
KEY LARGO FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022



INTRODUCTION

Key Largo Fire Department (KLFD or Department) is a not-for-profit corporation that consists of 18 career and 10 volunteer members. It is a combination fire department that employs 3 career operation Captains who serve a role in administration as well, 4 career Lieutenant's, 11 career Driver Engineers, and has 10 volunteer firefighter EMTs/Paramedics to supplement firefighter shift positions. The Department was formed at the end of May 2013. This transition was primarily a management change – the Department maintains and continues the long history of quality fire service to the Key Largo community and provides 24-hour a day fire rescue services to the residents and visitors of Key Largo. The Department continues to operate out of two fire stations. Our North Key Largo Fire Station, number 25, is located at 220 Reef Drive at the intersection of U.S. Highway 1/Overseas Highway and State Road 905 at mile marker 106. Our South Key Largo Fire Station is located at 1 East Drive at the 99.8-mile marker; the intersection of Overseas Hwy. and East Dr.

Key Largo is an island community of approximately 15,000 yearly residents. During the season, on weekends and on holidays the population of Key Largo increases dramatically. There is an influx of tourists and winter residents who are part-time residents that live in Key Largo for the winter. Visitation is year-round due to the subtropical climate of the area and the lure of world class fishing and diving. Key Largo is home to the largest living coral reef

in the U.S. located in nearby Biscayne National Park, its crystal clear protected waters, largest man-made reefs – sunken U.S.S. Spiegel Grove, Duane, and Bibb. There are also numerous smaller shipwrecks and add to that, an exotic natural and relaxed atmosphere.

Key Largo is the first key or island of a string of islands off of the southernmost tip of Florida that stretch for 100 linear miles from Key Largo to Key West that make up the Florida Keys in Monroe County, Florida. The population of Monroe County is approximately 73,000 with a visitation count of over 4 million. The island of Key Largo is approximately 27 miles long and consists of approximately 22,000 acres. Key Largo Fire Department's jurisdiction extends to the water's edge of the Florida Bay and the Atlantic Ocean and a number of small islands in those waters as well as numerous canals and marinas that are all bordered by resort, residential and boating communities. Homes in the area consist of mobile homes and trailers, live-aboard boats/vessels, and homes built prior to quality construction codes.

Key Largo has seasonal tropical storms, a hurricane season as well as a dry/fire season.

KLFD operates as the Key Largo incident command center, emergency operations center and is also shelter for staff during tropical storms and hurricanes as well as for any hazardous or radiological emergencies that might occur as a result of an accident from the nearby Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant. To be equipped with the ability to respond to any and all emergencies or activities that might occur during these times is imperative.

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The responsibility for fire, rescue, and EMS services in the Key Largo area falls under the Key Largo Fire Rescue and EMS Special Independent District formed in 2006. The District has the authority to levy and collect ad valorem taxes for fire, rescue, and EMS services from the taxpayers of Key Largo. The District has a 5-member Board of Commissioners that operates under the “Florida Sunshine Law” and oversees the budget and administration of the Key Largo District.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Monroe County Ordinance 035-1996 states the boundaries for District 6 (Key Largo Fire & EMS):

That part of Key Largo from South Bay Harbor Drive and Lobster Lane to the southern boundary of the intersection of the right-of-way County roads 905 and 905A, plus Cross Key up to the US1 MM112.5 (Morris Lane/Manatee Bay Marina).



MISSION STATEMENT

The Key Largo Fire Department is committed to providing the highest level of fire and rescue services possible through community involvement, education, and prevention. Our team of friendly and dedicated professionals will strive for excellence to serve our community in paradise.

DEPARTMENT CHARACTERISTICS

You will see from the organizational chart (*Attach. #1*) that Key Largo Fire Department is structured in such a way to allow for the highest level of professional coverage by identifying the positions necessary to accomplish this and ensure proper checks and balances and chain of command. The nature of the combination department does not always allow us to fill every position, but we have identified the necessity and opportunity for each. We have been fortunate that in difficult economic times when budgetary constraints are an ever-tightening reality and volunteerism is ever decreasing, we have managed to retain and recruit an impressive number of volunteers. Additionally, we have been identifying our needs for full-time uninterrupted coverage and been allowed to meet some of those needs with the addition of full time paid career personnel. The Department continues to meet and exceed State of Florida requirements for certification requirements for paid and volunteer personnel and to ensure that all personnel are well trained and physically fit.

