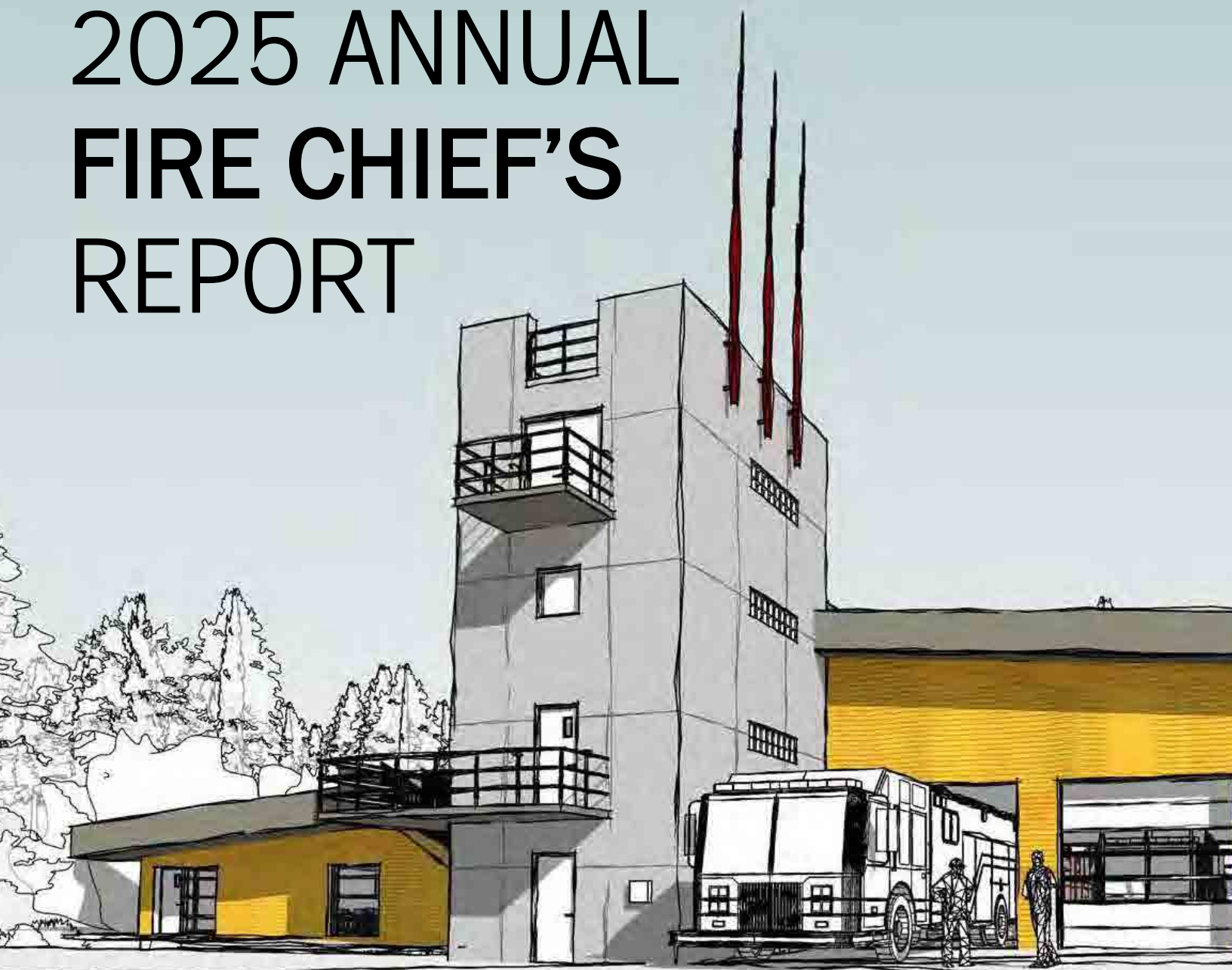


# Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue



# 2025 ANNUAL FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT



PERSONAL MISSION: *To be honest, helpful, and human.*

PERSONAL VISION: *To see potential, instead of obstacles.*

CHIEF OFFICERS' VISION: *Empower others within our organization.*

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## Message from the Fire Chief's Office

As Fire Chief of Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue, I am honored to present the 2025 **Annual Fire Chief's Report**. I want to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Board of Trustees and the volunteer committee members who devoted countless hours in 2025 to enhance our community and the department.

