guide sheets and training syllabus.
4. Under the direction of the Deputy Fire Chief leads department committees, creates and revises Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) and lesson plans with the help of committee members.
5. Prepare and provide training in compliance with Regulation O. Reg 343/22 Firefighter Certification.
6. Assist the Deputy Fire Chief with maintaining comprehensive training

records for all personnel, and ensuring their entry into a records management system.

7. Make recommendations to the Deputy Fire Chief on new equipment purchases and advise on any technological changes.
8. Responsible for facilitating annual fire apparatus hose testing and documentation.
9. Responsible for conducting firefighter Bi-Annual SCBA Fit Testing
10. Maintain inventory of supplies, equipment and apparatus assigned to the Training Department.
11. Conduct required classification / promotional examinations for members of the department, conduct instructor evaluations and reports results to the Deputy Fire Chief or designate.
12. Visit fire stations and attend emergencies to evaluate operations and to ascertain training quality. Ensures emergencies are handled in accordance with the training given and departmental operational guidelines and policies.
13. Act as an Incident Safety Officer (ISO) as required.
14. Research technological changes in operations and recommend programs and procedures.
15. Recommend candidates to attend both internal and external courses and technology programs.
16. Assist in recruitment and hiring of new volunteer fire fighters.
17. Attend, conduct, or assist with training of all volunteer fire fighters on evenings and on weekends, as required.
18. Perform firefighting duties, as required.
19. Perform other duties, as assigned.

Knowledge: Must possess an excellent working knowledge of the Ontario Fire Protection and Prevention Act, applicable National Fire Protection Association standards, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Education: Post-secondary education in Public Administration, Adult Education, Business Administration, or a related technical subject.

Certification/Designation:

- Certification in Adult Education is an asset
- Certification of Firefighter I and II, NFPA 1001
- Certification as Fire Officer II, NFPA 1021
- Certification of Fire Instructor I and II, NFPA 1041
- Certification of Incident Safety Officer, NFPA 1521
- Five (5) years Fire Officer Experience

Skills:

1. Thorough knowledge of NFPA programs and firefighter certification, relevant regulatory standards, fire apparatus and equipment operation, safety practices, and training techniques.
2. Competency in emergency response operations, including apparatus, equipment, and fire suppression techniques.
3. Highly organized with the ability to coordinate multiple training opportunities and apply adult learning principles effectively.
4. Advanced interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills, including proficiency in computer applications.

Salary: Level 5 \$75,227 - \$94,034 Plus Benefits

Justification:

The addition of a full time Firefighter Training Officer position within Woolwich Fire Department is crucial. This request is rooted in the recognition of the increasingly critical role that ongoing training plays in enhancing and maintaining the capabilities of our firefighting team and ensuring the safety of both our personnel and the communities we serve.

Current Challenges:

1. **Evolution of Firefighting Techniques:** Firefighting is a dynamic job, with constant advancements and changes to building construction, automobile technology and other external factors. The techniques, equipment, and technologies we employ to carry out our duties have to stay in step. A dedicated training officer is essential to staying abreast of these developments and ensuring that our firefighters are armed with the latest skills and knowledge.
2. **Compliance and Certification:** Maintaining compliance with current legislation and ever evolving safety standards and certifications is crucial. A Training Officer can streamline the certification process, ensuring that our firefighters meet and exceed provincial, federal and industry requirements, reducing liability for the corporation and enhancing our department's public image and reputation.
3. **Specialized Training Needs:** Firefighters often encounter diverse and complex scenarios. A Training Officer can identify and address specific training needs, such as electric vehicle fires, ice/water rescue emergencies, hazardous materials response, search and rescue, and advanced medical interventions, ensuring our team is well-prepared for any situation.

