

MEMORANDUM

October 20, 2009

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Minna K. Davidson, Legislative Analyst *MKD*

SUBJECT: Update - impact of daywork overtime reductions at Kensington Station 5, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, and Wheaton Rescue Squad

For the FY10 MCFRS operating budget, the Executive recommended reducing funding for daywork overtime at Kensington Station 5, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad (Rescue 1), and Wheaton Rescue Squad (Rescue 2) by -\$416,000. The Council restored \$200,000 leaving a reduction of -\$216,000 for this purpose. Although the Fire Chief has previously indicated that the reduction has been implemented successfully, the Committee requested this update to hear in more detail how the reduction is being handled, and how it has impacted service delivery to date.

Background

Before FY10, career staff assigned to daywork at the three stations worked from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., two hours longer than the regular daywork schedule of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This allowed volunteers time to leave for work in the morning and get to the station in the evening. The extra hours for career staff were funded with \$416,000 in overtime.

The Executive's FY10 recommendation to eliminate \$416,000 would have meant that career daywork staff at the three stations would have returned to the regular daywork schedule. Initially, the Executive assumed that with an increased number of volunteers in the County and the implementation of volunteer standby policies, volunteers would be able to accommodate his recommended reduction. However, during the budget review, representatives of the MCVFRA and the affected LFRDs said that the proposed reduction would be untenable for volunteers. The Council's restoration of \$200,000 for daywork overtime enabled the Fire Chief to restore some of the extended daywork hours.

Implementation

In general, the Fire Chief has implemented the reduction to “split the difference” between the extended career schedule and the regular career schedule at the three stations as shown in the table below. The staffing plan is described in more detail on © 1-2, and in the table on © 3. To date, volunteers have provided coverage for the hours that are no longer covered by career personnel.

Staffing	Kensington Stn. 5	B-CC RS	Wheaton RS
Affected units	Engine, BLS Unit	ALS Unit	Rescue Squad, 2 ALS Units, 1 BLS Unit
Total career staffing	5	2	9
Extended career schedule	3	1	5
Regular career schedule	2	1	4

The estimated cost for this staffing plan is slightly over \$251,000. MCFRS will absorb the \$51,000 that exceeds the \$200,000 that was budgeted for this item by reducing overtime in other areas of the organization.

At this point, it appears that the staffing plan has not caused significant impacts on service delivery. MCFRS is monitoring the number of failures to respond during the affected hours. An increase might indicate that the stations are not sufficiently staffed to provide first due service. So far, there has been one failure to respond, but it was caused by a dispatching error and not by a staffing issue.

At these stations, the total number of responses during the affected hours for July 1 through September 30, 2008, is somewhat different from the total number for the same period in 2009, but MCFRS feels that there are several possible reasons for the changes and the staffing plan is unlikely to be a factor. Summary information is provided in the table below. Detailed information for each station is attached as indicated in the table of contents.

Comparison of Total Responses, July 1-September 30, 2008, with the same period in 2009
For affected units, weekdays: 6:00-7:00 a.m. plus 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Year	Kensington Stn. 5	B-CC RS	Wheaton RS
2008	62	40	154
2009	49	33	155

Response times have also changed somewhat when 2008 is compared to 2009. As with the changes in the number of responses, MCFRS feels there are several possible reasons for the changes, but the staffing plan itself is unlikely to be a factor. Summary information is provided in the table below. Detailed information for each station is attached as indicated in the table of contents.

Comparison of Avg. Response Times, July 1-September 30, 2008, with the same period in 2009

Hours/Year	Kensington Stn. 5	B-CC RS	Wheaton RS
6:00-7:00 a.m.			
2008	5m to 6m 30s	3m 50s to 5m 40s	4m 40s to 6m 15s
2009	5m 30s to 6m 15s	4m to 5m 20s	4m 40s
5:00-6:00 p.m.			
2008	5m to 5m 20s	3m 30s to 4m 10s	4m 40s to 5m 15s
2009	4m to 5m	3m 30s to 3m 40s	5m to 5m 30s

Information for this table was approximated based on the Average Response Time graphs provided by MCFRS.

While the staffing plan appears to be working well at this time, it is too soon to tell whether the current arrangements will be tenable for the long term. In response to a Council staff question on this issue, MCFRS staff said that they will need three more months of data, and dialog with the LFRD Chiefs to make a final determination.

For the October 22 update, the Fire Chief will discuss the elements of the staffing plan and its potential for the long term in more detail, and he will be available to respond to Committee questions.

This packet contains:

circle #

MCFRS responses to Council staff questions	1
Proposed staffing schedule	3
Budget for staffing plan	4
Kensington Station 5	
Responses, 2008	5
Responses, 2009	6
Average response times, 2008	7
Average response times, 2009	8
Bethesda-Chevy Chase RS (Rescue 1)	
Responses, 2008	9
Responses, 2009	10
Average response times, 2008	11
Average response times, 2009	12
Wheaton RS (Rescue 2)	
Responses, 2008	13
Responses, 2009	14
Average response times, 2008	15
Average response times, 2009	16

Responses to R1, R2 and FS5 OTP

1. Before FY10, career staff assigned to day work at the three stations worked from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., two hours longer than the regular day work schedule of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This allowed volunteers time to leave for work in the morning and get to the station in the evening. What is the current schedule for career staff assigned to day work at the three stations?