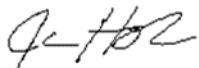
I am immensely proud of the men and women serving in all capacities of Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue. They are skilled professionals who face physical, mental, and emotional challenges regularly. This report aims to showcase our performance and the achievements we celebrated throughout the year.

In 2025, Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue achieved several key milestones that reflect our commitment to community safety and service excellence. We successfully maintained high response times, ensuring that emergencies were addressed promptly and effectively. Our team conducted numerous training sessions, enhancing the skills and readiness of our personnel. We also implemented new fire prevention programs that significantly increased community awareness and preparedness. Additionally, we upgraded our emergency equipment to meet safety standards, further bolstering our operational capacity. Overall, our department fostered strong community relationships through outreach initiatives, emphasizing the importance of fire safety and emergency preparedness.

I would also like to thank the families of our members for their unwavering support, as they are an integral part of our fire service family. Our aim is to foster a healthy community for our staff, residents, and visitors. SSIFR is comprised of dedicated professionals committed to delivering exceptional service to our community. We are privileged to serve this great community.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to every member of our department for their extraordinary dedication and hard work throughout the year.

*Sincerely,*



*Jamie Holmes*

Fire Chief

jholmes@saltspringfire.com

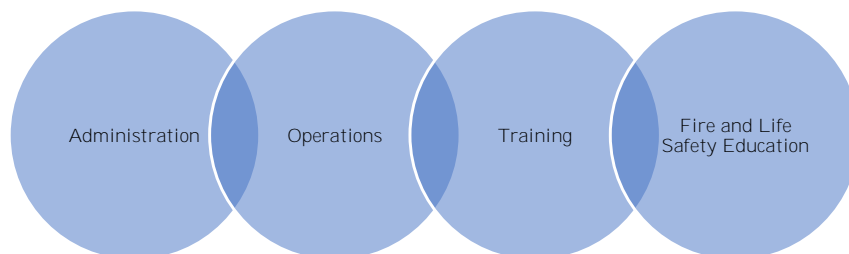


## Our Purpose to Serve



## Focus 2025

- Continue to enhance the health and livability of our community.
- Enhance our relationships with our neighbours and community leaders.
- Foster and support a resilient and diverse community.
- Continue to address the operational and financial requirements for our department.
- Encourage employee mental wellness.
- Construction of a new community fire station.



# Organizational Overview

The Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue (SSIFR) is a full-service department providing fire/rescue operations, emergency medical services, fire investigations, fire inspections, and fire and life safety education.

The Fire Department operates from three fire halls located strategically throughout the island to provide a rapid response. Service is delivered utilizing three Engines, three Water Tenders, one Brush Truck, one Mini Pumper, one Rehab Support Unit, three Medic Units, one Hazmat Unit, one Inland Water Rescue Boat, one Wildland Sprinkler Unit (SPU) along with three reserve apparatus.

The Fire Department maintains accreditation through Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) for our water delivery capabilities under the certification of Superior Tender Shuttle.



**Bel Manson**  
Being a firefighter at SSIFR is/was one of my proudest experiences. Thank you for being an amazing, supportive service to represent. Happy International Women's Day to all the current and past serving members.