Benefits of a Firefighter Training Officer:

1. **Continuous Professional Development:** A dedicated Training Officer will facilitate ongoing professional development, ensuring that our firefighters and officers are not only well-prepared for their current roles but also equipped to take on future leadership positions within the department.
2. **Consistency and Standardization:** Standardized training programs will be developed and implemented, ensuring consistency in skills and procedures across all members and stations within the department. This will enhance collaboration, effectiveness, and safety during emergency response situations.
3. **Cost-Efficiency:** While the initial investment in a Training Officer may seem significant, the long-term cost savings are substantial. Well-trained firefighters are more efficient, reducing the likelihood of injuries and equipment damage. Additionally, a well-trained team is more likely to prevent and mitigate emergencies, ultimately saving lives and property.
4. **Reduction of Liability:** With an increase in training related injuries while attending third party training organizations. Investigation into these accidents often results in a forensic analysis of the organizations training records and practices. If fault is found the offending party could be liable for personal and property damages. The current fines are set at 1.5 million for employers.
5. **Enhanced Community Safety:** A highly trained firefighting force instills confidence in the community. By having a Training Officer, we can demonstrate our commitment to excellence in emergency response, fostering trust and support from the public we serve.

Conclusion:

The addition of a Firefighter Training Officer is a strategic investment in the future effectiveness and safety of our firefighters and the department as whole. It not only addresses current legislated challenges, but also positions our team as leaders in the field, capable of responding to the evolving demands of operating a safe and effective emergency service. I am confident that this addition will have a positive and lasting impact on the capabilities and reputation of our department.

Appendix A

Training Gap Analysis Report

1. Introduction

As per a request from Council, this gap analysis evaluates the current state of training within the Woolwich Fire Department, identifies key deficiencies, and proposes the establishment of a full-time Fire Training Officer (FTO) position as a solution. The goal is to address legislative, operational, and safety challenges while improving overall department readiness and efficiency.

2. Current State and Challenges

2.1 Organizational Structure and Complexity

- Woolwich Fire Department operates six fire stations with 160 volunteer members.
- Training coordination and delivery under the current part-time model is increasingly challenging due to the department's geographic spread and operational demands.
- Collaborative training with neighboring municipalities is impractical due to unique department-specific requirements.
 - This includes differences in operating procedures, equipment, and community-specific needs, which limit the effectiveness of joint training sessions.

2.2 Training Demands and Compliance

- The introduction of O.Reg 343/22 - Mandatory Firefighter Certification has significantly increased training requirements.
- Training hours have risen by an average of 15% annually, with 15,000 hours projected in 2025 to meet certification and maintenance requirements.
 - In 2024, the department delivered 12,840 hours of training, reflecting a 17.8% increase from the previous year. (Fig. 1.1)
 - This upward trend is expected to continue as certification deadlines approach.
- Deadlines for certification (2026 for general certifications, 2028 for technical disciplines) amplify these demands, placing additional strain on the department's current training resources.

Fig 1.1

| Year | Training Hours | % Increase |
|-------------|---|-------------------|
| 2024 | 12840 | 17.8 |
| 2023 | 10897 | 11.8 |
| 2022 | 9747 | 25.2 |
| | Mandatory Certification Introduced | |
| 2021 | 7785 | 5.6 |
| 2020 | 7371 | |

2.3 Limited Resources and Capabilities

- Training responsibilities are shared among senior staff, the part-time Training Officer, and volunteers, leading to inefficiencies and inconsistencies.
 - Senior staff often struggle to balance their primary responsibilities with training coordination.
 - Volunteer trainers may lack the time and resources needed to deliver comprehensive programs.
- Current training resources are insufficient to address:
 - Advanced technical training (e.g., hazardous materials response, drone operations).
 - Development of new training programs to meet evolving needs, such as electric vehicle fire response and industrial firefighting.

2.4 Risk and Safety Concerns

- Limited capacity for safety-focused training and regular drills.
 - Firefighters may not receive adequate instruction on critical safety measures, such as cancer prevention protocols or decontamination procedures.
 - Inconsistent enforcement of safety measures increases health risks for firefighters.
 - The absence of regular evaluations and standardized safety training leaves gaps in operational readiness and compliance with best practices.
-

