

# STATE OF THE FIRE- EMS DEPARTMENT

Presented by Sal Scarpa

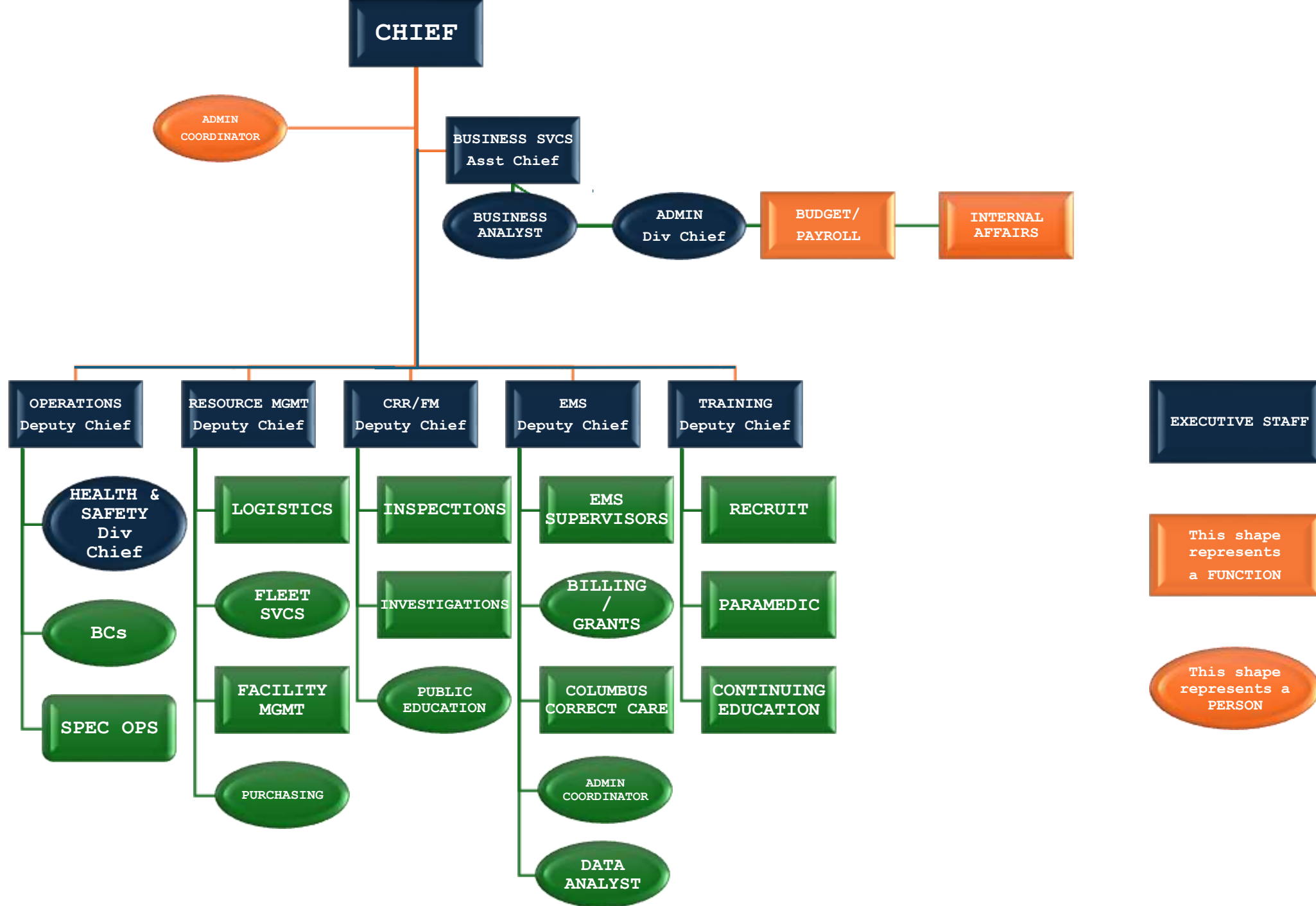
Fire-EMS Chief

# THE BASICS

- All-hazards response agency
- 14 fire stations
- Authorized strength: 433
- ISO Class 1 rating
- CFAI Accredited: 27 years