3w Love Reply Hide 7



**Theresa Burley-Hughes**  
Thank you for being awesome and watching out for us 🌈❤️

28w Like Reply Hide

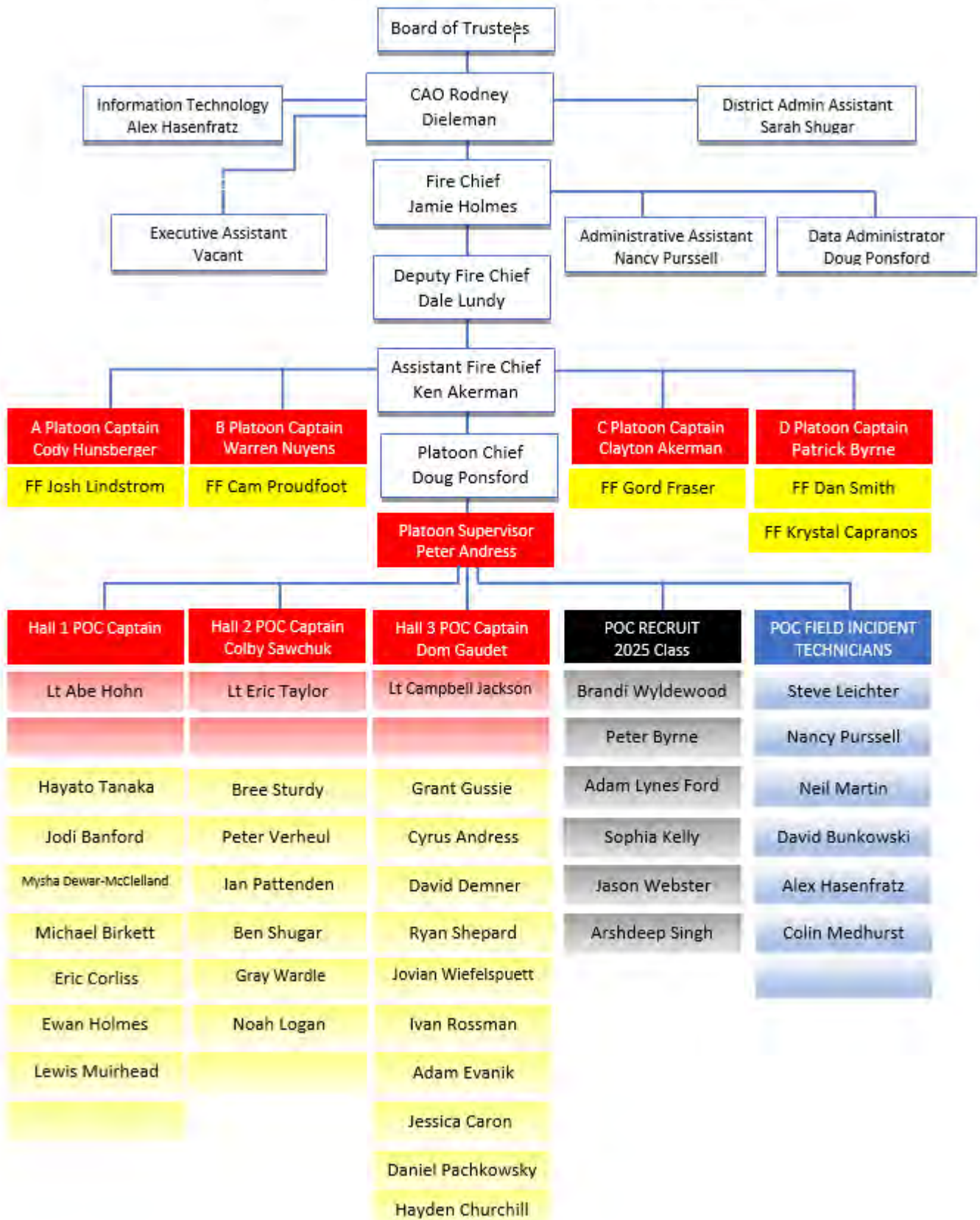


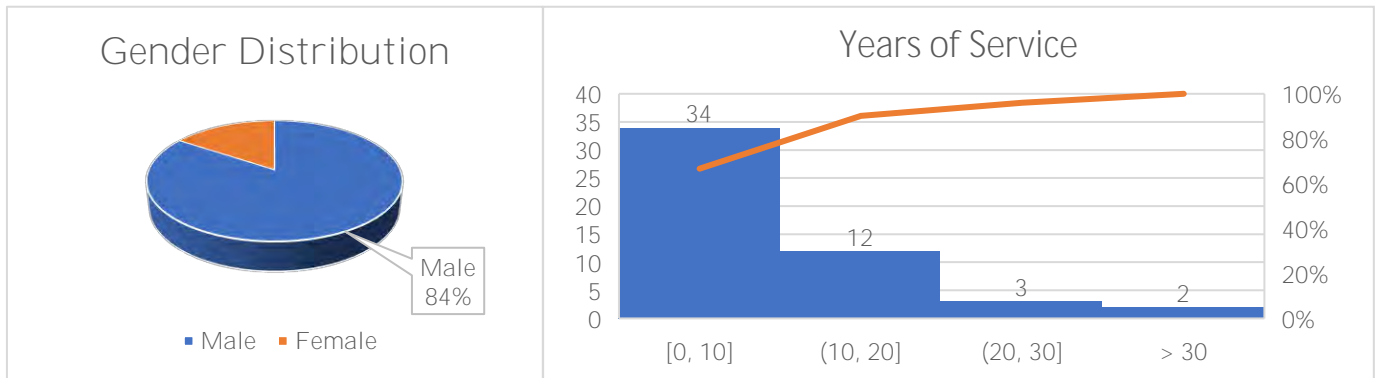
**Rosemary Kilmer**  
Beautiful energy..we are so grateful these folks stepped up..feel safer already!

12w Love Reply Hide 2



### Salt Spring Fire Rescue Organizational Chart 2025





SSIFR took on six additional recruit members in 2025. We continue to be a relatively junior department, with more than half of our membership under the ten-year service mark. The average length of service currently sits at 9.9 years, which is higher than average for Paid-On-Call (POC) departments. SSIFR continues to promote diversity in our department with sixteen percent of the membership being non-male. SSIFR is well above the Canadian average of five percent gender diversity. Our members range in age from sixteen to sixty plus with the average being 44 years old. The average recruit age is **34, so it's not too late if you are thinking of volunteering.**

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue is very proud to recognize our talented and dedicated members who celebrated years of service milestones in 2025.

## Celebrating Milestones

10 Years - Cam Proudfoot

15 Years - Clayton Akerman, Nancy Purssell, Grant Gussie

20 Years - Dominique Gaudet

30 Years - Ken Akerman

Most Dedicated to Training – Mysha Dewar-McClelland 455 hours

Most Dedicated to Calls – Colby Sawchuk 211 hours

Most Dedicated to Fire and Life Safety Education – Mysha Dewar-McClelland 197 hours

Recruit Firefighter of the Year – Gray Wardle

Fire Officer of the Year – Abrahm Hohn

Congratulations to **Dominique Gaudet** for receiving the 2025 BC Wildland Firefighter Vanguard Award at the FireSmartBC awards. On top of the work Captain Gaudet puts in for SSIFR he also works for BC Forestry and has worked on deployments all over BC. We're very lucky to have Dom on our team and utilize his knowledge to help keep our crews safe at home and while out on deployments.