Fire Station 5 – Kensington

- *Normal staffing is five personnel to cover an Engine and BLS service Monday through Friday.*
- *3 personnel are assigned from 0600-1800.*
 - *This is for engine service only. The engine is equipped to provide first responder BLS capability.*
 - *The firefighter assigned during that time must be a driver on an EMS unit. This allows greater flexibility to staff the BLS unit using volunteers in the station.*
- *The remaining 2 firefighters work the normal 10 hour shift (0700-1700)*

Rescue Company 1 – Bethesda Chevy Chase

- *Normal staffing is two ALS providers to cover one medic unit Monday through Friday*
- *1 ALS provider is assigned from 0600-1800*
- *1 ALS provider works the normal schedule from 0700-1700*
- *Volunteers have provided staffing between 0600 and 0700 and 1700-1800.*

Rescue Company 2 – Wheaton

- *Normal staffing is nine personnel to cover one heavy rescue squad, two ALS units and one BLS unit*
- *5 personnel are currently assigned to staff the heavy rescue squad and one ALS unit from 0600-1800*
- *The remaining 4 personnel work the normal 10 hour schedule from 0700-1700; staffing the other ALS unit and the BLS unit.*

2. How are the transitional hours of 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. being covered at these stations?

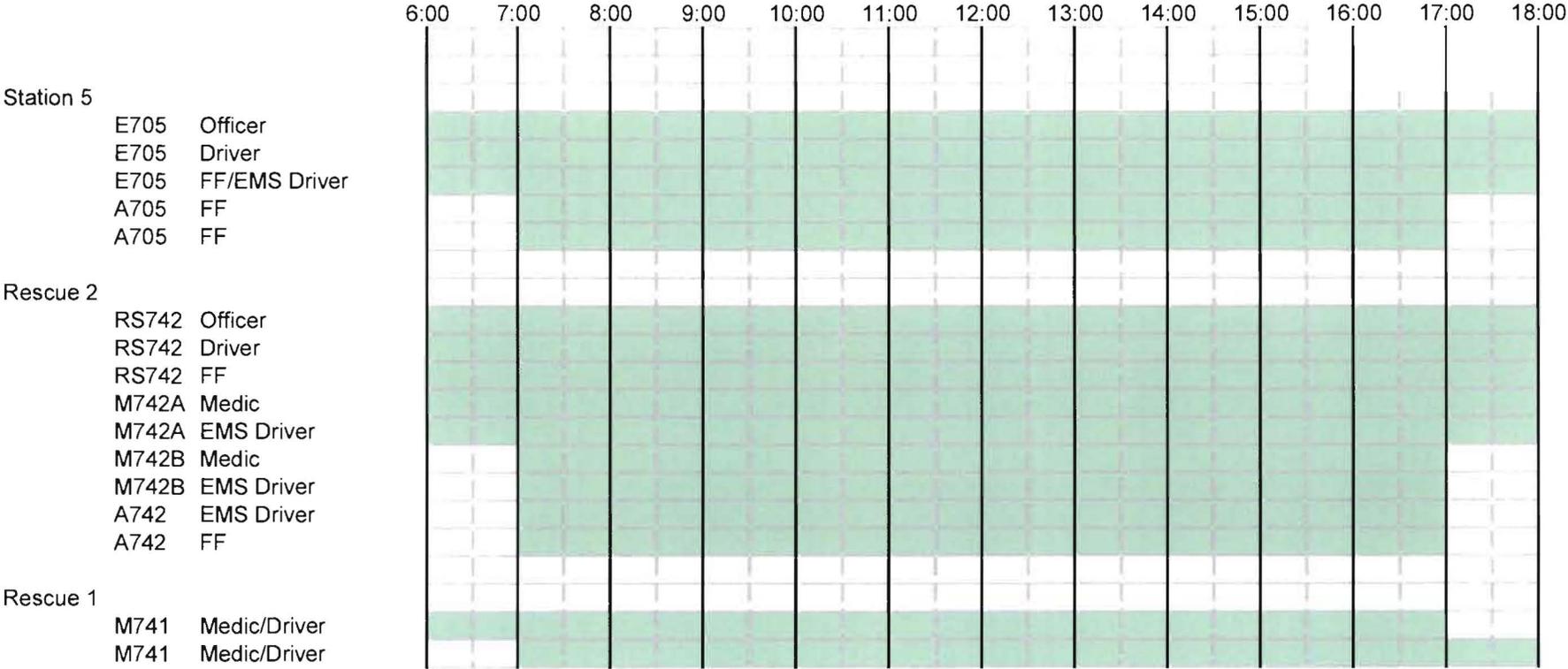
- *Please see the response above.*

3. Initially, the Executive assumed that with an increased number of volunteers in the County and the implementation of volunteer standby policies, volunteers would be able to accommodate his recommended reduction. However,

representatives of the MCVFRA and the affected LFRDs said that the proposed reduction would be untenable for volunteers. How has the reduction in daywork overtime funding impacted volunteer participation at these stations? How are volunteers helping to provide coverage in response to the reduction?