# CFEMS ORGANIZATION CHART





**GOLD HELMET DEPARTMENT**

# HIGHLIGHTS

1. COLUMBUS CORRECT CARE
2. STAFFING
3. FACILITIES

# COLUMBUS CORRECT CARE





# COLUMBUS CORRECT CARE

*"Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning"* - Benjamin Franklin

The National Association of Counties is proud to award  
**Columbus-Muscogee County, Ga.**

A 2025 Achievement Award for its program titled:  
**Columbus Correct Care**

  
Matthew Chase, CEO/Executive Director



  
Supervisor James Gore, NACo President



# CCC VALUE: REDUCED 911 DEMAND AND AVOIDED RESPONSE COST

Calendar year 2025 results from Care 1 activity (started Feb. 3, 2025) and Right Site 911 Navigation (started Oct. 2025).

## ~\$176K

### Documented 2025 Emergency Response Cost Savings

Care 1 weekly engagement and post-exit results saved about \$152.3K, and Right Site 911 added another \$23.9K in avoided response cost.

### 61%

fewer 911 calls while enrolled for 25 program completers

### 580

total Care 1 visits completed

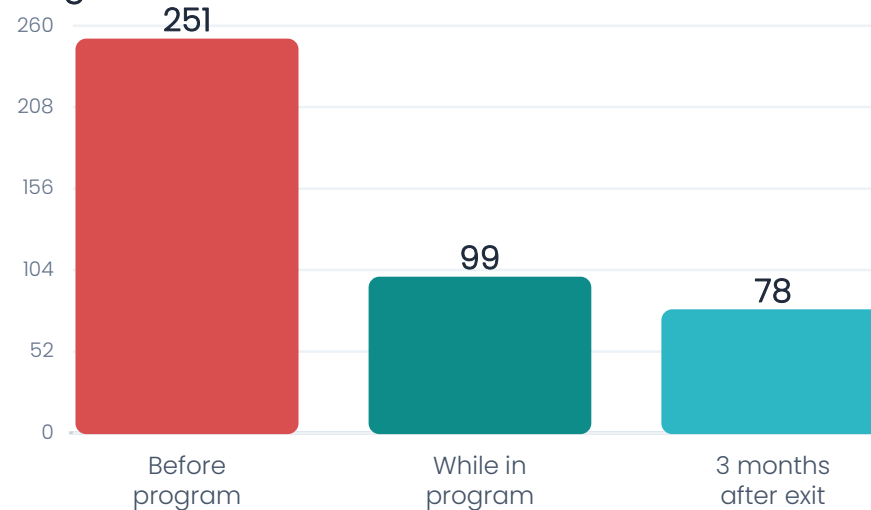
### 27

Right Site diversions with no Fire EMS response

### How The Savings Were Generated

- \$134.6K saved while participants were active in Care 1
- \$17.7K saved within 3 months after program exit
- \$23.9K saved from Right Site 911 diversions

### 911 Calls For The 25 Citizens Who Completed The Program



### 186

addresses visited

### 124

citizen contacts

### 43

agreed to weekly visits

### Why This Matters

- 114 citizens were identified directly from run-report data, with another 69 referrals from Fire EMS crews.
- Care 1 shifts repeat callers from episodic 911 use toward planned follow-up and resource linkage.
- Right Site 911 proves CCC can intercept some low-acuity calls before dispatch occurs.

