



Our Municipality, Our Fire Department.



Building The Relationship To Face Today's
Challenges.



- We are not suggesting in any way that any that you are not doing everything you can for your volunteers.
- Fire Chiefs and Officers are management, just like Mayors and Councillors.
- We all must accept our responsibilities to form a strong and lasting relationship.



Who Are We ???

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Fire Services

Representing approximately 6,000 firefighters throughout
Newfoundland & Labrador

We are the only all inclusive voice for fire services in the province

Our mandate has been to enhance fire services throughout NL
since 1964



The Calls We Get

- Structure Fires
- MVC
- Assist EMS
- Town Emergencies – Water Supply, Road Washouts, storms.
- ATV, UTV and Snowmobile Incidents
- Missing Persons.
- Assisting Other Agencies – RCMP, Tow Trucks, Dept of Health



Continued

- Pets – in poles, up trees in storm drains...
- Gas Detection calls.
- Downed power lines
- Natural disasters
- Assist with traffic control at funerals or community events.



Some Dept's Offer Specialized Service

- Cold Water Rescue
- High Angle Rescue
- Technician Level Hazardous Materials Response
- Full Medical Response
- Vehicle Extrication Services



How we get our calls



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Why was this stressful?

- Very early on a Sunday Morning
- The incident was in a very difficult area to get to
- A young person we all knew with very serious injuries
 - Family and friends were on scene
- Ambulance was about 40 to 45 minutes away



Aircraft Incidents





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Why was this stressful?

- First crash of this magnitude since Arrow Air crash.
 - No advanced notice of issues.
 - Anticipating no survivors.
- Safety features on the aircraft could have been deadly to responders.
 - Anticipating fire with fuel on board.
 - Exposure to hazardous materials.



What are the stressors on the way???

- Getting to the Fire Hall – weather, traffic, pedestrians, Baby Sitter?
- Are other agencies needed?
- Location? Is it accessible, are there other hazards?
- Do we have enough people?
- What Information do we have, what do we not have?



We need each other

With the stress all emergency responders are feeling today and the increased challenges we encounter at calls, our support is needed more than ever.

With the challenges of recruitment and retention of volunteers, we need to keep our volunteers engaged!



The NL Fire Service

- Approximately 6000 Firefighters in our province.
- 2 Career Departments, St Johns Regional and Corner Brook.
- 6 Composite – Career and Volunteer, Gander, CBS, Labrador City, Happy Valley Goose Bay, Stephenville and GFW.
- 3 Industrial Fire Departments.
- **250 + Volunteer Fire Departments.**



At the Scene

- Attend to priorities

1. Life Safety

2. Incident Stabilization

3. Property / Environment Conservation



Fire Scenes





Motor Vehicle Incidents





Motor Vehicle Incidents





ATV Incidents





Snowmobile Incidents



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EMS Assist

- A large percentage of our calls are to assist EMS.
- Lift Assist, Victim Removal, CPR, Incidents requiring extra personnel.
- 99% of these calls are to people we know personally.
- Sometimes very difficult calls with unwanted outcomes.



National Volunteer Fire Council Study

Study on why volunteers leave the fire service was completed in August 2020.

- Over two thirds of respondents said they were having difficulty with the retention of Volunteers.
- 70 % of fire service leadership believes they have a problem.
- Nearly 50% of current members they interviewed are considering leaving the volunteer fire services.



Learnings

Former volunteers cited a lack of department cohesion and unsupportive leadership as their main reasons for leaving the service.

The top reasons cited by current volunteers were:

- The realities of volunteering changed or didn't meet the expectations that were set before signing up.
- Lack of clear expectations of how much time and effort will be required each week or month for meetings and trainings.



Why People Were Considering Leaving

“Because the volunteers are treated like second class citizens.

“The volunteers are treated like they are just disposable assets.”

“Don’t find that my dept is working towards the future. It’s pretty much been stuck in the 1990s for the past 30 years.”

“Fire Chief is not trained to best practices, or to a standard, nor are any chief officers required to have any training.”



What additional Issues Do We Hear?

- Expectations of legal requirements can be too much for a volunteer.
- Too much micro managing.
- Not enough funding from local or provincial governments.
- Decisions made about the fire department without any consultation.
- Downloading to the volunteer.
- Open to public scrutiny – reports being released to the public.



So How Do We Keep It Going?