- *Volunteers have been able to provide the required coverage on a regular basis.*
4. In previous Public Safety Committee sessions, the Fire Chief mentioned reallocating some funding from other sources to help support day work overtime at these stations. How much funding has been reallocated, and where did it come from?
 - *A number of staffing models were proposed. The chosen model allowed us to deliver the minimum service providing for public and firefighter safety. The calculated cost for the final model was slightly over \$251,000 dollars. \$51,000 will be absorbed as a result of reducing overtime in other areas in the organization.*
 5. Please provide emergency response data for these stations and the stations immediately surrounding them which compares call loads and response times for July 1-September 30, 2008, with data for the same period in 2009.
 - *Please see the attached data.*
 6. Has this funding reduction resulted in any negative impacts on emergency service from the three affected stations or other nearby stations?
 - *There is one documented failure to respond for the hours no longer covered by career staff, Monday-Friday. This was a second ambulance dispatched out of Kensington Station 5. A705 was on an incident and ECC dispatched A705B. A705B was not staffed and not part of the normal staffing model and should not have been dispatched.*
 7. Are the current arrangements for coverage tenable for the long term?
 - *We will need three more months of data, and dialog with the local Fire Chief's to make a final determination.*

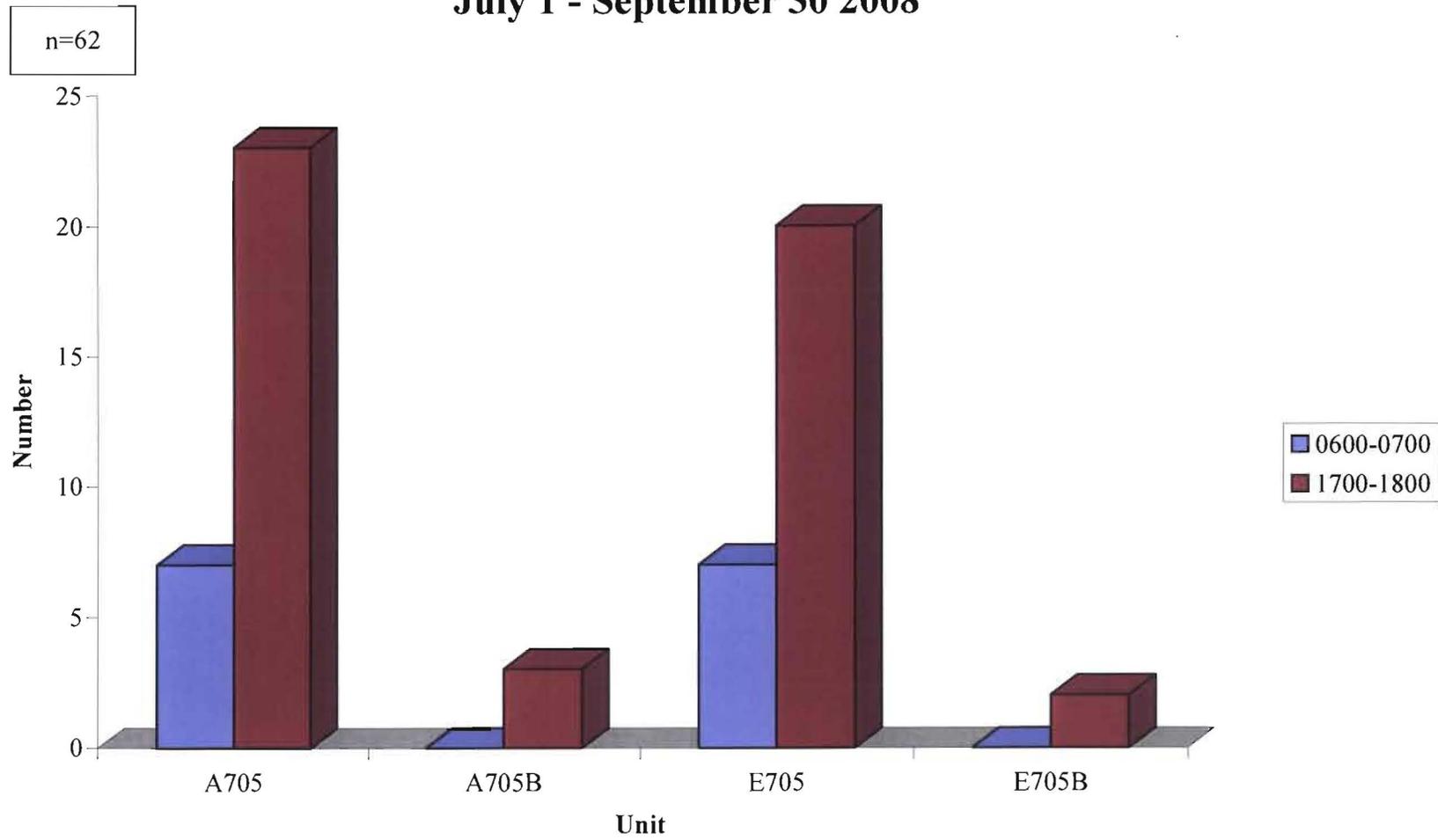
Proposed Schedule
 For R1, R2, Station 5
 FY10 Savings Plan



