



2023 – 2032 Region of Durham Paramedic Services Service and Financing Strategy

*Committee of the Whole
February 15, 2023*

Region of Durham Paramedic Services Service and Financing Strategy (2023 – 2032)



Context

Report responds to Regional Council's October 27, 2021 direction to staff to report back on the status of the review of the recommendations in the Comprehensive Master Plan for Paramedic Services prior to presenting the proposed Public Health and Paramedic Services 2023 Business Plans and Budget.



Purpose

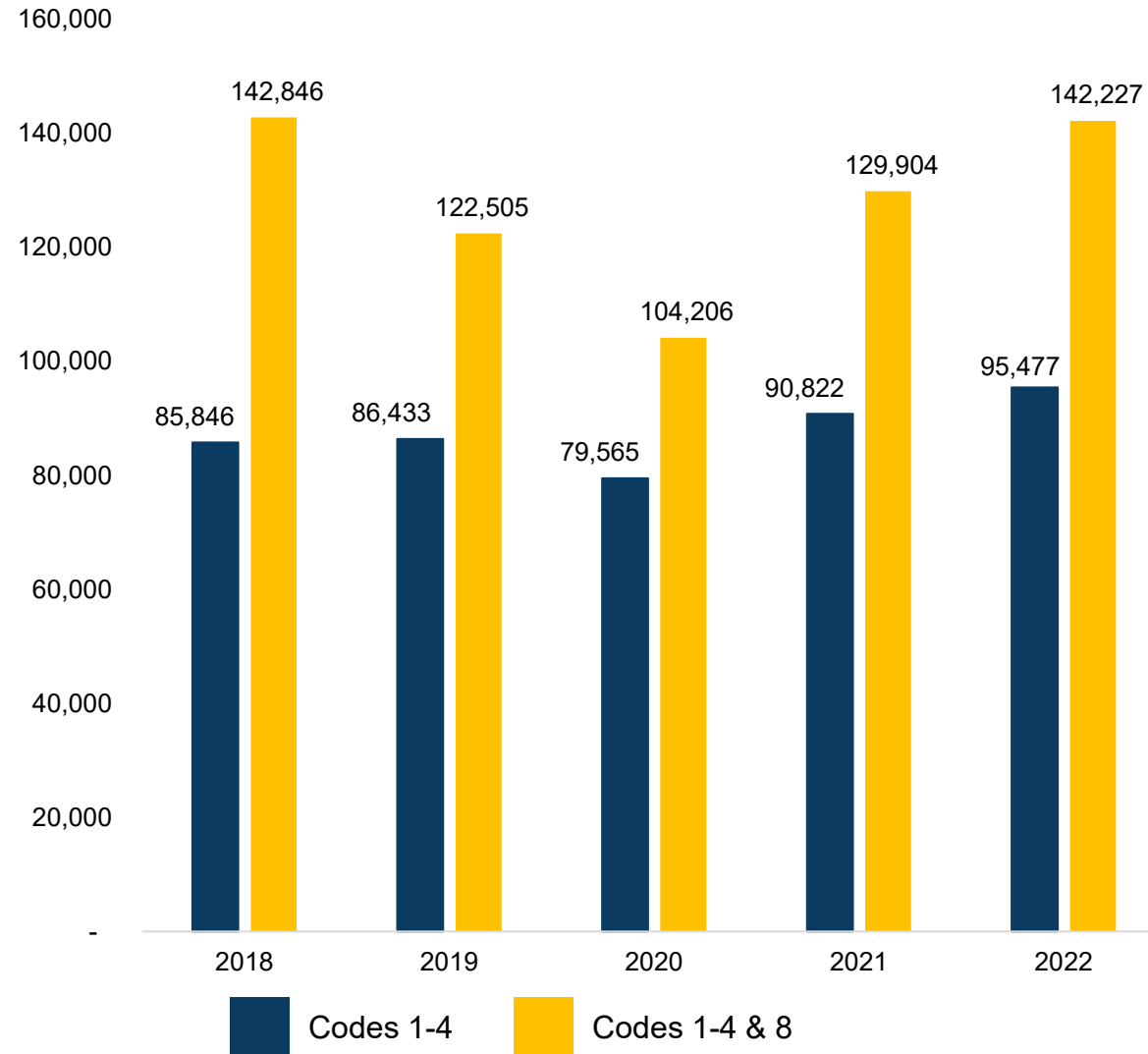
Building on service enhancements approved in 2022, the report provides a comprehensive 10-year service and financing plan for Region of Durham Paramedic Services, including consideration of projected:

- updated demand for service,
- employee health and wellness,
- operational service levels,
- external pressures impacting service (e.g. hospital offload delay),
- facility and asset management considerations,
- potential changes in provincial legislation/programs impacting paramedic service delivery and
- financial considerations.