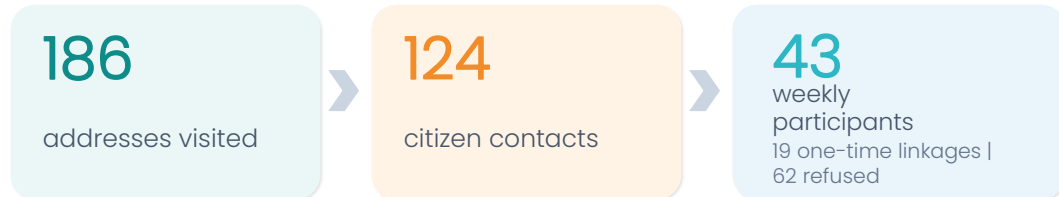
Documented savings total = \$134,617.28 + \$17,712.80 + \$23,912.28 = \$176,242.36

# CCC impact: earlier intervention and better care routing

Care 1 shows broad community reach in 2025; Care 2 adds a behavioral health response pathway with early 2026 traction (data through Mar. 24, 2026).

## CARE 1 COMMUNITY IMPACT IN 2025

The unit concentrated on residents with recurrent need, especially older adults, and connected them to practical supports that can stabilize health and social risk.



### Who Was Served

**67%**

of weekly participants were age 60-79

- Largest age band: 60-69 (19 citizens)
- Next highest: 70-79 (10 citizens)
- Most activity came from 31907, 31909, 31906, and 31904

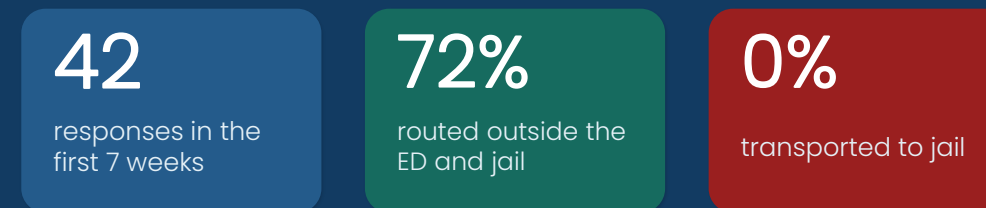
### Most Frequent Resource Referrals



These referrals address practical barriers that often drive repeat 911 use.

## CARE 2 EARLY SIGNAL (FEB. 2-MAR. 24, 2026)

The Mental Health Co-Responder Unit is already demonstrating a distinct behavioral health pathway that keeps people out of jail and often out of the ED.