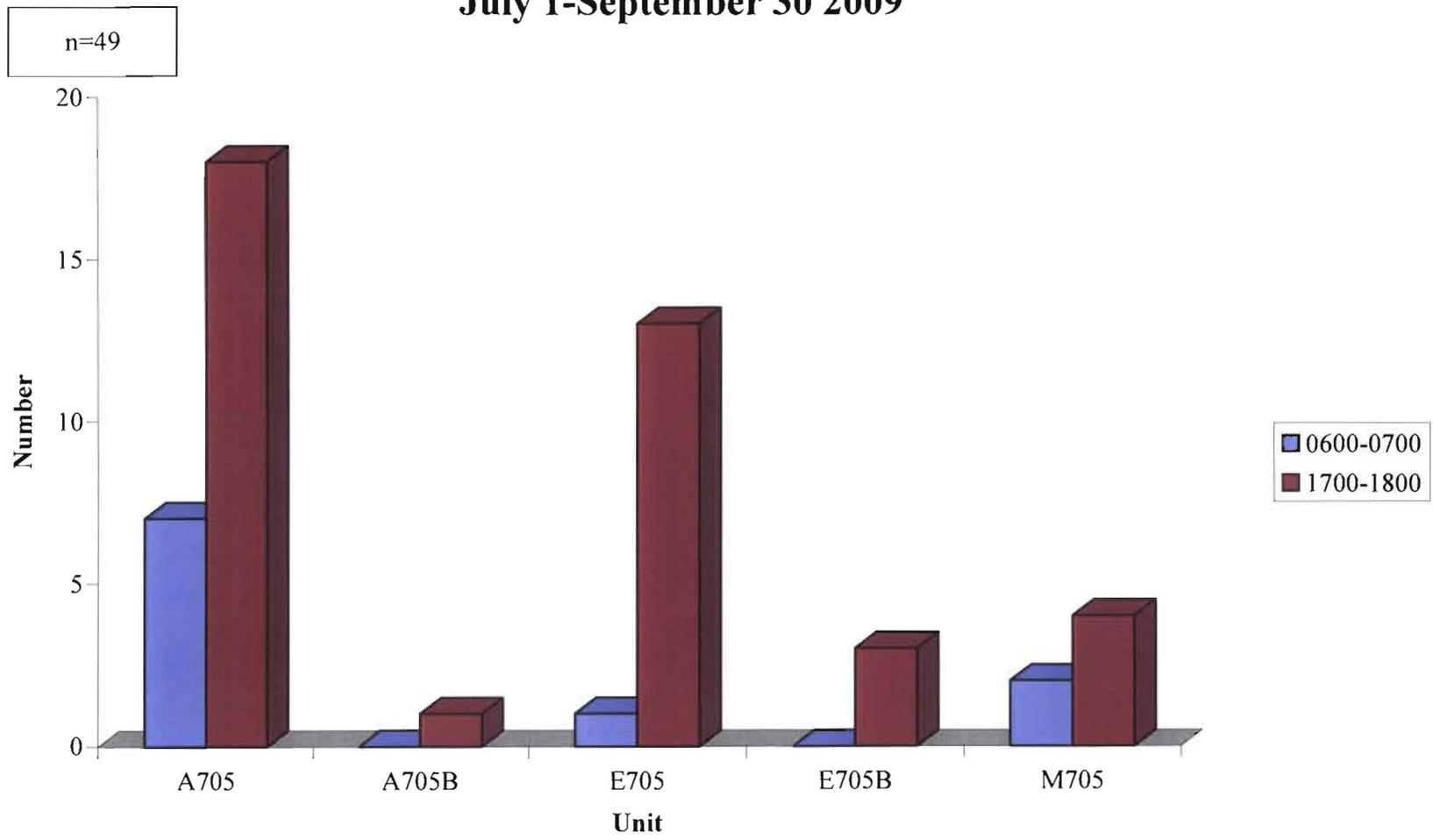
Proposed Schedule
For R1, R2, Station 5
FY10 Savings Plan

			Current	Rate	Hours	Current Week	Year	Hours	Proposed Week	Year
Station 5										
E705	Officer	Captain	\$72.18		10.00	\$721.80	\$37,533.60	10	\$721.80	\$37,533.60
E705	Driver	MFF	\$54.85		10.00	\$548.50	\$28,522.00	10	\$548.50	\$28,522.00
A705	EMS Driver	F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00	10	\$419.00	\$21,788.00
A705	FF	F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
		F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
Rescue 2										
RS742	Officer	Captain	\$72.18		10.00	\$721.80	\$37,533.60	10	\$721.80	\$37,533.60
RS742	Driver	MFF	\$54.85		10.00	\$548.50	\$28,522.00	10	\$548.50	\$28,522.00
RS742	FF	F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00	10	\$419.00	\$21,788.00
M742A	EMS Driver	F3P	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00	10	\$419.00	\$21,788.00
M742A	Officer	MFP	\$54.85		10.00	\$548.50	\$28,522.00	10	\$548.50	\$28,522.00
M742B	EMS Driver	F3P	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
M742B	Officer	MFP	\$54.85		10.00	\$548.50	\$28,522.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
A742	EMS Driver	F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
A742	FF	F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
Rescue 1										
M741	Officer	MFP	\$54.85		10.00	\$548.50	\$28,522.00	5	\$274.25	\$14,261.00
M741	Driver	F3	\$41.90		10.00	\$419.00	\$21,788.00	5	\$209.50	\$10,894.00
							\$413,769.20			
FY09 Current OT			\$413,769.20							
FY10 Savings Plan Proposed			\$251,152.20	←						
Net Savings			\$162,617.00							
FY10 CE Recommended			-\$416,000.00							
FY10 Council Approved			-\$216,000.00							
Difference			-\$200,000.00							
FY10 Savings Plan Prposed Spending			\$251,152.20							
Over (Under)			\$51,152.20							