# Operations

Our mission is to minimize injuries, death and property loss related to fires, medical emergencies, and other disasters through efficient delivery of effective fire suppression, rescue and pre-hospital care.

The career members ensure our equipment is in good order, and ready for emergency responses through weekly hall inspections and truck equipment checks. Paid-on-Call members assist in emergency responses, when available, to give us the numbers required to deal with emergency situations safely and effectively.

The change in staffing model to a twenty-four-hour staffed Fire Hall #1 that took place in 2021 continued to pay dividends in 2025. Several structure fires were knocked down while still small due to the quick response of on-Duty Crews backed up by Paid-on-Call members. This year SSIFR responded to eleven structures where fires were extinguished and prevented from spreading to adjacent buildings or to nearby wildland interface areas.

Our fleet continues to be maintained to Fire Underwriter Survey (FUS) standards. We purchased a “new to us” Ambulance Unit from Texas, saving over 90% of the cost of a new unit. This unit now serves as Rehab Support Unit 1 (RSU1) and allows us to assess, evaluate, and rehabilitate our members at the scene of major events. It can also provide assistance with communications, first aid, and traffic control.



## 2025 Operational Highlights

**New Firehall #1:** The bulk of the new Firehall #1 build was completed in 2025. It certainly took a considerable amount of my time day to day and week to week. The important part? We are on time and on budget. I would like to thank Owner Representative Hans Hazenboom and steering committee members, Trustee Rollie Cook, Trustee Robin Williams, Trustee David Courtney, John Wakefield, Lloyd Cudmore, and CAO Rodney Dieleman. The committee was in place to ensure we maintained an operational building within the budget, and reach of our community.