Report Recommendations

- 1** The 10-year implementation plan for increased investment in Paramedic Services response be **approved in principle subject to annual investment approvals through the Region's business planning and budget process**;
- 2** Given the significant service level investments needed, that annual incremental increases for Paramedic Services be acknowledged in the range of **half to three-quarters of a per cent per year on the overall Regional tax levy** over the forecast period;
- 3** Staff monitor and **report every two years on the outcomes of the implementation plan** and that the plan be updated as required to respond to changes impacting the forecast including, but not limited to, changes in service demands, provincial funding, offload delays and provincial policy decisions impacting the delivery of Paramedic Services; and
- 4** Staff **continue working with the Province and local hospitals** to improve hospital offload delays, advance provincial legislative changes to improve paramedic service delivery and efficiency and advocate for additional funding to support the increased investment in paramedic services response.

Call Volumes

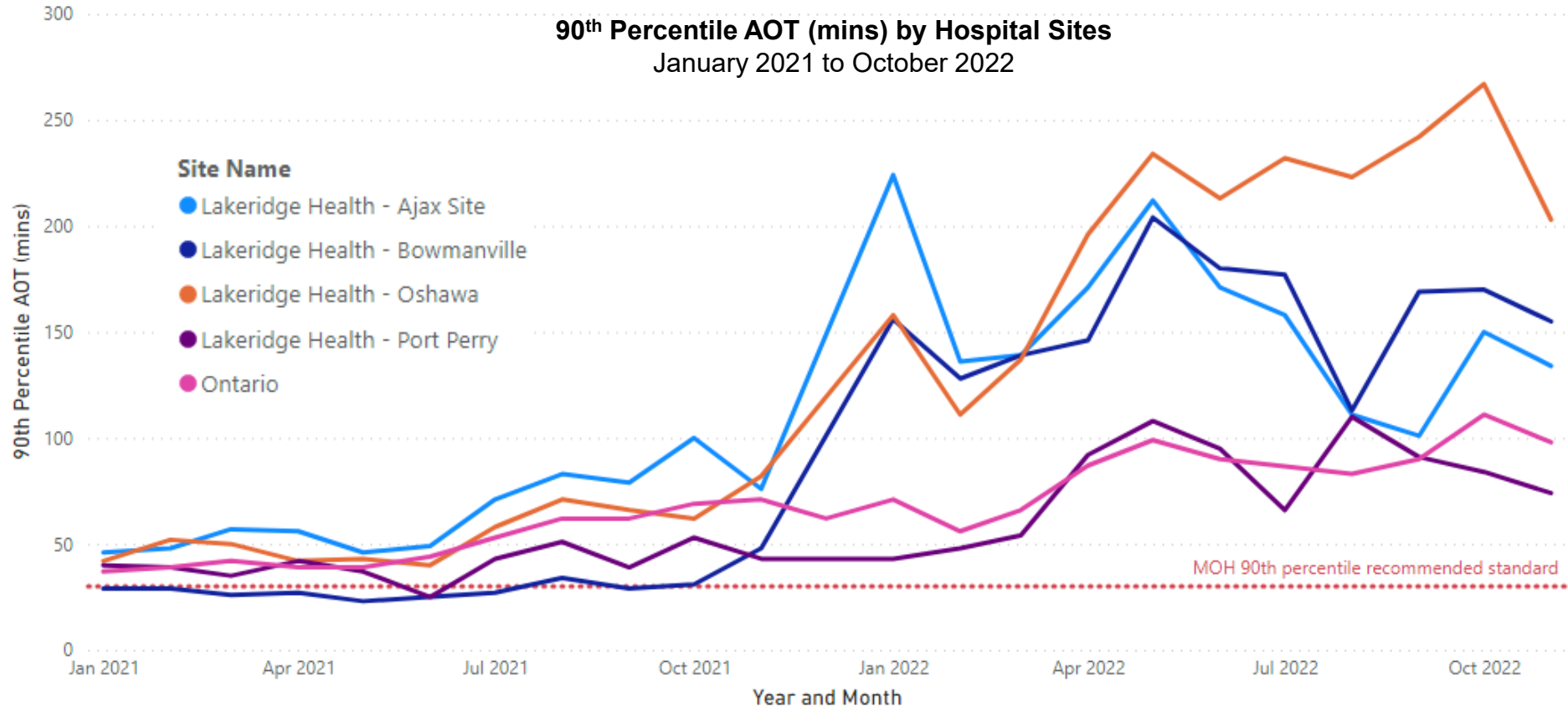


5.1% increase in Codes 1 to 4 calls from 2021 to 2022

11.2% increase in Codes 1 to 4 calls from 2018 to 2022

Source: Region of Durham Paramedic Services

Hospital Offload Delay



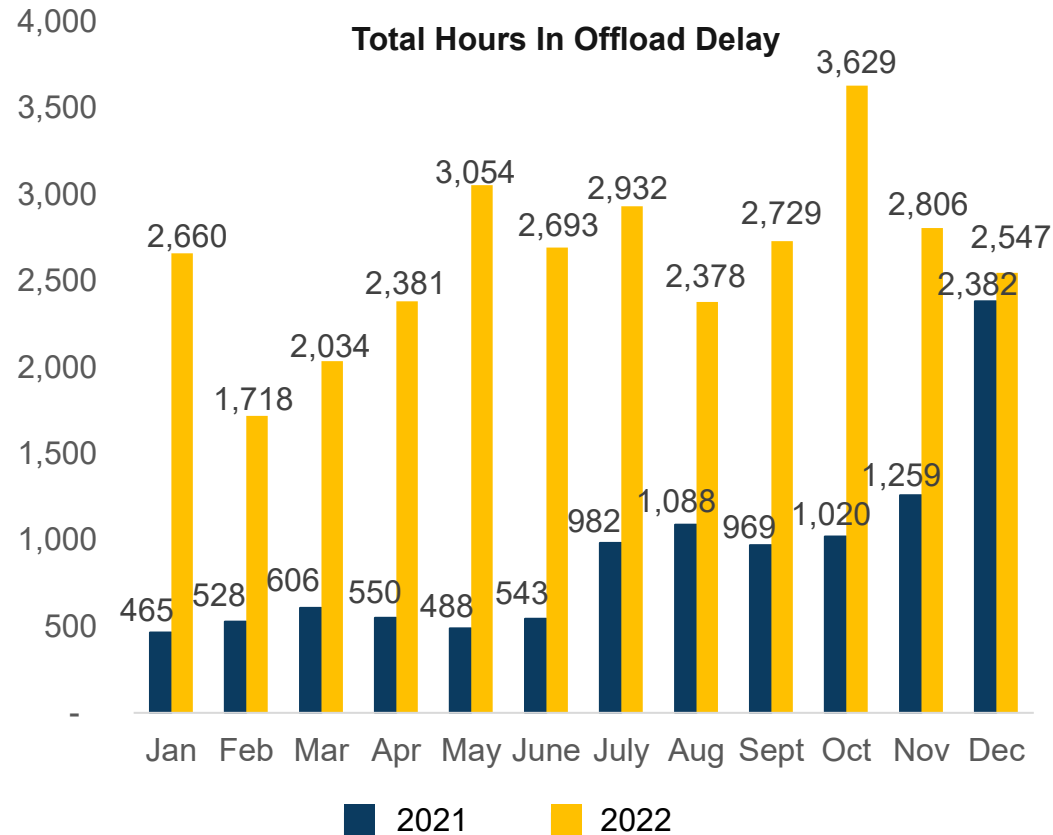
Source: Province of Ontario

Offload delays have **increased significantly since late 2021**

Lakeridge Health Hospitals' offload delays are **significantly higher than MOH's 90th percentile recommended standard**