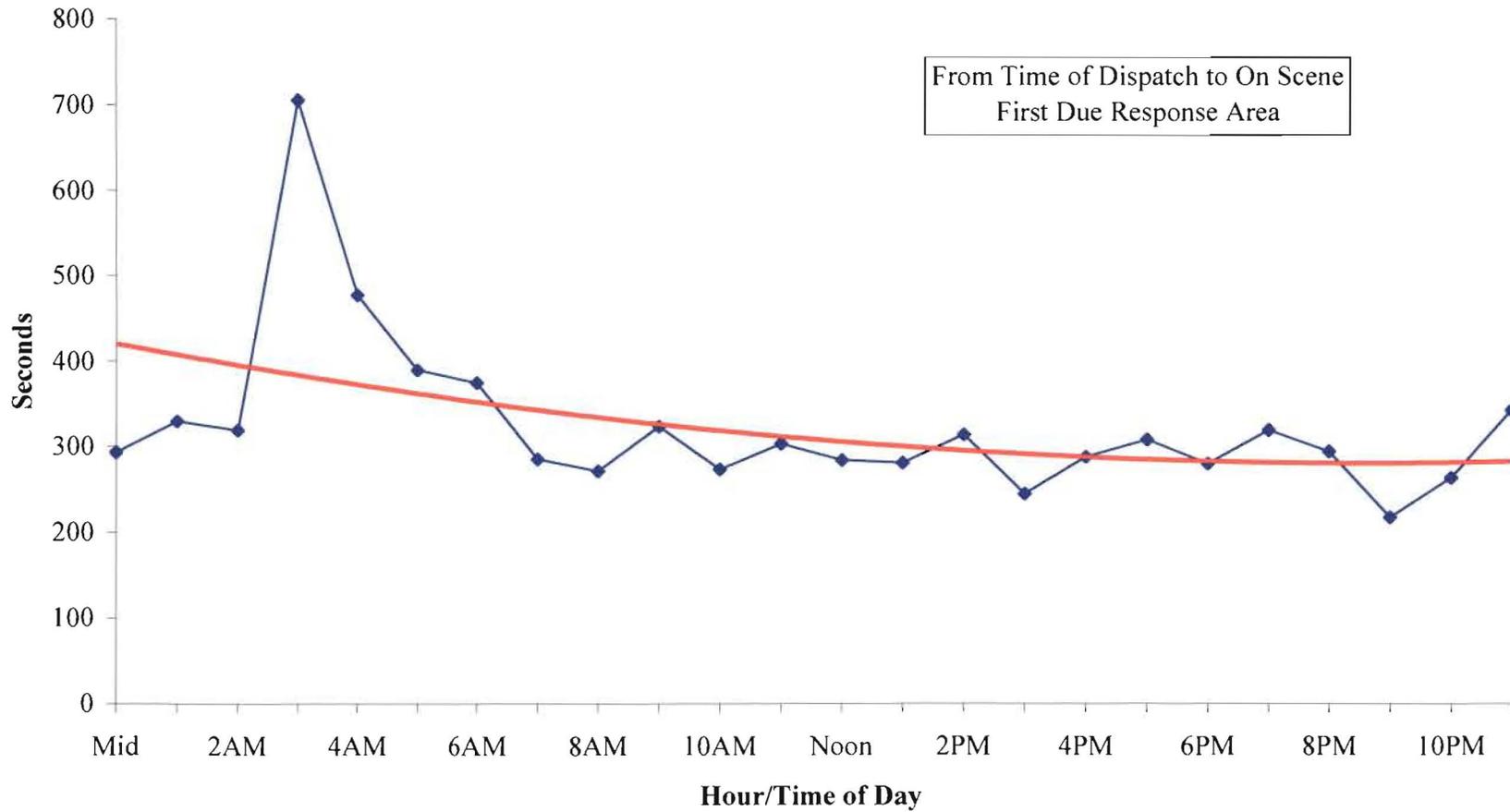
**Fire Station 5 Responses
Target Hours - Weekdays
July 1 - September 30 2008**