### Disposition Mix

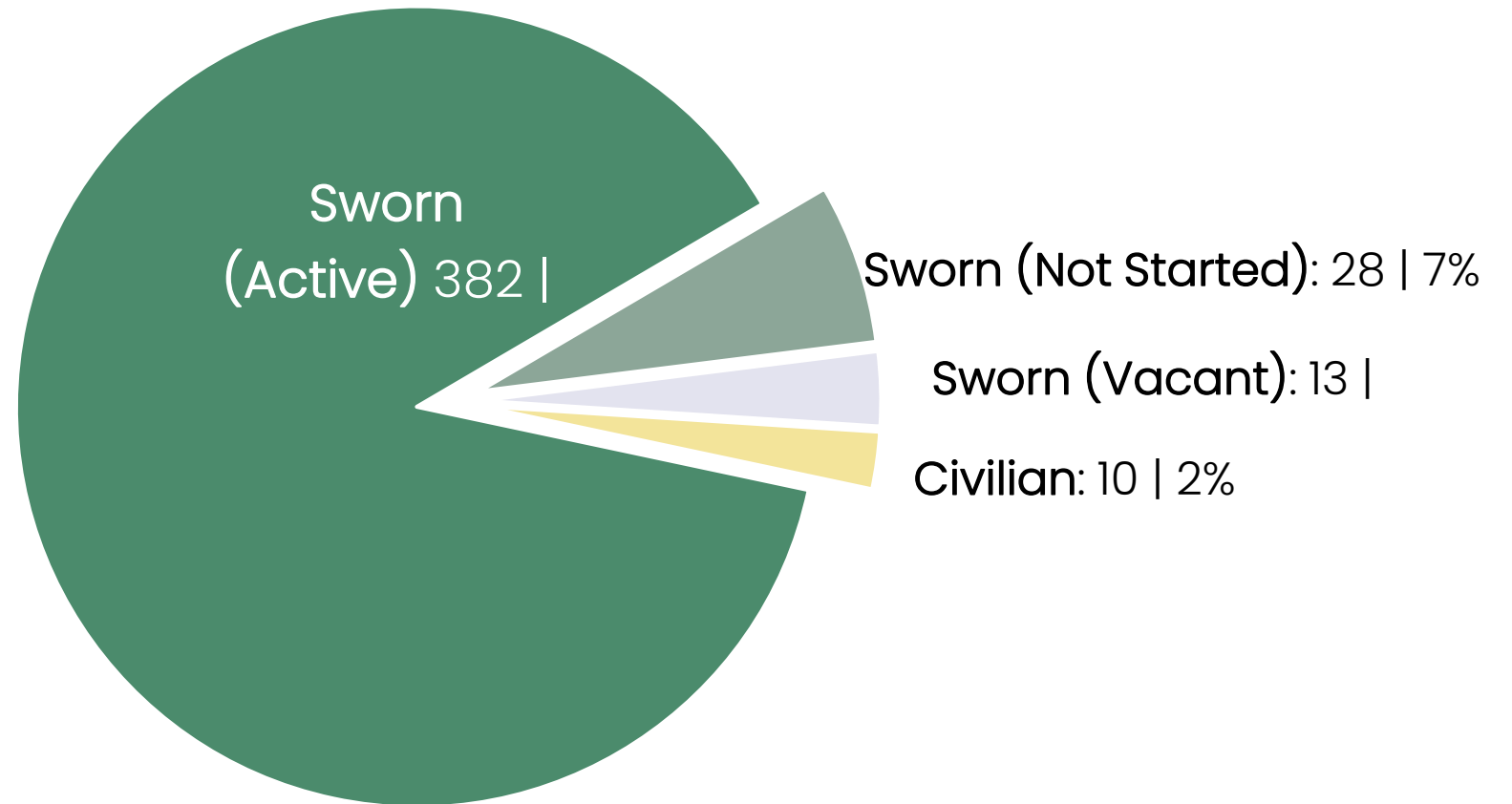


- 31% transported directly to Bradley by Care 2
- 29% remained at home or were provided resources
- 12% transported to Bradley via CPD officer
- 28% required ED transport because of medical exclusion criteria

~55% self-dispatched  
Peak demand: Tue/Thu, 11:00-14:00

Implication: CCC now addresses both repeat medical/social-utilizer demand and low-acuity behavioral health demand.