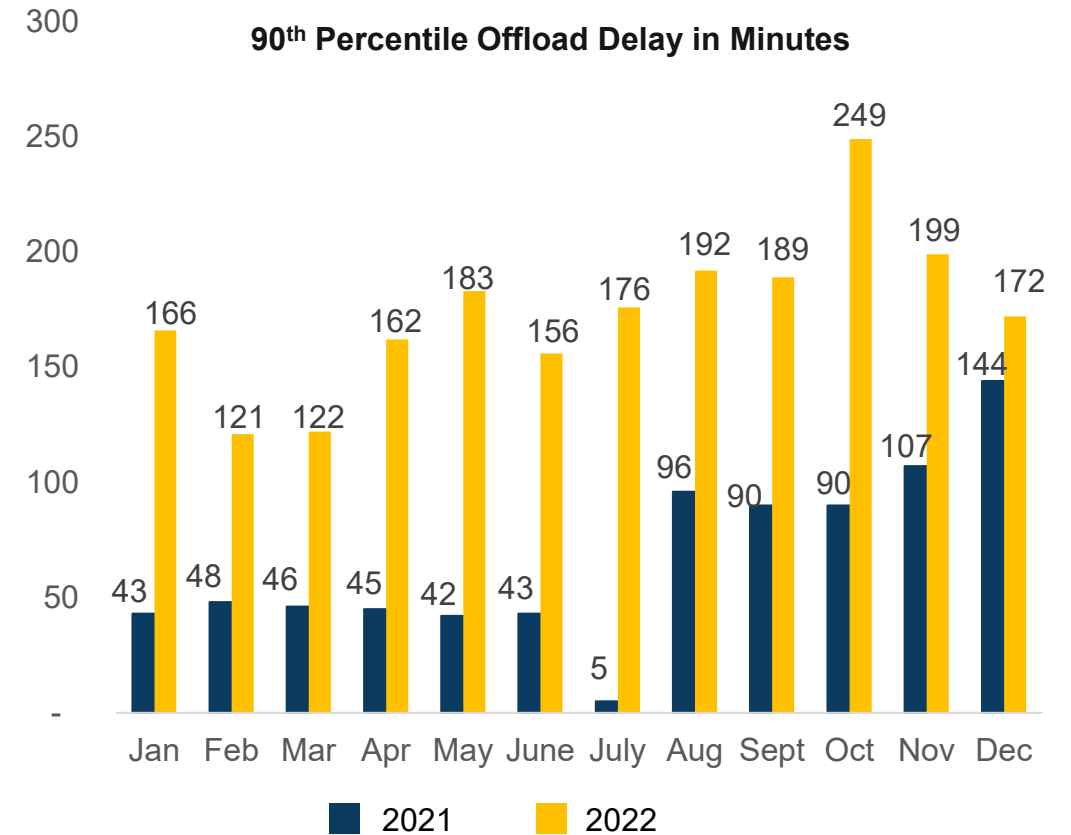
Lakeridge Health Oshawa, Bowmanville, and Ajax **consistently significantly exceed the Ontario average**

Hospital Offload Delay Continued



Source: Region of Durham Paramedic Services

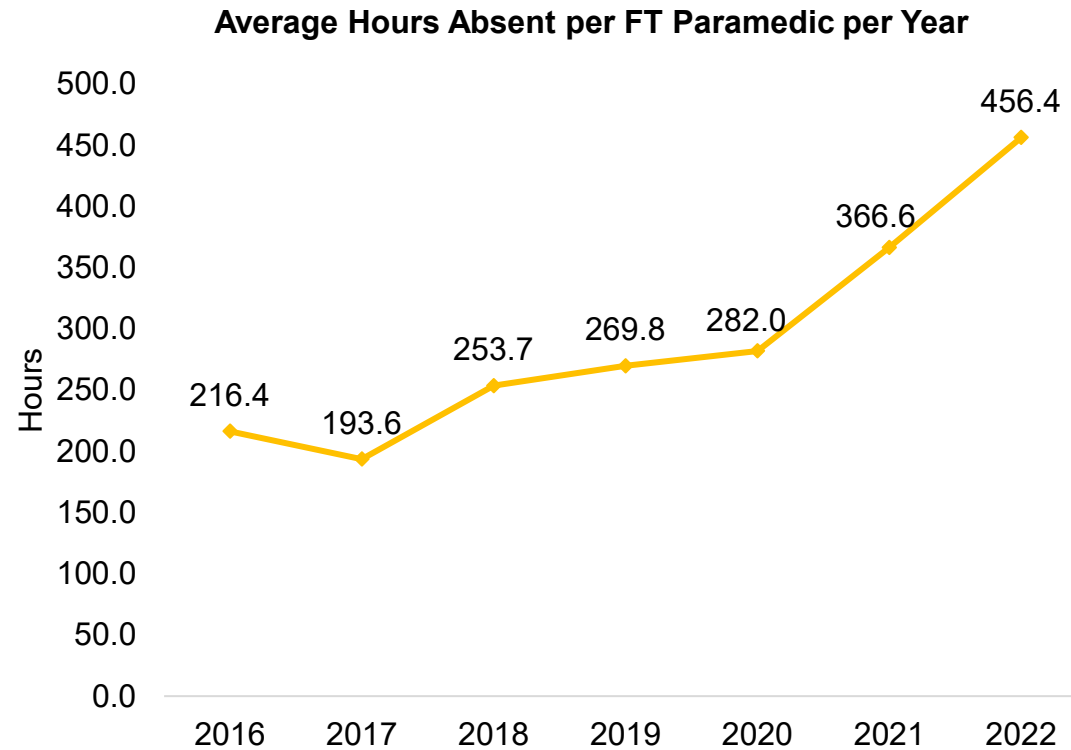
3.6 – 24 hour ambulances spent daily in offload delay on average in 2022 - compared to 1.2 on average in 2021