Our combat operations team consists of a Fire Chief, 3 career Captains, 4 career Lieutenants, and 11 career Driver Engineer’s. Our career Captains at Station 24 handle administrative duties and support both the combat operations and the administrative operations of the department. The combat operations are broken down into 5 different divisions within the department, Training Division, Logistics Division, Fire Prevention & Planning Division, Station Grounds & Maintenance Division, and Apparatus Tools & Maintenance Division.

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Our corporate operations consist of volunteer positions as Corporate President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and three Directors. The Corporate Board of Directors oversee the Fire Chief, the membership and Corporate business matters. The Corporation also operates in compliance with the Florida Sunshine Law.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS AND CHALLENGES/VULNERABILITIES – Fire Department Response

Demographics

Key Largo is a small island community that is home for many senior citizens. The U.S. 2020 Census has the population of Key Largo at 12,500. Senior Citizens aged 65 years and older comprise 26.8 percent of the population. Many residents of the area own second homes or come seasonally and make their primary residence in another city and state. Most of these individuals are retirees 65 years and older. Children 18 years and under according to the U.S. 2020 Census comprise 15.8 percent of the population and Children 5 years and under according to the U.S. 2020 Census comprise 4.4 percent of the population. There are approximately 9,954 housing units per the 2020 US Census It is important to note that visitation to Key Largo is year-round with the heaviest influx during winter season (November through April) and Spring Break Season (March through May). Weekend visitation is extremely high. The local Chamber of Commerce estimates that the annual visitation to Monroe County can easily exceed 4 – 5 million per year. Many of these visitors spend their time in our various households/homes in the Keys.

Challenges/Vulnerabilities

Key Largo residents and visitors reside in a variety of different types of homes. In addition to regular “CBS structure neighborhoods”. Key Largo has 7 trailer communities with approximately 2,800 residents (U.S. 2020 CENSUS); marinas that house live-aboard vessels (approximately 5 communities, with approximately 55 boats and 80-90 residents); and homes that were constructed prior to the development of quality building codes and “grandfathered” so that they are not required to meet current quality building and fire codes. The vulnerability for fire hazards to exist in these environments is great.

Visitation has doubled since the end of 2019 accordingly to recent tourism figures from the Chamber of Commerce. Approximately 91 percent of visitors whether it be visiting and staying in Key Largo or passing through Key Largo do so via automobile. This would account for the large percentage/number of annual motor vehicle accidents.

RESPONSE - INCIDENT STATISTICS

EMERGENCY INCIDENT/CALL VOLUME 2022

(2022) Total emergency call volume for all incidents was **973**. This is an increase of 75 calls or 13% from 2021.

Total fire related incidents were 388 incidents or 40% of the total call volume in **2022 (973)**.

Motor Vehicle accidents totaled 140 and comprised 14% of our total call volume in **2022 (973)**.

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The Department provided **mutual aid** to neighboring Fire and EMS Departments **34 times in 2022**. This is a decrease of 65 calls for mutual aid from 2021 because the Department has stopped tracking mutual aid given to KLEMS. The Department received mutual aid from neighboring Fire and EMS Departments **30 times in 2022**. This is a decrease of 21 calls for mutual aid from 2021.

The number of **EMS or Medical assistance** totaled **549 calls** or 56.4% of the total call volume in **2022 (973)**. This is an increase of 94 calls since 2021.

EMERGENCY INCIDENT RESPONSE 2022

Average Attendance at NFIRS (total) incidents **(973) in 2022** was **4**. This is a decrease of one firefighter per emergency call from 2021.

Average Response time to all NFIRS (total) incidents **(973) in 2022** was **5.03 minutes** (From dispatch to arrival on scene).

UNAUTHORIZED/ILLEGAL BURNING 2022

The total number of unauthorized and **illegal burns in 2022** totaled **5** or .01% of the total call volume **(973)**. This is an increase of 3 illegal burns since 2021.