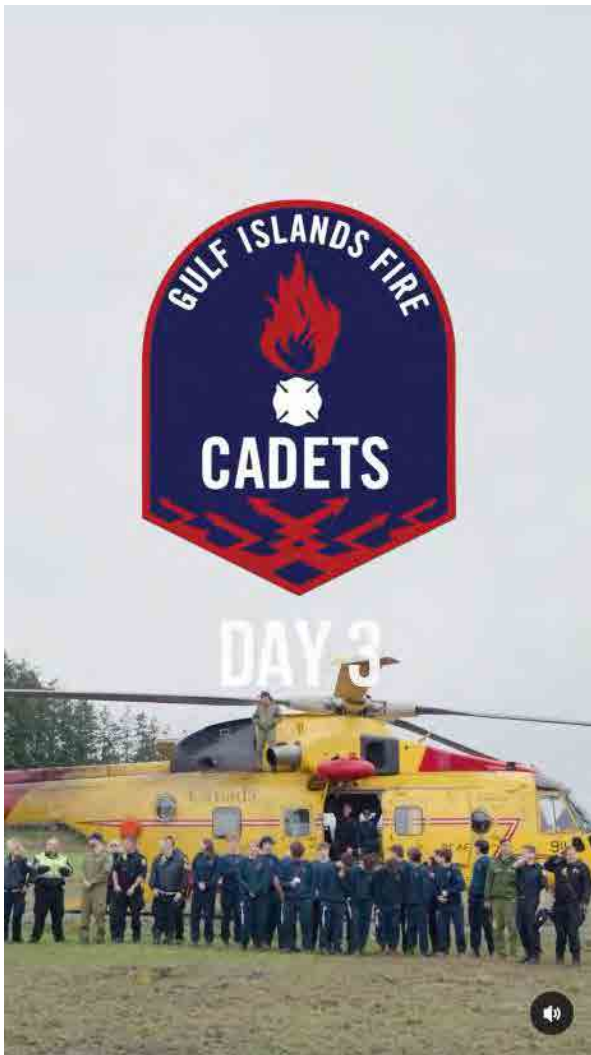


**Superior Tender Shuttle Service Accreditation:** The Superior Tender Shuttle Accreditation (STSS) is a significant fire protection method for areas without fire hydrants. It involves using water trucks, known as tenders, to shuttle water from a source to the site of a fire. This method aims to provide a level of fire protection equivalent to a municipal hydrant system. To achieve STSS accreditation, fire departments must demonstrate their ability to transport and maintain a water flow of 200 Imperial Gallons Per Minute (IGPM) for at least 1 hour. This accreditation can lead to reduced insurance premiums for property owners within the covered areas, which include properties within 8 km of a firehall and 5 km of a recognized water source.

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue first received this accreditation in April 2011, which was a significant achievement for the department. This led to decreased fire insurance rates for many residents. The department re-accredited in 2016 and, after a reprieve due to COVID-19, prepared for another on-site accreditation process in 2025.

In February 2025, a team consisting of 24 department members practiced diligently and successfully completed the accreditation test, with Fire Protection Specialist Jomari Gaza from **Fire Underwriters Survey** overseeing the process. His positive remark, **“Beautiful”** at the 30-minute mark highlighted the team’s excellent performance. Deputy Chief Lundy and Platoon Chief Ponsford organized the evaluation team and the whole crew did an amazing job. We would also like to thank BC Ferries for letting us use the ferry lanes at Long Harbour for the evaluation and North Salt Spring Waterworks for ensuring the fire hydrants and water system stayed in great working order.





Gulf Island Fire Cadet Camp: Four of our members headed over to Pender Island to instruct at the bi-annual fire camp. Spanning six days during spring break, students from the Gulf Islands and greater Victoria logged around 100 hours in fire and rescue disciplines. **Some of this year's highlights included, live fire, rappelling, 149 Cormorant Search and Rescue helicopter, Coast Guard Hovercraft, and RCMP command boat.** Each cadet takes away something different with all of them finding a challenge at some point of the camp and **pushing through it. I think one parent said it best, "This experience was beneficial on so many levels including team building, learning firefighting skills, and working through perceived limitations. From our perspective, the fire cadet camp is a unique immersion program where the teens get to feel part of a firefighting family."**

I want to thank the Board of Trustees for your continued support of the Fire Cadet camp and the program. We have seen so many positive results over the years from this great event.