# STAFFING SNAPSHOT

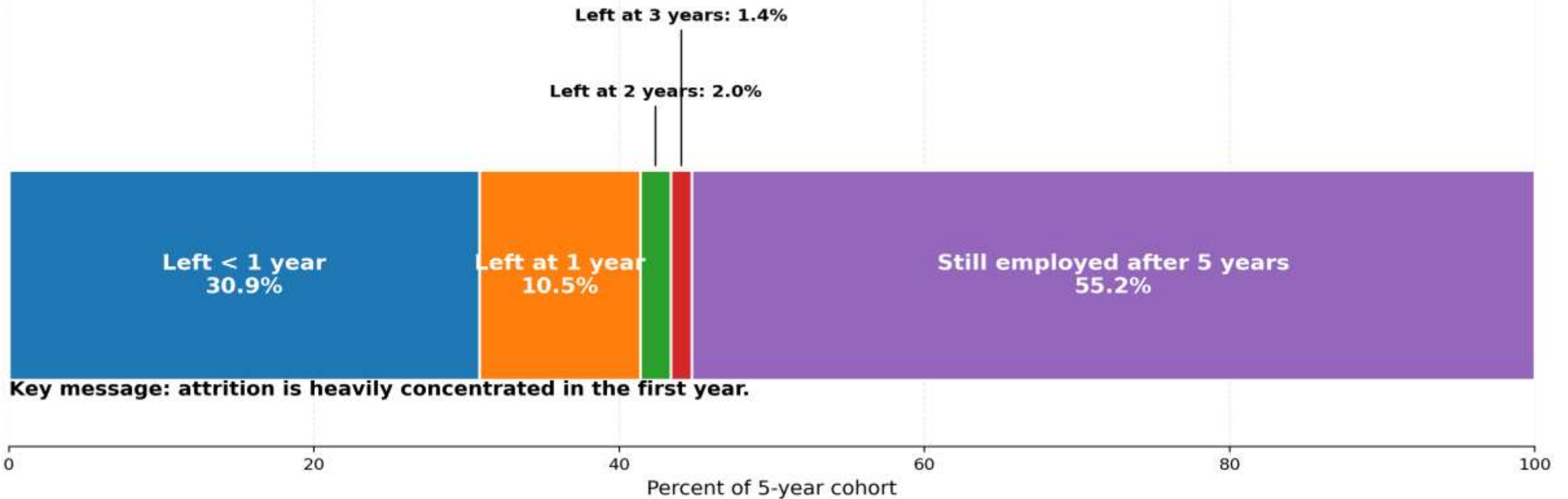


# Retention: The Core Risk

45% attrition within 5 years

Cohort: 295 employees | 5-year attrition: 44.75% | 5-year retention: 55.25%

## 5-Year Workforce Attrition and Retention



Legend:  
Left < 1 year (Blue)  
Left at 1 year (Orange)  
Left at 2 years (Green)  
Left at 3 years (Red)  
Still employed after 5 years (Purple)



# FACILITIES





## SPLOST FUNDED RENOVATIONS

- Currently in Final Design Phase for Station #4 (built in 1970) & Station #8 (built in 1978)
- Projected Q1/FY27 - construction begins
- Projected completion in CY27
- Renovations for Station #6 (built in 1970) are part of this SPLOST

# CHIEF CHATS 2026

Listening. Learning. Leading.

## PURPOSE

- Inform FY27 Work Plan
- Formulate 5-year Strategic Plan
- Align Organizational Priorities
- Prepare for Council Briefing

**42**  
Sessions

**4**  
Overarching Findings

**12**  
Feedback themes

# THE STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT

Strong — but in transition



Green

## CULTURE

Department is proud and moving forward



Green

## STRUCTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Stability has improved in most areas

Yellow

## OPERATIONAL VULNERABILITY

Primary risks are experience & system alignment

# CFEMS Strategic Plan Progress

FY26 Strategic Working Plan scorecard | Last updated March 15, 2026



## OVERALL TASK STATUS

The plan is largely complete, with remaining work concentrated in a few goals.



● Completed 66    ● In Progress 9    ● Not Started 1

## Completion by strategic goal



## Key takeaways for Council

- The department has completed 66 of 76 strategic plan tasks, with 10 tasks remaining.
- Most unfinished work is concentrated in Goal 4 (technology/data) and Goal 3 (health and wellness).
- Three goals are fully complete: fleet sustainability, community engagement, and service delivery.
- Near-term focus should be closing active workstreams rather than launching significant new initiatives.