The total number of **false alarms for 2022** totaled including malicious or mischievous calls, system malfunctions, unintentional tripping of interior device and other false alarms such as bomb scares totaled **95** or 9.8% of the total call volume **(973)**. This is an increase of 10 false alarm calls since 2021.

The total number of **Hazardous Materials Incidents in 2022** totaled **50** or 5.1% of the total call volume **(973)**. This is a decrease of 9 Hazardous Materials calls since 2021.

The total number of **Severe Weather & Natural Disaster Incidents in 2022** totaled **3** of the total call volume **(973)**. This is an increase of 2 Severe Weather & Natural Disaster calls since 2021.

RESPONSE – ADDRESSING CHALLENGES/VULNERABILITIES

Since the Fire Department and Key Largo Fire Rescue & EMS District passed the open burn ordinance and the false alarm ordinance, we have experienced a decrease in these types of calls.

Key Largo experiences an annual tropical storm and hurricane season that lasts from April until November. The Department feels it is a large part of their mission and responsibility to ensure that the members and visitors to their community have the opportunity to become educated on what measures to take during such emergencies and what to do when they find themselves in these emergency situations.

Grants and Improving ISO Ratings

Key Largo is referred to as the “Dive Capital of the World”. You are never more than 3 minutes from water when you are in Key Largo. The community consists primarily of businesses and homes that are either directly ocean, bay, canal front, or just adjacent to a water source. We do; however, have some areas in our District that are not close to an available water source. This has adversely affected our ISO rating in the past; however, by obtaining a grant through Fireman’s Fund Insurance agency, the Department was able to purchase two Turbo Drafts to aid in getting water to these areas. This has resulted in an improvement in our ISO ratings for those areas which has directly translated into savings in insurance premiums

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for our businesses and residents located in those areas.

Our overall ISO rating was a 5/9 in 2011 and is now a 4/4X. We are very pleased with our new rating and hope to continue to decrease this rating the next time ISO evaluates us. We expect to be evaluated again in 2023 and are working to achieve a rating of 3/3X.

The Department has made a concentrated effort working with the Key Largo Fire Rescue and EMS District as well as Monroe County to improve our service and ultimately our ISO rating through the installation of new hydrants, improvement in staffing levels, water supply, training, equipment, and many other components that are considered when an ISO review is conducted. The Key Largo Fire Response district currently has more than 334 hydrants through the annual budget the Department was able to allocate funds and complete the installation of 7 new fire hydrants and has budgeted \$150,000 in fiscal year 2022/2023 for the installation of 7 more hydrants. Availability of nearby water source positively impacts our ISO rating. It also enhances our ability to fight fires by having water readily available.

Our firefighters conduct quarterly visual inspections of these hydrants and the District budgets for the Florida Aqueduct Authority to conduct a full annual inspection and maintenance program on all hydrants.

FIRE PREVENTION

FIRE PREVENTION is the "NAME OF THE GAME" as far as Key Largo Firefighters are concerned. The best way to support our community and provide the highest level of fire rescue services is to continually educate the public on what

they can do to PREVENT fires, accidents, and injuries due to emergency related incidents. We also continually strive to educate OURSELVES in the latest fire and rescue techniques and strive to ensure that our neighborhoods, businesses, marinas, schools, etc. are the recipients of pre-fire planning and inspection. Education, training, and preparation are essential in ensuring that this happens.

We continually like to encourage residents, schools, and businesses to contact us for a free pre-incident inspection and fire prevention session. We regularly conduct pre-fire planning of our local businesses so that we know the layout of the property, where the necessary water sources and hook-ups are located, the type of emergency warning and sprinkler systems they have and where the control panels are located, entrance and egress to the properties, etc. so that we can provide the most efficient and highest quality service in time of need. This greatly helps should there be a fire because the Department personnel know the layout and hazards, thus they already have a plan on how best to handle the emergency.

We regularly schedule fire prevention education and activities at the local pre-schools and elementary schools during fire prevention week as well as throughout the year as requested.