Source: Region of Durham Paramedic Services

190% increase in offload delay hours from 2021 to 2022

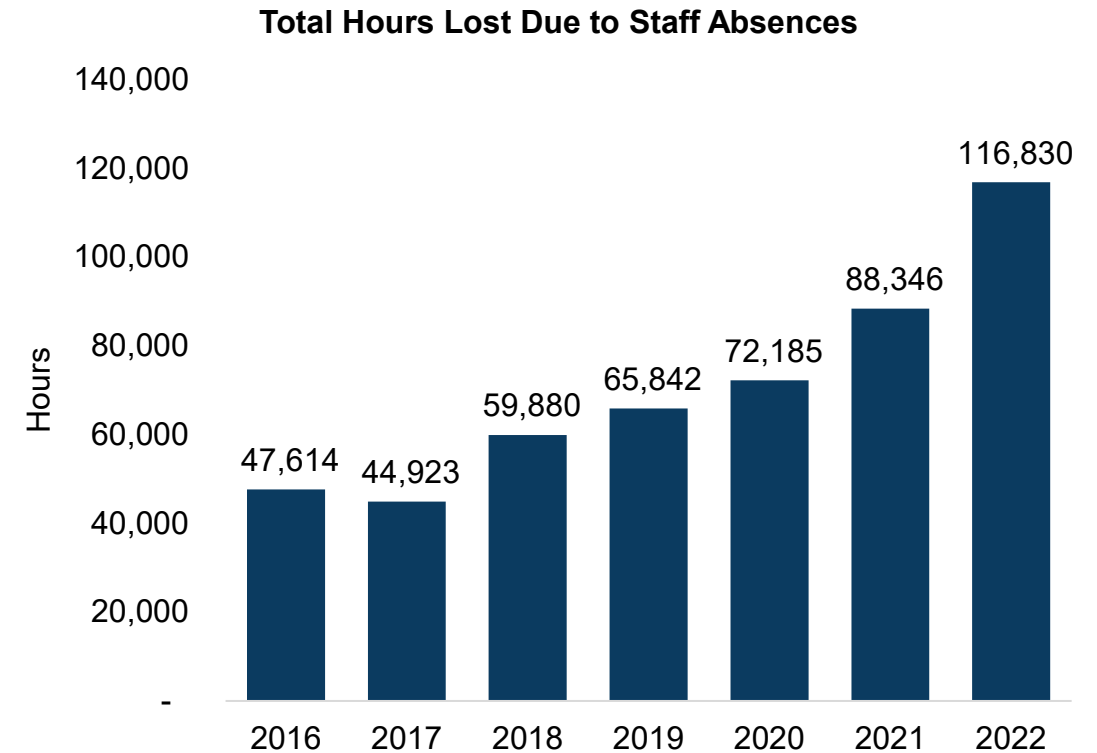
Paramedic Absences



Source: Region of Durham Human Resources

* Absences include maternity, paternity and parental leaves, short-term sick, long-term sick and work injury absences.