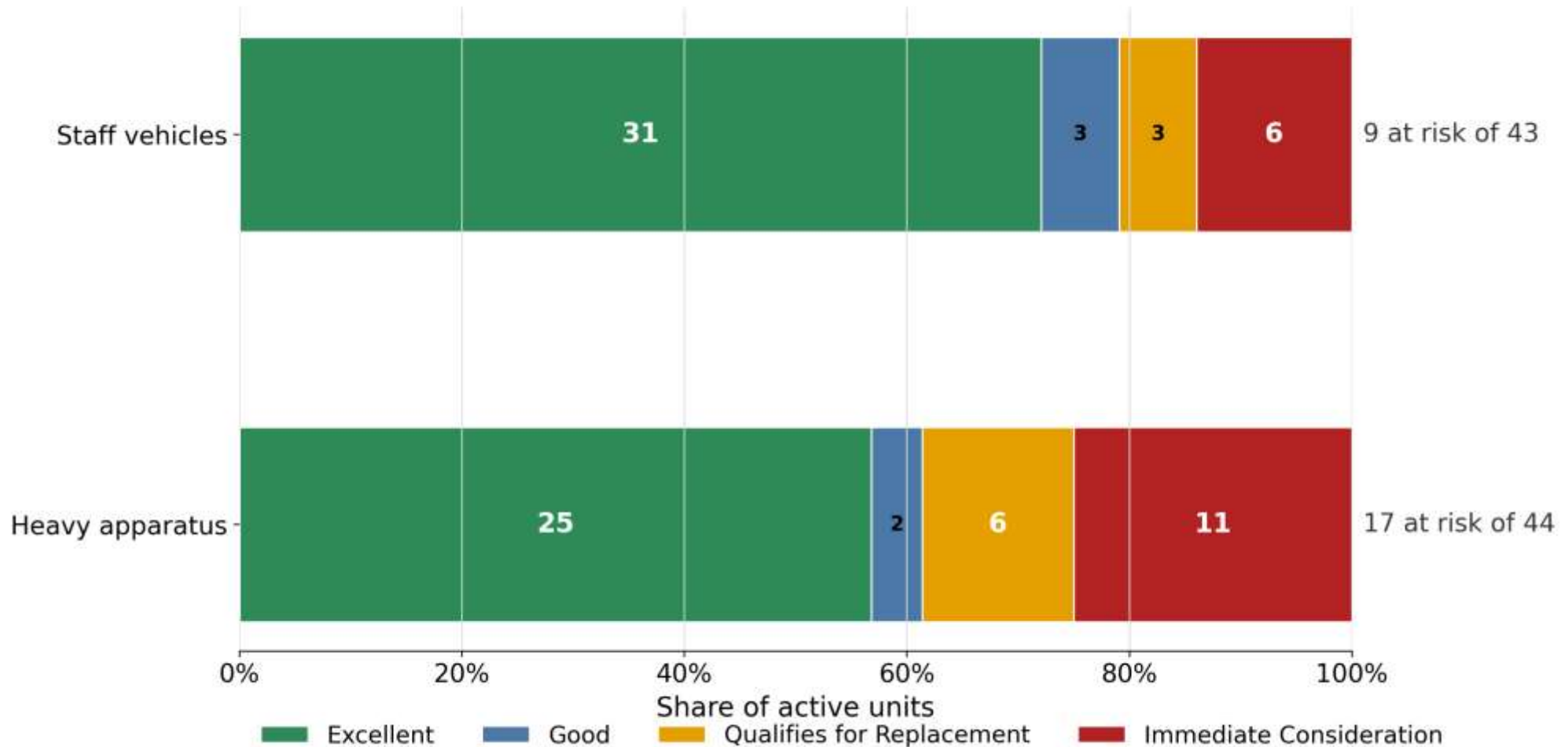


OPPORTUNITIES

# Current active fleet status

26 of 87 active units are already at or beyond replacement threshold; heavy apparatus represents 17 of those 26 units.