Wildfire Deployment: SSIFR was requested by the province to assist with the Wesley Ridge fire above Cameron Lake August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 8<sup>th</sup>. Two apparatus, Brush 2 with Tender 1, and five members were deployed. The crews received excellent performance reviews, and the Fire District made a few extra dollars off our apparatus. Reserve apparatus back filled our firehalls during the deployment period.



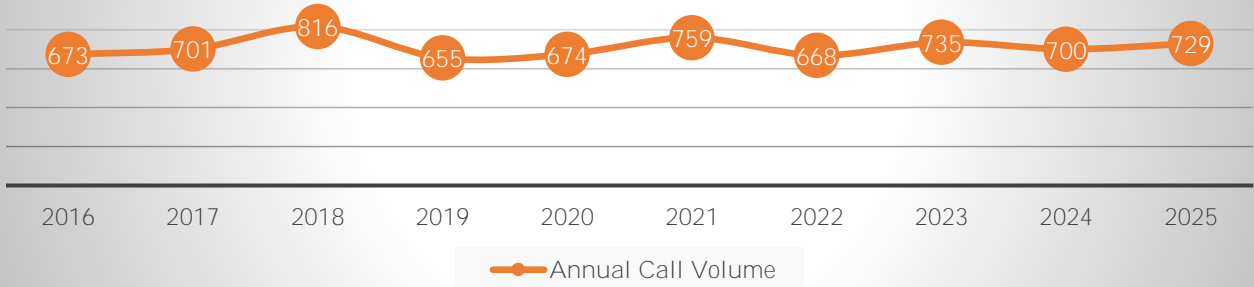
Water Supply Pond Fulford: A 750,000-gallon pond behind the Fulford Firehall was completed in 2025. A dry hydrant has been installed and will provide water for both drills and emergency calls for the whole island. Water supply has been a major strategic goal for the Fire District and the completion of the pond in Fulford is a major accomplishment for SSIFR. The pond was fully funded from the Water Supply Capital Reserve Fund.