25% increase in average hours absent per FT paramedic from 2021 to 2022 -
69% increase from 2019 to 2022

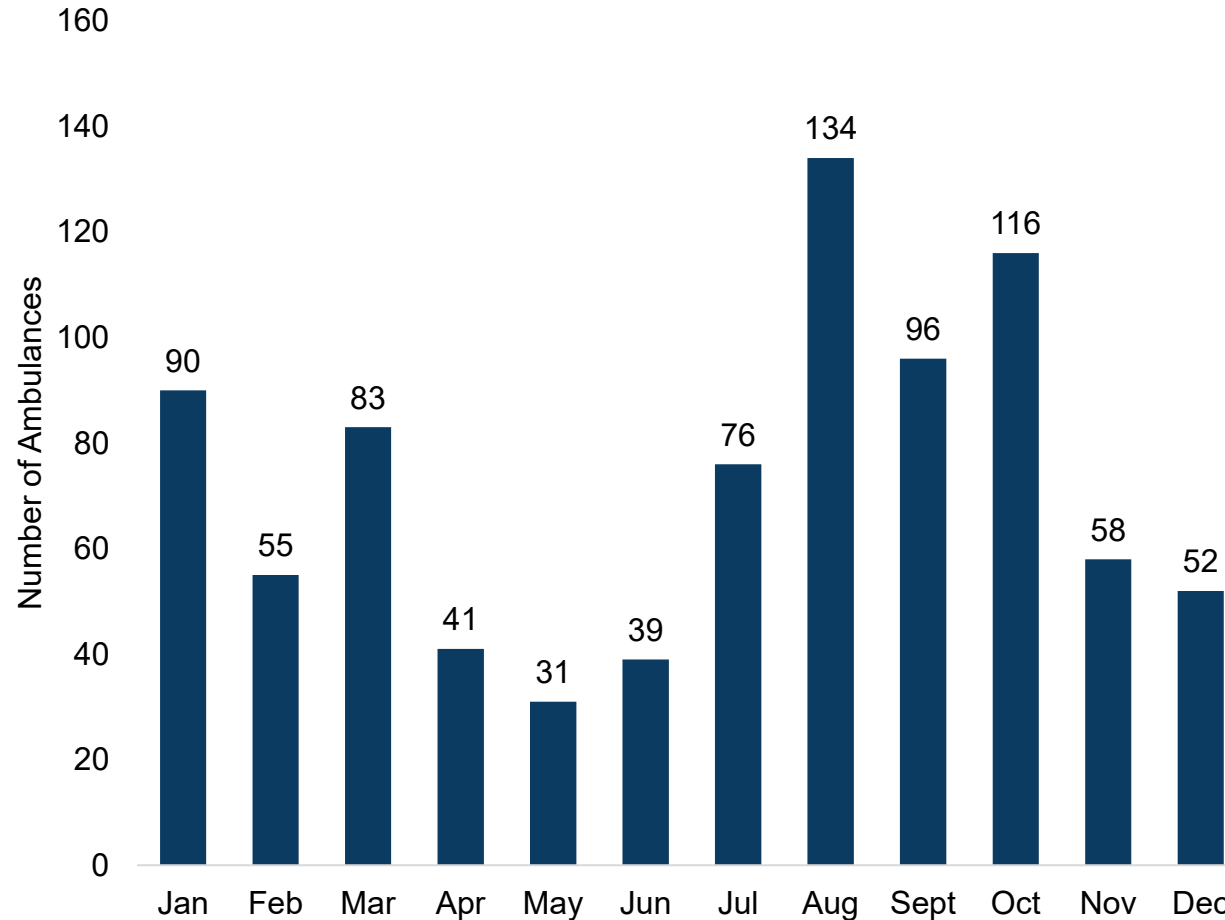


Source: Region of Durham Human Resources

32% increase in total hours lost due to staff absences from 2021 to 2022 - **77% increase** from 2019 to 2022

Down Staffed Ambulances

2022 Down Staffed Ambulances due to Staff Absences



Source: Region of Durham Paramedic Services

Down staffed ambulances were rare prior to 2022 - absences were covered through existing staff complement, part-time paramedics and where required, overtime

1.2 – 24 hour ambulances down staffed daily on average in 2022 due to absenteeism

