

**From:** "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>  
**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL" <CCDTMACDL@vancouver.ca>  
**Date:** 2/1/2016 4:56:30 PM  
**Subject:** Message from VFRS

Greetings Councillors-

In response to media questions today, VFRS has shared the following statement with media that enquire:

-----  
VF&RS has no plans to reduce resourcing or staffing levels anywhere in the city, including the West Side or the West End.

This past weekend saw two separate workplace incidents (an illness and an injury) that occurred mid-shift when staffing levels were at typical levels. As both of these incidents occurred mid shift, the department evaluated the need to call out additional personnel taking into consideration the time of day, active major alarms being attended to (which there were none) as well as other potential operational demands. Based on that assessment, the department did not identify a need for additional personnel and a two-person medic unit (Medic 12) was placed out of service for the remainder of the shift. The VF&RS places top priority on the health and safety of its staff, local residents and businesses; the mid-shift departure of two employees did not present a material risk to staff or public safety. The reduction of staff at the Kerrisdale unit, which took place in 2009, was only made after the department conducted a risk assessment to ensure that any reduction would not impact the department's ability to provide appropriate emergency medical and fire response throughout the city, including the Kerrisdale district.

Over the past 3 years, the City has invested \$78M in VF&RS capital projects, including:

- \$38.2M investment in firehalls, including replacement of firehalls #5 and #17
- \$35.2M for new fire trucks
- \$3.4M for new fire boats
- \$1.2M for new scheduling software

The VF&RS operating budget has increased from \$108M in 2014 to \$117M in 2016, an increase of \$9M. Since 2015, over \$1.7M has been added to VF&RS budget for targeted new operating budget investments including new fire trucks and fire boats, resource planning and firefighter wellness programs.

In 2016, the VF&RS will receive 25 new apparatus consisting of 10 engines, 5 rescue engines and 10 heavy 105' ladder units, replacing older fire trucks. In order to accommodate these new resources, the VF&RS is currently considering a strategic redeployment of some resources on the West Side and the West End following a review of risk categories, call types and response needs. This realignment could result in the movement of some apparatus units from one downtown fire hall to another while still providing the same number of units and staff in the downtown core.

In the West End specifically, VF&RS are looking at possibly moving the 2 person rescue unit currently at the # 8 fire hall located at Hamilton & Smithe to the # 6 fire hall located at Nelson and Nicola. However, one of the new heavy 105' ladders will be deployed to the # 8 fire hall. This configuration will continue to provide our residence and citizens with timely response of firefighting equipment and actually improves these capabilities in that there will be 3 heavy 105' ladders in the downtown core; 1 at the # 7 fire hall located at Thurlow and Haro, 1 at the #8 fire hall (Hamilton & Smithe) and 1 at the # 2 fire hall located at Main & Powell St.

Sadhu A. Johnston, LEED AP  
Acting City Manager  
City of Vancouver

sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca  
o. 604.873.7627  
twitter: sadhuajohnston  
www.vancouver.ca