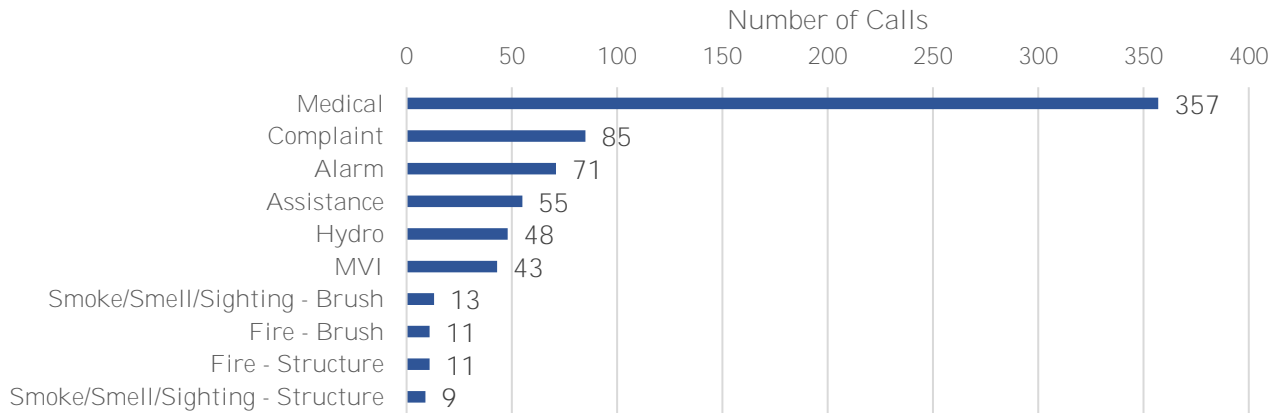
## Your Salt Spring Island Firefighters



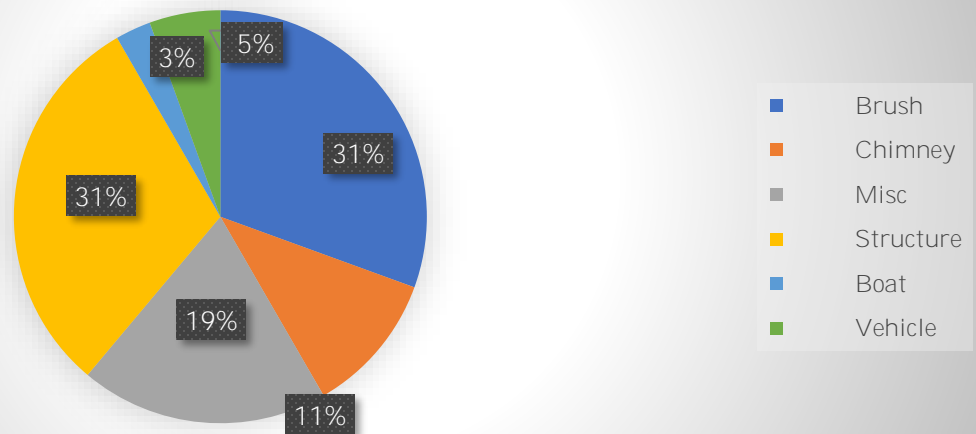
## Annual Call Volume 10 Year Trendline



## Top 10 Call Types — 2025



## 2025 Active Fire Breakdown



*Brush, Chimney, Misc., Structure, Boat, Vehicle (As Dispatched by Fire Dispatch)*

# 2025 Incident Information



INCIDENT LEGEND	Dec-25												TOTAL CALLS: 729				
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC					
Act/Bylaw																	
Complaint	5	2	5	4	12	13	9	13	8	5	5	4					85
Emergency																	0
Alarm	2		4	6	3	8	9	10	10	7	5	7					71
Assistance	1	1	4	5	4	11	3	3	9	4	4	6					55
Explosion																	0
Brush		1			1	1	1	1	5			1					11
Chimney	2		1							1							4
Misc		1		1		5											7
Structure	2	1		2	1	1	1		2	1							11
Boat					1												1
Vehicle						1											2
HazMat		2			1			1									4
Hydro	1	5	2	1	1	1	2	8	4	3	3	17					48
Medical	29	28	36	27	23	31	31	39	33	37	18	25					357
MVI	7	2	2	3	5	2	4	4	2	5	5	2					43
Rescue	1	1	1		2		1	1		1							8
Smoke/Smell/Sighting			2	1	1	2	1	4	1	1							13
Structure	2			1	1	2	1	1	1								9
Total Calls for the month:	52	44	57	51	56	78	63	86	75	65	40	62					729
2025																	
FIRE	9	10	9	12	10	21	15	26	23	13	8	25					181
RESCUE	8	3	3	3	7	2	5	5	2	6	5	2					51
MEDICAL	29	28	36	27	23	31	31	39	33	37	18	25					357
ASSISTANCE	6	3	9	9	16	24	12	16	17	9	9	10					140

# Fire and Life Safety Education (F&LSE)

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue had a busy year with the Education division. We taught GISS Grade 9 students CPR level C and the TASK program Grade 11-12 students Emergency First Aid. We also went to all the Elementary Schools during Fire Safety Week and taught Lithium Battery Safety. We also visited Family Place five times and Co-Op Pre School once where there was a variety of Life Safety topics discussed with the parents.



SSIFR attended many public events to teach a variety of Fire and Life Safety subjects, some of which are Seedy Saturday, Ruckle Farm Day, Canada Day Car Show, Emergency Fair, and Fire Safety Week. Our members had countless interactions and Hall Tours where we had the opportunity to share some education and talk about the work that Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue does within the community.



The year was a huge success for FireSmart. SSIFR performed seventy-nine Fire Smart Home Assessment and had six neighbourhoods working towards a Neighbourhood Recognition. Over the year seven properties took advantage of the B.C. Fire Smart Rebate and got some money back for making their house and property more fire resilient. Several PODs had FireSmart training and CPR/AED awareness training.

I would like to thank everyone that helped with Fire and Life Safety as well as FireSmart for the 2025 year.