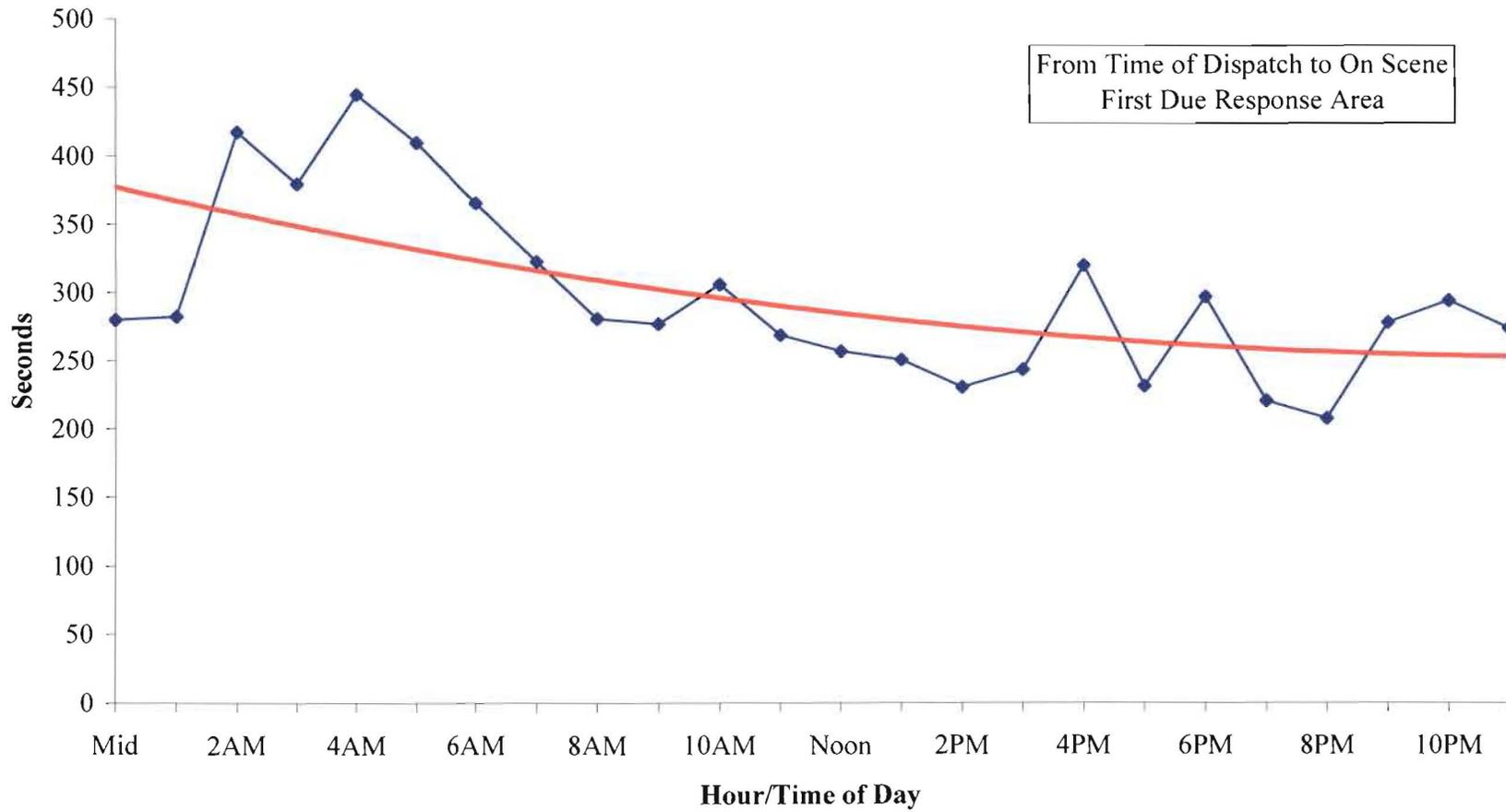
**Fire Station 5 Responses
Target Hours - Weekdays
July 1-September 30 2009**