FIRE CHIEF

Fire Chief Donald Bock volunteers as the Fire Chief for the Key Largo Fire Department.

TRAINING

Our Commitment to training continues. The Department boasts 7 state certified fire instructors, 4 of which have been certified as a Live Fire Training Instructor (LFTI-1) In addition

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to daily training drills with on-duty shift personnel, the Department conducts daily training and also hosts quarterly multi-agency training with the surrounding departments. The Department continues to focus on E.V.O.C training and has revamped their in-house driver training and evaluation program using guides and materials provided by our automobile insurance carrier VFIS.

The department continues to send its personnel to outside training events like the Ft. Lauderdale Fire Conference, Orlando Fire Conference, and Great Florida Fire School where firefighters get to enhance and test their skills in live burn scenarios in actual CBS construction and wood frame homes, vehicle extrications, incident command, and other pertinent trainings. The department also provides in-house training courses like Building Construction, Strategies & Tactics, Course Delivery, Company Officer, Fire Service Hydraulics, Apparatus Operations, Aerial Operations, and EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operators Course). The department also sends its personnel to other agencies to attend trainings like Advanced Vehicle Extrication (VMR), Aerial Operations, and Technical Rescue (FLUSAR) among other courses. These courses provide our personnel the knowledge to training to advance their skills within the fire service. Our Captain's and Lieutenants are required to hold the State of Florida Fire Officer I and/or Fire Officer II Certifications along with Fire Service Instructor State Certifications and are able to teach the above-mentioned classes.

The Department requires all of our Driver Engineers to have a State of Florida Approved EVOC, Fire Service Hydraulics & Apparatus Operations which go hand and hand in pump operations and also recommends that they

retain their State Pump Operators Certificate. The Department continues to improve their existing comprehensive orientation and training for all new firefighters. This training or "Rookie Book" must be satisfactorily completed by new volunteer firefighters prior to final acceptance with the Department along with a 12-month evaluation period where their skills are tested.

RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

The Department welcomed 6 new volunteer firefighters in 2022. All of the applicants came to us as fully state certified Firefighter's and have their State EMT and/or Paramedic certification as well. The Department also lost 4 volunteers and 1 career staff members in 2022 to surrounding departments. 4 of our volunteers and 1 of our career staff members obtained career jobs with other surrounding fire departments; they had from 1 to 5 years of service with Key Largo Fire Department.

Our proximity to the mainland, Miami area and the fact that we are one of the few volunteer companies in South Florida aids us in our efforts to recruit volunteers. This very thing also works against us when it comes to retention of volunteers. We serve as a hands-on training ground for young recruits right out of the academy only to see them hired by the nearby municipalities. The experience and training the firefighters receive also helps their chances of being hired by another fire department so it's a win-win situation. This is a revolving and ongoing process. This process allows us to hone our training and management skills. Feedback from neighboring departments that hire our volunteers is highly positive.

The Department continues the volunteer reimbursement (stipend) program and training program that has proven to be highly beneficial

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in attracting volunteers to the Department and in retaining them even after they have accepted career positions with other Departments.

Our Department cares about the community it serves and offers support and services that extend beyond the reactive fire and rescue services through fire prevention and education, pre-fire planning, and involvement in community events. We instill a sense of “Community” in our Department. This intrinsic value of belonging and helping one another (family) is probably the largest contributing factor toward retention of volunteers and staff.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The health and wellness of our firefighting personnel is vital. The Department makes the physical fitness and health and wellness of its firefighters a top priority. The Department encourages physical fitness in part by the use of its donation dollars to create a gymnasium equipped with state-of-the-art exercise equipment. Volunteers are encouraged to use the gym while on shift and career personnel are allotted an hour per day to be used exclusively for physical fitness.

Annual health screenings are required of all personnel. The District budget has provided the funds to cover the cost in full of these comprehensive health screenings that are conducted on the fire department premises. All combat firefighters are required to pass the NFPA 1582 recommended firefighter medical physical.

New recruits are required to pass a physical ability test (in addition to written exam and oral interview) prior to obtaining a position with the Department. The Department is a tobacco, drug

and alcohol-free organization with policies governing this.