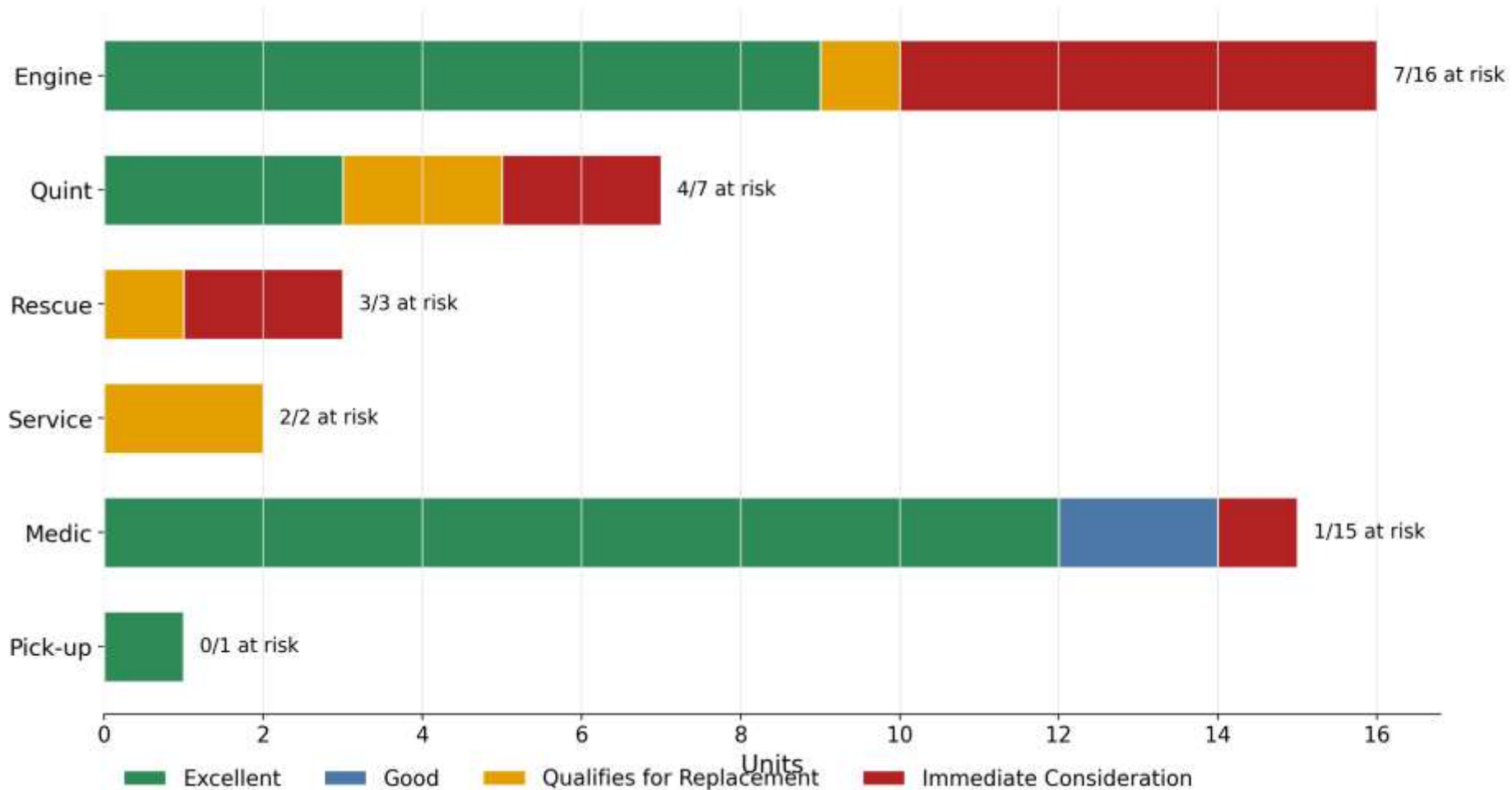
## January 2026 active fleet status



# Heavy-apparatus risk is concentrated in a few classes

Engines, quint s/ladders, rescues, and service trucks drive the current heavy-fleet replacement backlog.