Investment plan includes new dedicated **Disability Management Specialist**

Service Impacts

Offload Delay & Paramedic Absences

	Average Daily Staff Hours	Average Daily Shifts	Equivalent 24 Hour Ambulances
Offload Delay	172.9	14.4	3.6
Down Staffing	57	4.8	1.2
Total	229.9	19.2	4.8

\$8.14 million estimated annual operating costs and \$1.57 million capital cost of ambulances spent in offload delay and down staffed

Proposed Investment



Staffing

	Approved	Proposed Staffing Investment									2022 - 2031	
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total	
Full-time Paramedics	12	24	16	14	18	16	16	14	8	4	142	
Additional 12-hour shifts	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	27	
Support Staff												
	Supervisors	-	2	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	7
	Commanders*	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
	Disability Management Specialist	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Professional Standards	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Logistics	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	Scheduling	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Sr. Accounting Clerk	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Total New FTEs	15	30	19	16	18	17	17	14	9	5	160	

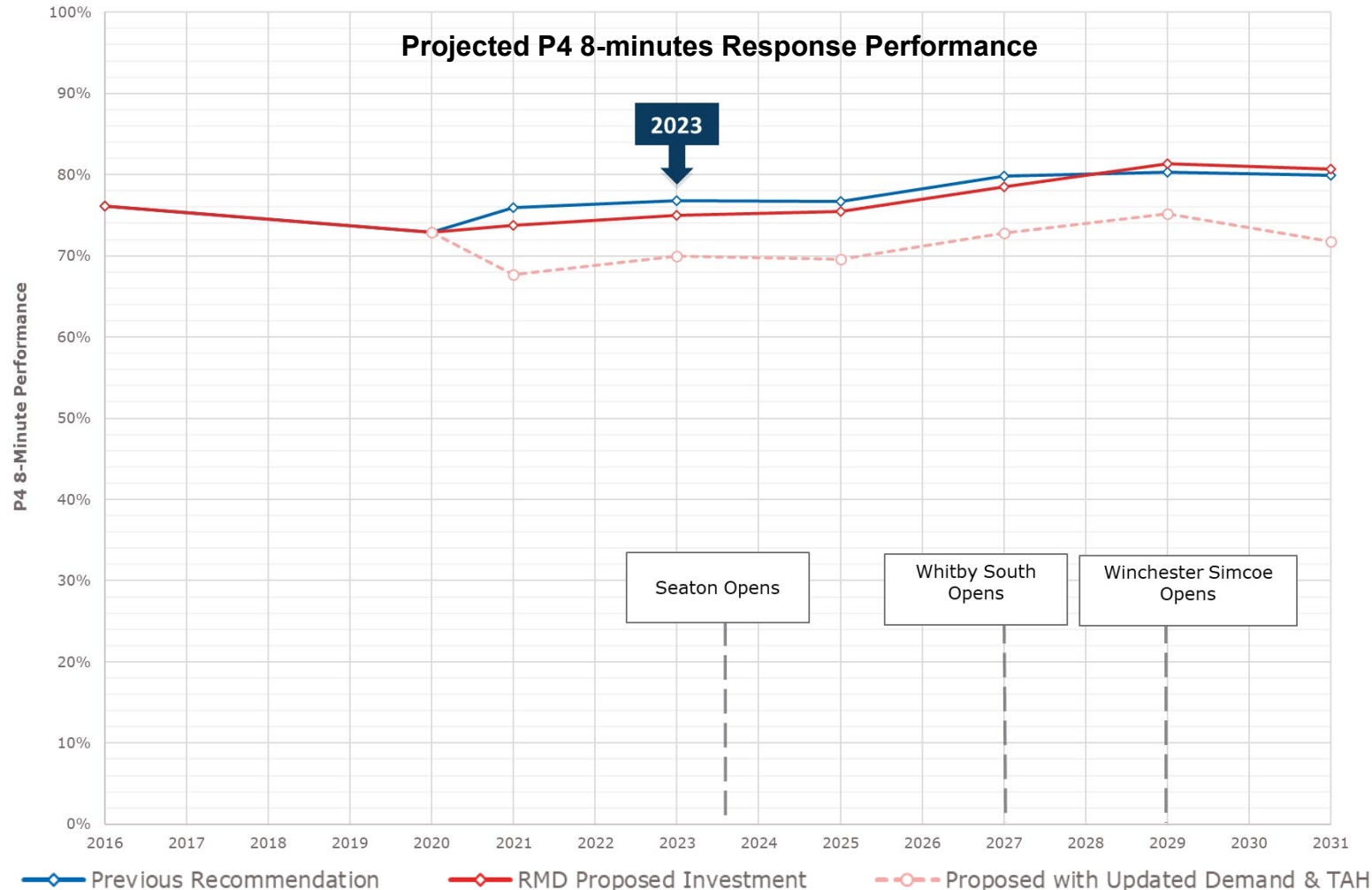
* 2 additional Commanders for emergency response were added in 2022 through the conversion of two existing positions