The Department has also donated to and joined a number of Cancer Awareness and support groups and has shown their support for breast cancer awareness by “wearing pink”. The pink tee-shirts are cancer awareness combat shirts. The Department has allowed the use of it’s classroom to host breast cancer screenings by qualified medical professionals agencies.

NIMS COMPLIANT

The Key Largo Fire Rescue and EMS District is committed to providing the most effective approach to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents. Regardless of the cause, size or complexity and supports a unified approach toward command, training, and management of resources. This is to ensure interoperability and compatibility among Federal, State, and local emergency agencies.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET

The Department has consistently worked with the District in an effort to reduce budget line items in an effort to keep the tax burden to our residents and businesses as low as possible.

LOOKING FORWARD...

The department has established a 5 year plan to hire 9 more career staff members as well as the purchase of new equipment. The Department is also working closely with the District on the second story addition and renovation of Station #24.

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We have placed emphasis on and taken a team approach to updating and improving our standard operating procedures on a yearly basis and have implemented a SOP Committee that reviews, creates, and updates SOPs to fit our department's needs.

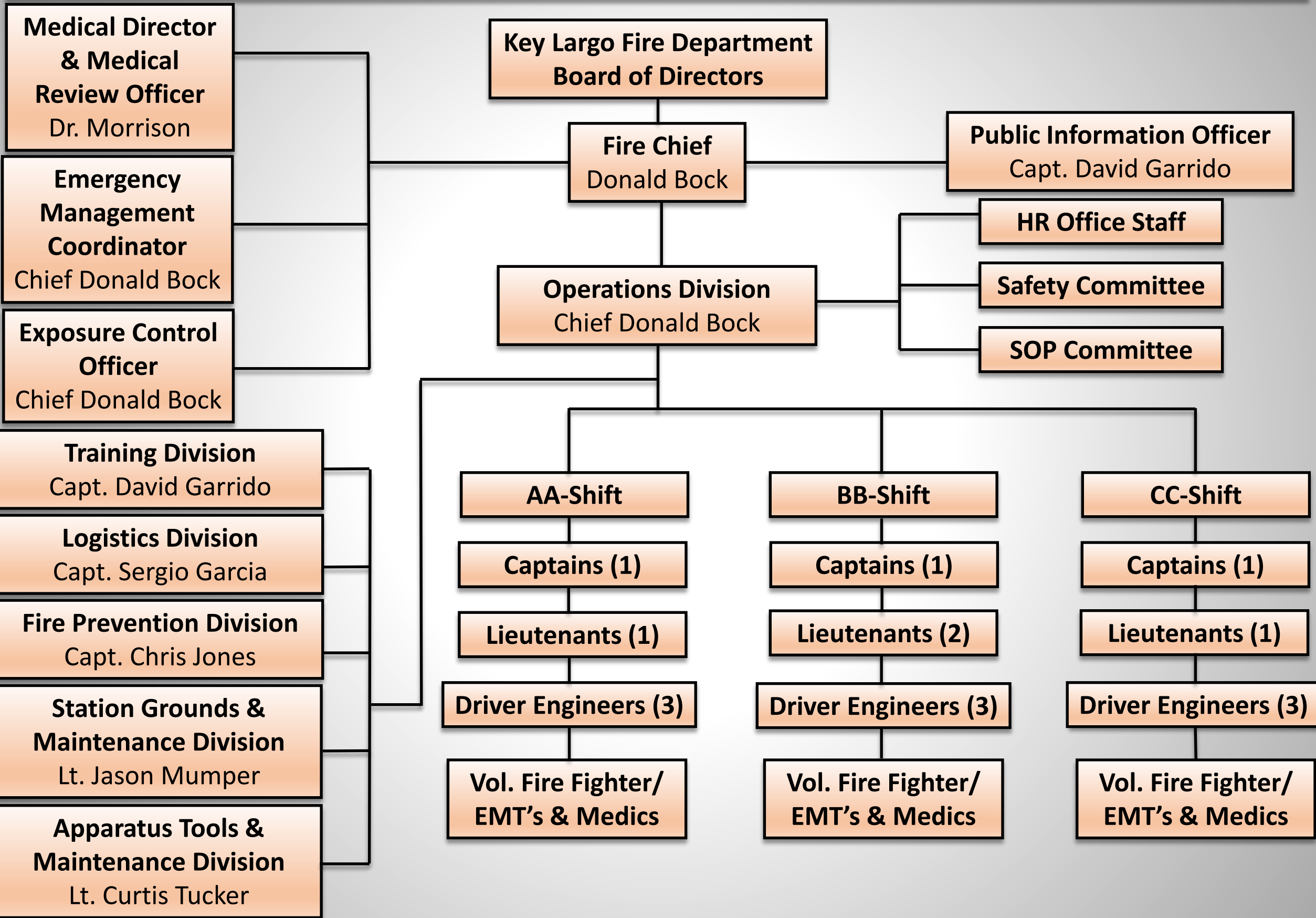
We have come a long way since the inception of this new department on May 27, 2013. We carry with us the tradition and history as well as much of the personnel from the previous fire department – essentially 60 years of primarily volunteer service to the Key Largo Community. Today we are still a small-town Community when it comes to available resources, but we have become significantly larger when you look at the challenges we face. We continue to provide the highest level of fire services at the lowest cost in Monroe County. And we are doing this in a rapidly changing municipal and political environment with ever challenging economic realities. Post 9-11 strengthening of requirements for the Fire Service created new challenges as well. Our challenges may be different than they were 5, 10, 50, 60 years ago, and may be not quite as evident, but very real. We have; however, managed to meet these challenges and improve our quality and level of service and will strive to continue the trend through education, communication, teamwork, and strategic planning.

