



CASE STUDY

Dunedin Fire
Department

Dunedin Fire Department Modernizes Scheduling Technology and Integrates Systems

Most people would probably be very surprised to learn how many local government agencies are still using archaic systems. Budget limitations no doubt play a big role in technology advancements. However, when you consider the painful processes imposed upon our public servants who are handicapped with outdated technology, the time savings of modern systems typically offsets the costs—along with a myriad of additional benefits.



Staffing and Payroll Complexities of a Fire Department

Dunedin Fire Department operates three fire stations and an emergency operations center in Pinellas County, FL. They run three 24-hour shifts, each containing 16 people composed of a District Chief and crews assigned to three different engines and one truck. In addition to the three shifts and administrative staff, Dunedin FD also staffs the Blue Jays games, who opened their 2021 Major League season with their home stadium in Dunedin.

Now, consider the staffing complexities across three shifts, each with specialties for an engine driver, a minimum number of firefighters, a District Chief, and administrative staff. Combine that with overtime regulations, vacation schedules, sick days, Blue Jay contract coverage, and training requirements—in an unpredictable occupation when structure fires may require all hands on deck and never falls neatly into shift changes. And then there is the payroll component which requires getting the accurate number of hours worked and pay codes to the finance department so that everyone gets paid correctly.

Imagine using spreadsheets, an old county mainframe, and about four separate systems that your Fire Chief and District Chiefs have to use to enter data, manually calculate hours, and re-enter and re-enter and re-enter information. Painful.

Modern, Mission-Critical Scheduling Solution Alleviates Painful Processes

Instead of placing individual phone calls for all-hands-on-deck situations, Dunedin FD can now send mass text notifications through the app to quickly get the word out. "We have been struggling with meeting overtime levels and staffing needs for the Blue Jays events," said Lt. Saeger, "so now we can use the app to communicate open shifts to help get the coverage we need. This will also be helpful in hurricane events so that off-duty personnel can get alerts to know when they will be activated, so they have time to get their families taken care of and be ready."

LMS Simplifies Training and Integrates with Scheduling

Chief Kevin Naylor has been with Dunedin FD for 15 years and has responsibility for the training program and their new emergency operations center, which they plan to use for a variety of training scenarios. They have been using Vector's Learning Management System (LMS, formerly known as TargetSolutions) since 2008. They use it to track all their online and in-person training, which has improved their reporting and saved a lot of time with features like the ISO Training Tracker. "We moved about 400 pounds of old training paper records that were created before we started using Vector LMS to our new training facility," said Chief Naylor. "Now that we have digitized all of our training, we don't have to sort through paper records and decipher handwritten notes. With the ISO Training Tracker, reporting is much easier and we were spot on to get all available ISO points."

Sharing Resources With Area FDs, But Maintaining Dunedin FD Identity

Dunedin FD shares an Enterprise LMS with the Pinellas County Training Group. The 18 departments can share files, policies, and coordinate joint training events through the shared portions of the system, while maintaining their own separate site for assigning training, tracking credentials, uploading training certifications, reporting on training status, etc. Chief Naylor said, "We can still maintain our own department identity, but also share ideas and new policy updates in real-time with the entire Pinellas group. Since we work together and need to be on the same page, it makes it easier to coordinate our monthly training with the department Chiefs and their crews."

Keeping Everyone Up To Date

Chief Naylor manages 55 LMS users from the Dunedin FD staff. They can easily post training events and record completions from the Pinellas Group, the St. Petersburg Fire Training Center, their own drill-yard trainings, and all their online and classroom training in one place. With the LMS Credentials feature, supervisors can also easily see everyone's training and license status, identify who is behind, and set reminders when deadlines are approaching. "We set up the system to provide 30, 60, and 90 day notifications for Credential expirations to prompt personnel on actions they need to take," said Chief Naylor. "We also use the LMS for annual performance reviews and have it set to provide a 30-day notice before the evaluation is due." Whether the certification is for CPR, Fire Boat Operator, Driver, Paramedic, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Emergency Vehicle Operator, BLS Renewal, or simply tracking their Driver's License and FCDICE Student Number expirations, the LMS sends reminders to keep everyone up-to-date.

Leveraging Vector Online Courses for Pre-Learning and During COVID

During the COVID period, Dunedin FD had been using more online coursework to continue regular training. "We use a lot of Vector's built-in canned courses for HAZMAT and NFPA required training," explained Chief Naylor. "Online courses have their place to help prepare personnel before performing hands-on drills. I also like to use the File Center and Community resource areas of the LMS for research. There is more than one way to remove glass from a vehicle or take a door off, so it's helpful to have a place to get different ideas from other departments."

Vector Check It Streamlines Checks, Repairs, and Replacements

Dunedin FD also uses Vector Check It to automate their vehicle checks, out-of-service assets, and maintenance work orders. In a quick dashboard view from a single morning's check, Check It shows that two tires needed replacing on Apparatus 157, the brake lights were out of service on Apparatus 142, a 12V to 120 inverter strip needed replaced, water was dripping behind the pump panel door collecting on gauges on Apparatus 104, and the E60 pager case was damaged and placed in the Lieutenant's office. With Check It, Dunedin FD can see the status of all apparatus, equipment, and inventory across their three stations with a dashboard view summary of out-of-service vehicles and items. They can easily see which assets have overdue checks and the number of missing items per vehicle, fireboat, etc. to streamline repairs and replacements and keep operations running smoothly.