Ken Akerman  
Assistant Chief





# THE TRAINING REPORT

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue

2025



# Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue (SSIFR) 2025 Training Report

In 2025, Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue recorded a total of **9,757 training hours** across all divisions. Training efforts focused on foundational skills, officer development, specialized rescue operations, and the successful onboarding of new recruits.

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## Courses Delivered in 2025

A wide range of training programs were provided to support operational readiness and professional development:

- Report Writing & Note Taking
- Level 1 Fire Investigation (Career staff)
- Fire Inspector Level 1 (Career staff)
- Haz-Mat Awareness (Recruits)
- Haz-Mat Technician (1 career member)
- Low to Steep Angle Rope Rescue (14 members)
- Haz-Mat Operations (Recruits)
- Confined Space Operations/Technical (15 members)
- Live Fire Training (Recruits)
- Fire Officer 1 (5 members)
- Fire Officer 2 (1 career member)
- Occupational Health & Safety courses (3 OH&S team members)
- Pumps & Pumping
- Occupational Health Wellness (all members)



# Recruit Training

The 2025 recruit program began with 12 job offers. 8 candidates accepted and entered the program in January. The year concluded with 5 successful graduates.

In late 2025, the training branch launched the 2026 recruitment cycle, again offering 12 positions. All 12 accepted and began training in January 2026.

The training year is an intensive program focused on achieving the NFPA 1001 standard. Each recruit trains between 250 – 300 hrs in their first year. These hours do not include studying and reading on their own time to ensure they are prepared to be successful. SSIFR has partnered with the College of the Rockies for the last several years, as the accrediting agency, and work closely with the college on all testing, both practical, and theoretically.



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## Field Incident Technician (FIT) Training

The FIT program embraced a “Back to Basics” theme for 2025. FIT members play a critical support role during emergency operations, contributing to:

- Accountability
- Scribing
- Drone operations
- Traffic control
- Rehabilitation
- Area command support
- Other incident support functions

The 2025 training plan reinforced fundamental skills to ensure FIT members could reliably support incident operations.

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## POC (Paid-on-Call) Member Training

Regular members also focused on “Back to Basics” throughout 2025. Early in the year, significant training time was dedicated to preparing for and successfully completing the Tender Shuttle Accreditation test.

Ongoing training through the year emphasized:

- NFPA 1001 JPR proficiency
- First Responder medical skills
- Alternative Water Supply techniques
- Fire attack operations
- Additional core firefighting competencies

Another component of the POC training opportunities is the Shift Familiarization on alternating Fridays and Sundays. Two POC members spend the day with the career staff, learning the daily jobs related with being a fulltime firefighter. This has been well received and a valuable training tool for the group, as well as a great venue to get to work with the career staff on a more consistent basis.

---

## Career Member Training

Most career members dedicate time during every shift to train on the essential skills **required to “be on the job.”** They also provide significant support to our Paid-On-Call (POC) firefighters, guiding them through many of the competencies they must develop to be successful in their roles. This committed group plays an instrumental part in building the confidence and abilities the POC team relies on—especially in complex, time-intensive areas such as Driving and Pumps & Pumping.

The career staff remain an integral component of the training program, and we want to extend our sincere thanks to each of them for their ongoing dedication, mentorship, and professionalism.

---

# Training Summary

2025 was a year of strong foundational training, successful onboarding of new firefighters, and broad delivery of technical and officer development programs. SSIFR continues to prioritize readiness, consistency, and professional growth across all its membership groups.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Board of Trustees and the Fire Chief for their ongoing support. Their leadership and commitment make it possible for our training program to thrive. I also want to express my appreciation to all members of SSIFR for their dedication, professionalism, and continuous contributions to the training that makes us the best we can be.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dale Lundy  
Deputy Fire Chief/Training Officer



A photograph of a forest fire. In the foreground, a large, dark tree trunk stands vertically. To the left, there is a fire burning on the ground, with bright orange and yellow flames and thick white smoke rising. The background is filled with more trees and a dense layer of smoke, creating a hazy atmosphere.

Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief

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Salt Spring Island, BC

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EVERYONE PLAYS A ROLE