## Heavy apparatus risk is concentrated in engines, ladders, and rescues

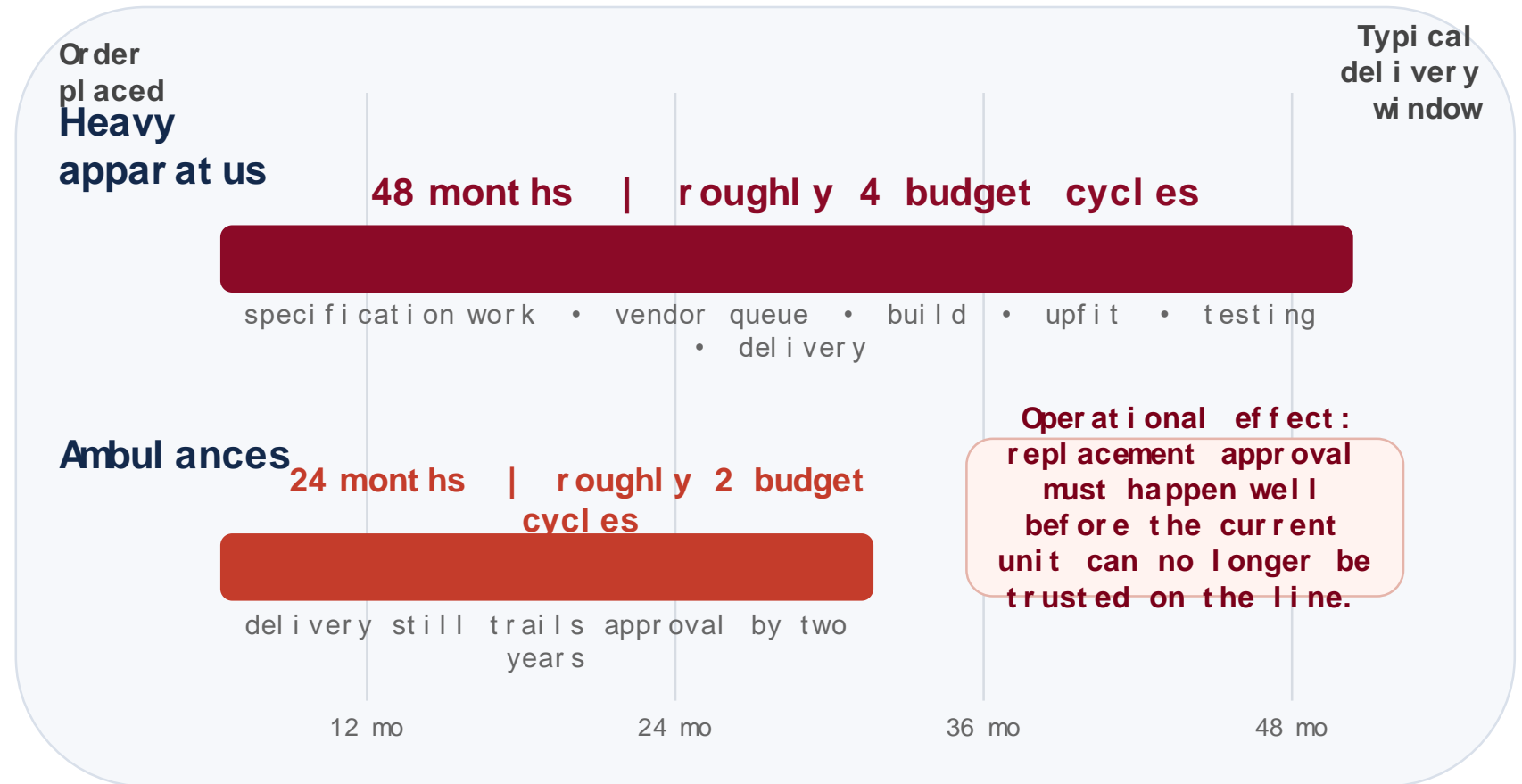


# Long acquisition cycles force earlier replacement decisions

Heavy apparatus lead times of 48 months and ambulance lead times of 24 months make fleet replacement a multi-year pipeline, *not a one-year reaction*.

Why this creates a challenge  
An emergency apparatus order can span four annual budget cycles before delivery

An ambulance order still spans two full years before relief



- Waiting until a unit becomes operationally critical no schedule cushion
- Missing one funding cycle extends reliance on aging

# PAY PARITY





WHERE DO I  
NEED YOUR  
SUPPORT?



WHERE DO WE GO  
FROM HERE?

# DIGITAL VANGUARD INITIATIVE



# FOCUS ON THE INTERMIX WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE (WUI)



# ROBUST DATA SYNTHESIS



# FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH



# NEVER FORGET



IT IS NOT 'ME',  
IT IS 'WE'

THANK YOU