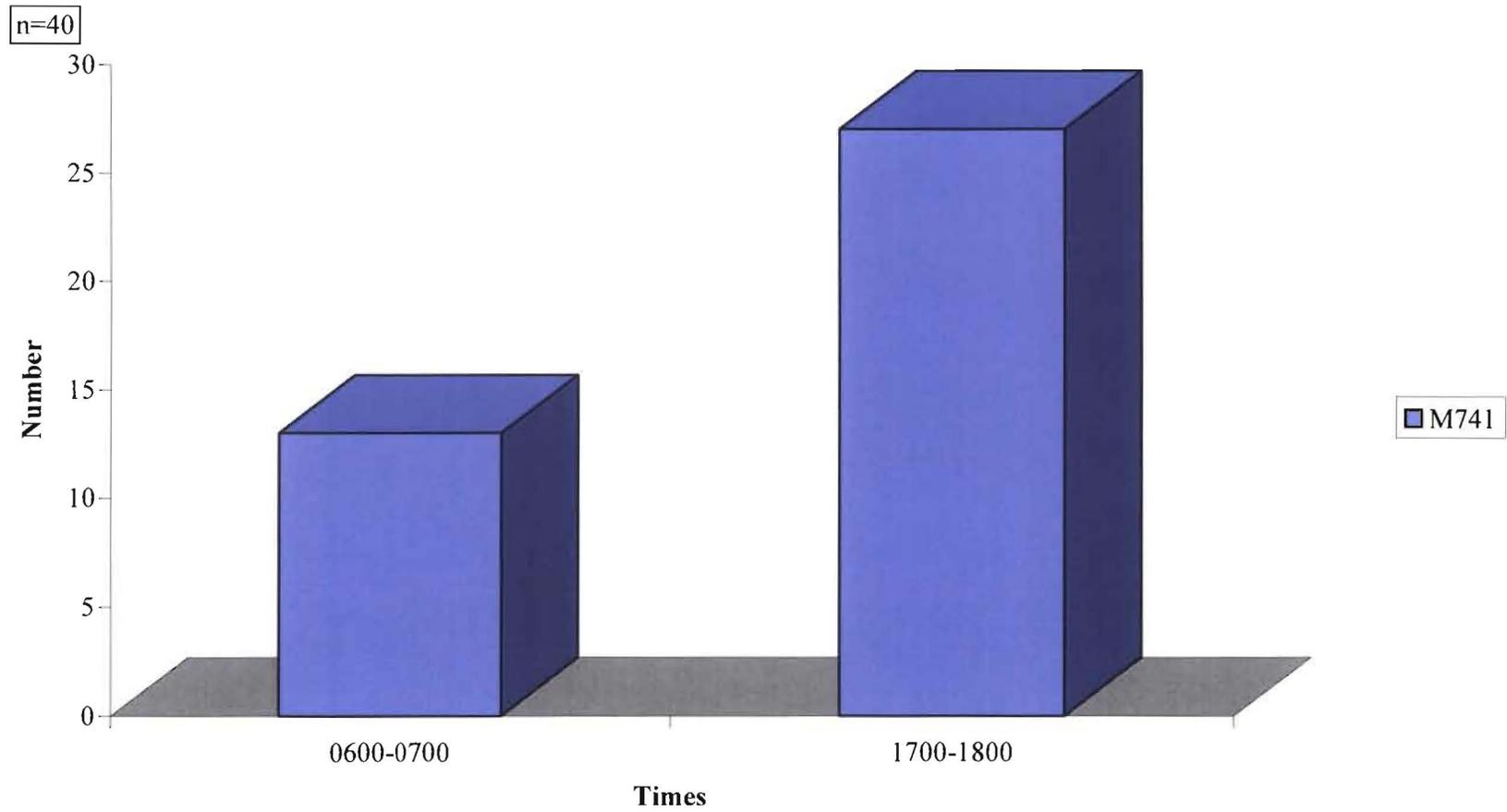
FS5 Average Response Times By Time of Day July 1-September 30 2008



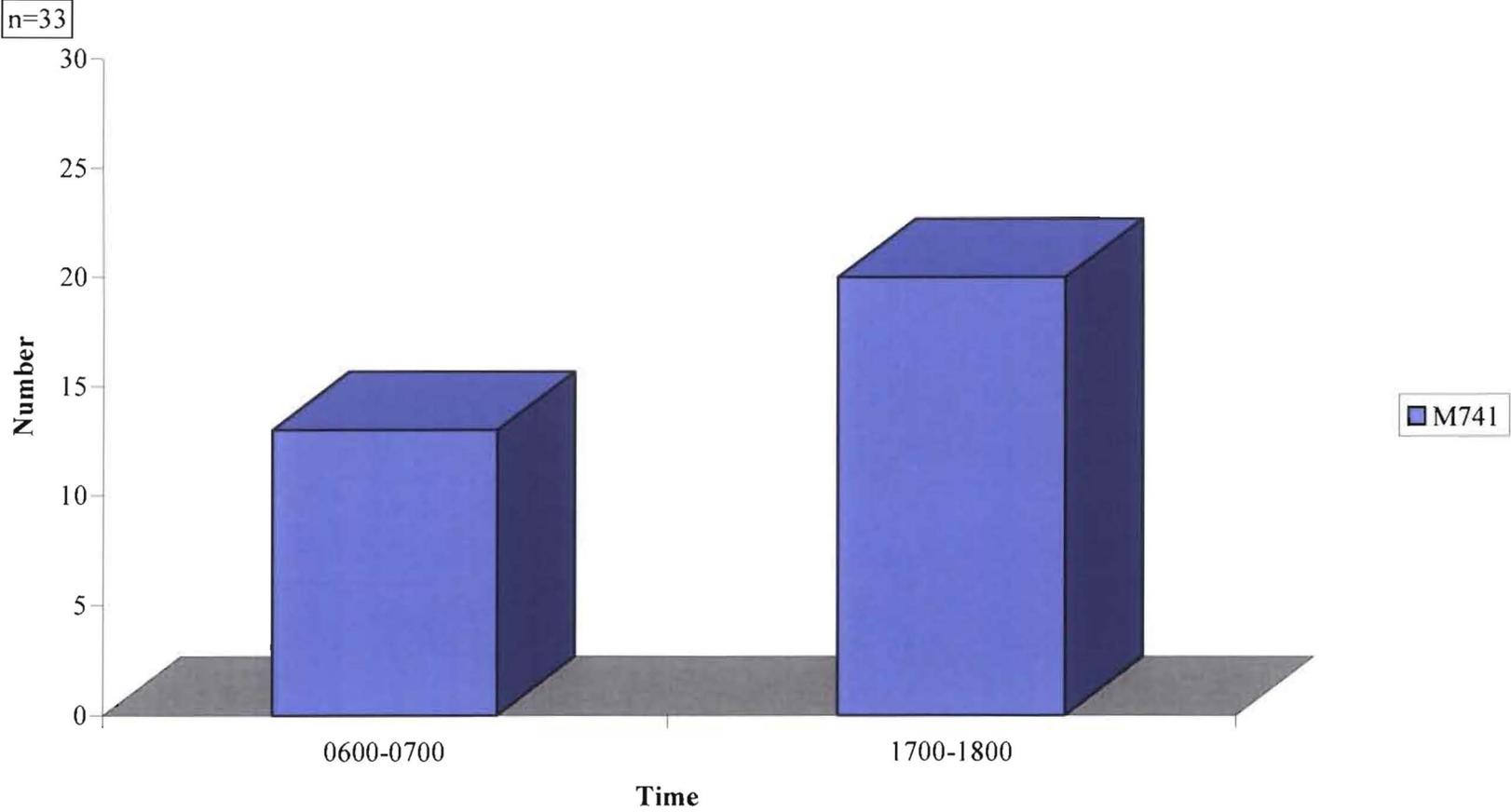
Station 5 Average Response Time By Hour/Time of Day July 1-September 30 2009