3. Gap Analysis

| Key Area | Current State | Identified Gaps |
|---|---|--|
| Training Program Delivery | Part-time officer and shared responsibilities. | Lack of consistency, specialization, and time to deliver effective programs. |
| Scheduling and Collaboration | Offset schedules, inconsistent opportunities to collaborate | Slow, inefficient workflows. Difficulty communicating effectively. |
| Compliance | Partial adherence to NFPA and O.Reg 343/22 standards. | High risk of non-compliance in some disciplines, legal penalties, and reduced service quality. |
| Training Hours | 15% annual growth; 15,000 hours forecasted. | Existing structure cannot meet growing demands and certification deadlines. |
| Safety and Risk Management | Safety measures inconsistently applied. | Increased risk to firefighter health and safety. |
| Resource Utilization | Shared responsibilities causing staff burnout, and possible retention issues | Absence of consistent focused oversight leads to inefficiencies and duplication of effort. |
| Advanced Training Needs | Limited access to specialized programs. | Insufficient preparation time for complex scenarios, reducing operational readiness. |
| Records Management/ Performance Tracking | Paper-based records stored across multiple locations, with inconsistent formatting. Performance assessments are incomplete, and no centralized Records Management System (RMS) is in place. | Missed opportunities for improvement, certification requirements not being met, and ineffective data analysis. |

4. Proposed Solution: Full-Time Fire Training Officer

4.1 General Purpose

The Fire Training Officer (FTO) assumes responsibility for coordinating all training activities within the fire department and stations. The FTO oversees a broad spectrum of training areas, including:

- Driver training, pumper operations, firefighter and recruit training, and fire officer development.
- Specialty programs such as vehicle rescue, hazardous materials response, emergency first aid, and public education.
- Compliance with Mandatory Firefighter Certification regulations (O.Reg 343/22).
- Acting as a Certified Incident Safety Officer during large-scale incidents.
- Delivering corporate health and safety related training to other departments.

4.2 Primary Responsibilities

- Develop, coordinate, and lead training programs for the Fire Suppression Division, including the creation of lesson plans, training manuals, and evaluation methodologies.
- Maintain training schedules and records in compliance with O.Reg 343/22.
- Conduct firefighter SCBA Fit Testing, fire apparatus hose testing, and promotional examinations.
- Evaluate operations during emergencies to ensure adherence to training and operational guidelines.
- Research technological advancements in firefighting and recommend new programs and equipment.
- Assist in recruitment and training of new volunteer firefighters, including evening and weekend sessions.

4.3 Benefits of the FTO

| Benefit | Description |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Legislative Compliance | Ensures adherence to O.Reg 343/22 and NFPA standards, reducing liability and enhancing reputation. |
| Safety Improvement | Proactive safety training reduces risks to firefighter health and operational incidents. |
| Efficiency Gains | Centralized Training Division management optimizes scheduling and resource use. Allows for data gathering and analysis which can aid future training decisions. |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Enhanced Readiness | Advanced training programs prepare firefighters for evolving and complex emergencies. |
| Cost Savings | Reduces dependency on third-party training, minimizing long-term expenses. |

4.4 Cost Implications

- **Initial Investment:** Salary and benefits for the FTO (Level 5: \$75,227 - \$94,034 plus benefits).
 - Additional costs may include one-time expenditures for training materials and equipment.
- **Long-Term Savings:**
 - Reduced reliance on expensive external training providers.
 - Lower injury rates and associated costs due to improved safety measures.
 - Enhanced efficiency in training delivery and resource allocation.

5. Conclusion

The Woolwich Fire Department's current part-time training model is insufficient to meet increasing demands, comply with legislation, and ensure firefighter safety and readiness. Establishing a full-time Fire Training Officer will:

- Address critical gaps in training delivery and compliance.
- Enhance safety and operational effectiveness.
- Position the department as a leader in emergency service readiness.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Woolwich Fire Department create and fund a full-time Fire Training Officer position to:

- Deliver standardized, high-quality training across all stations.
- Ensure compliance with NFPA and provincial standards.
- Foster a safety-first culture.
- Prepare firefighters to meet current and future challenges effectively.

By implementing this recommendation, Woolwich will secure the resources needed to provide exceptional service and safeguard the community and its personnel.

Appendix: NFPA Standards Referenced

- NFPA 1001: Firefighter Professional Qualifications.
- NFPA 1002: Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Qualifications.
- NFPA 1006: Technical Rescuer Qualifications.
- NFPA 1021: Fire Officer Professional Qualifications.
- NFPA 1031: Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner Qualifications.
- NFPA 1033: Fire Investigator Qualifications.
- NFPA 1041: Fire Service Instructor Qualifications.
- NFPA 1072: Hazardous Materials Emergency Response.
- NFPA 1521: Fire Department Safety Officer Qualifications.