Thank you to the staff and members of the Key Largo Fire Department, our District Commissioners as well as all of the members and staff of the Key Largo Volunteer Ambulance Corps. A very special thank you to the Community we are privileged to serve.

Please keep up with the ever-changing face of Key Largo Fire Department by liking us on our FACEBOOK PAGE – Or visiting our website at <https://www.facebook.com/keylargofiredepartment>

www.keylargofire.org

Key Largo Fire Department Organizational Chart



KEY LARGO FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



Section 000: Organizational Chart Division Breakdown

Subject: Organizational Chart

Effective: Ongoing

S.O.P. 000.000

Approved By:
Donald Bock, Fire
Chief

Revised:

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Forms Required:

I. Department Divisional Breakdown:

A. Training Division

- i. Captain David Garrido, Dept. Training Officer (Lead)
- ii. Lt. Jaime Arana (EMS Lead)

1. Department State Instructors:

- a. Capt. David Garrido
- b. Capt. Chris Jones
- c. Capt. Sergio Garcia
- d. Lt. Jaime Arana
- e. Lt. Jason Mumper
- f. Lt. Curtis Tucker

B. Logistics Division (Lifescan, Supplies, PPE, Communications)

- i. Capt. Sergio Garcia (Lead)
- ii. Capt. Chris Jones (Back-Up)

C. Apparatus Tools & Maintenance Division

- i. Lt. Curtis Tucker (Lead)
- ii. Capt. Chris Jones (Back-Up)



D. Fire Prevention Division

- i. Capt. Chris Jones (Lead)
- ii. Capt. Sergio Garcia (Back-Up)

E. Station & Grounds Maintenance Division

- i. Lt. Jason Mumper (Lead)
- ii. Lt. Fernando Garcia (Back-Up)

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	Section 000: Organizational Chart Division Breakdown	
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	Effective: Ongoing	S.O.P. 000.000
	Approved By: Donald Bock, Fire Chief 	Revised:
	Forms Required:	

II. Standing Department Committees

A. Safety Committee

- i. Capt. David Garrido (Chair)
- ii. Capt. Chris Jones
- iii. Capt. Sergio Garcia
- iv. Lt. Jaime Arana
- v. D/E Fabio De Las Cuevas
- vi. D/E Fernando Garcia
- vii. D/E Sebastian Sanchez

B. Standard Operations Procedures (SOP) Committee

- i. Chief Donald Bock
- ii. Capt. Chris Jones
- iii. Capt. David Garrido
- iv. Capt. Sergio Garcia