Other Investments

- Three new/replacement paramedic stations
- Increased investment in state of good repair of existing facilities
- New capital assets to support proposed staff increases
- ACP training

Proposed Investment Projected Service Performance



Source: ORH

Achieve P4 8-minute response time 80% of the time by 2028 under original demand and offload delay estimates – aligned with recommendations in ORH Study

Should current offload delay challenges persist performance is projected to remain at P4 8-minute response time approximately 70% of the time by 2031

The Region and its service partners are working to reduce this gap by:

- Reducing Hospital Offload Delays
- Implementing new provincial dispatch system
- Addressing staff absenteeism
- Implementing Provincial legislative changes - new/amended models of care (alternative transport destination options, treat and release, treat and refer)
- Continuing community paramedicine and primary care outreach programs

2023 – 2032 Implementation Plan

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	Total 2023-2032
# of New 12 Hour Shifts	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	0	25
# of Additional Daily Paramedic Response Hours	48	36	36	36	36	36	36	24	12	0	300
Projected Total Budget Increase (\$,000's)	\$11,458	\$10,895	\$12,147	(\$7,210)	\$14,689	\$280	\$3,684	\$5,983	\$7,324	\$2,094	
% Increase in Total Budget	19.30%	15.38%	17.15%	(8.82%)	15.65%	0.32%	3.64%	5.89%	6.95%	1.88%	
Projected Increase in Paramedic's Levy (\$,000's)	\$3,257	\$4,221	\$4,099	\$6,791	\$4,545	\$5,330	\$4,439	\$3,946	\$3,277	\$3,094	
% Increase in Paramedic's Levy	10.10%	11.89%	10.32%	15.50%	8.98%	9.66%	7.34%	6.08%	4.76%	4.29%	
Projected Overall Regional Tax Levy Impact	0.43%	0.53%	0.49%	0.77%	0.49%	0.55%	0.44%	0.37%	0.29%	0.26%	

Amounts do not include Community Paramedicine Program

Projected Financing Strategy includes:

- \$59.56 million projected increase (104.7 per cent) in annual operating expenditures over the 10-year plan
- \$89.47 million in capital expenditures over the plan
- \$12.26 million in reserve fund draws and \$3.78 million in development charges applied for capital expenses
- \$35.46 million in debenture financing for major facility projects with annual debt servicing costs projected to increase to \$3.5 million annually over the 10-year forecast
- Assumes annual increases in provincial funding to maintain the 50 per cent share arrangement

Risks and Considerations

- Financial impacts of Bill 23 (*More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*)
- Continued, sustainable provincial subsidy
- Effectiveness of potential provincial legislative amendments on the delivery of paramedic services
- Success of local hospitals and province in significantly reducing current ambulance offload delays
- Staff retention and attraction of qualified paramedics
- Capital cost escalations and near-term supply chain challenges
- Impact of rising interest rates and debt financing requirements
- Uncertainty/volatility of fuel pricing

Conclusions

- Significant investment in paramedic services is needed in response to projected population growth, increased calls for service, significant hospital offload delays, supporting employee wellness and sustained resilience to ensure improvement to current paramedic response times.
- Investments proposed in the 10-year plan alone are not sufficient to address service levels. Continued work with provincial and hospital partners is required to improve hospital offload delays, to advance provincial legislative changes to improve paramedic service delivery and efficiency and to advocate for additional provincial funding to support the increased investment in paramedic services response.
- The 10-year Paramedic Service and Financing Strategy is a starting point and will be:
 - subject to annual investment approvals through the Region's business planning and budget process;
 - reviewed every two year to ensure the plan is meeting projected service performance objectives; and
 - integrated into the Region's communication and intergovernmental advocacy strategies to raise awareness of funding needs.

Questions?