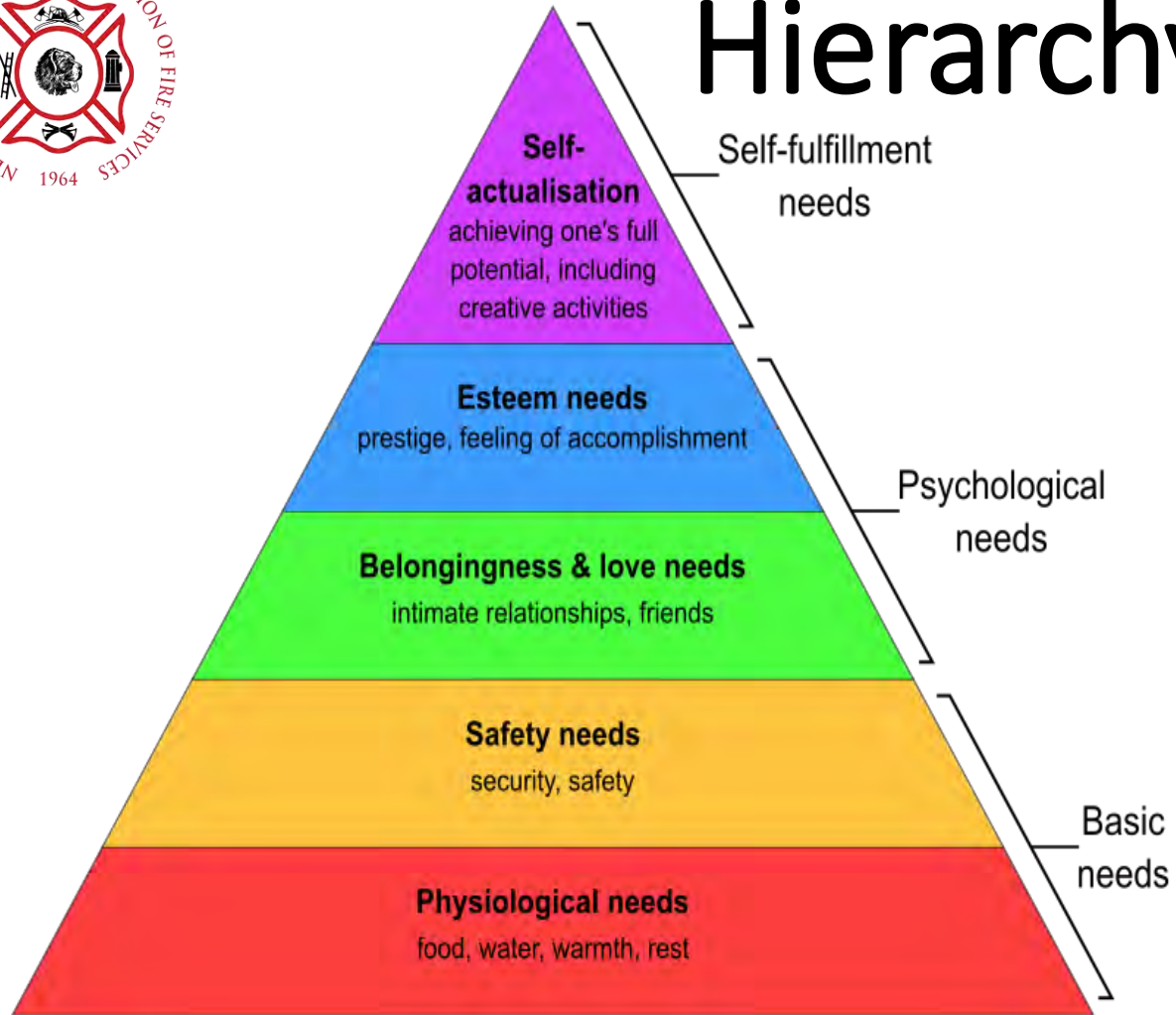
We Build The Relationship!

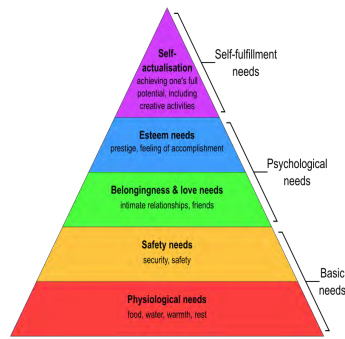
How do we breakdown any barriers that may separate us???

- Include our fire departments in the decision making process when it affects us.
- Show an interest in learning more about the challenges our people are facing and listen with an open mind.
- Focus on the real goal with a positive attitude.
- Motivate with positivity.



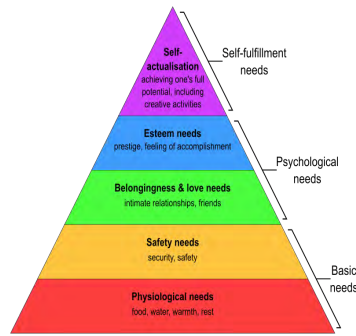
Hierarchy of needs





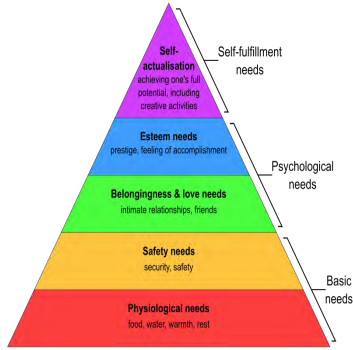
Basic needs

- Ensure our firefighters have basic needs met while serving, especially when during long difficult calls.
- Food, water, coffee or other consumables.
- Having the tools to do the job.
- Sometimes all that's needed is for them to know we are thinking about them.



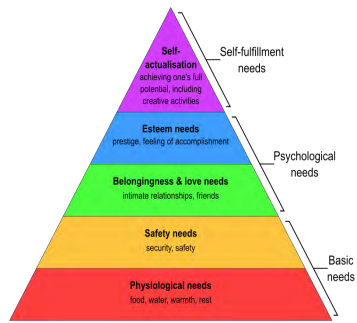
Safety Needs

- Supporting them in having safe modern PPE.
- Providing funding to have equipment inspected and serviced.
- Include them in your safety committee and decision making processes.
- Promote well being, offer free gym passes.
- Provide support for cancer prevention, a washer may be all it takes.
- Promote CISM and provide mental health support when needed.



Psychological Needs

- Promoting a culture of respect and understanding.
- Build a team atmosphere, we are all in this together.
- Eliminate the us and them culture.
- Provide opportunities for success and accomplishments.
- Reward success at every opportunity and recognize individual accomplishments.
- People need to feel appreciated and respected.



Self Fulfillment

- Support self development through opportunities such as fire school, seminars, our convention.
- Dedicated people have a desire to be the most that they can be.
- “What a person can be they must be” –*Abraham Maslow*



Why Us?

If Not Us Then Who?

We asked to be accepted as leaders, so we must lead.





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