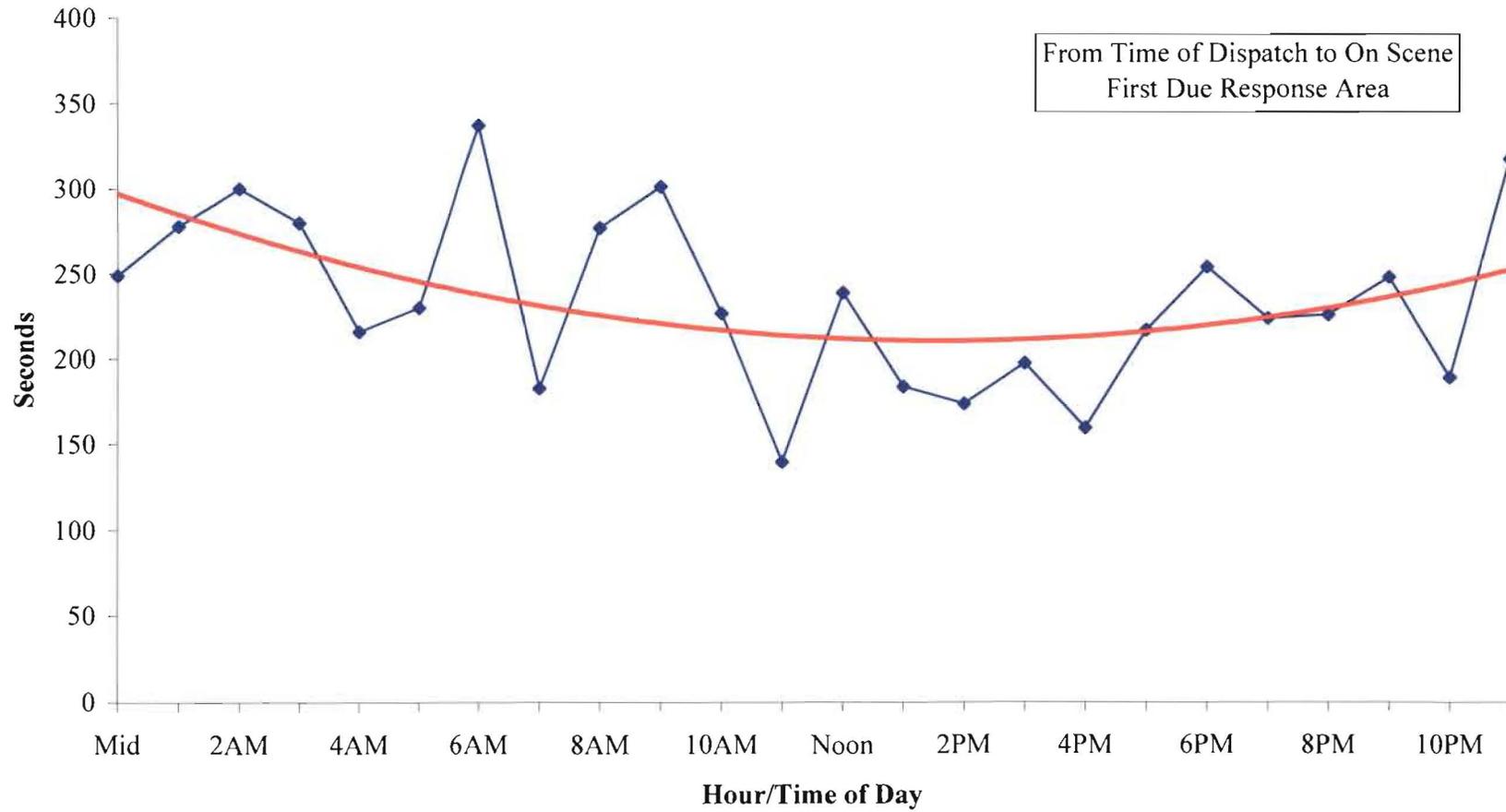
**Rescue 1 (M741) Responses
Target Hours - Weekdays
July 1-September 30 2008**



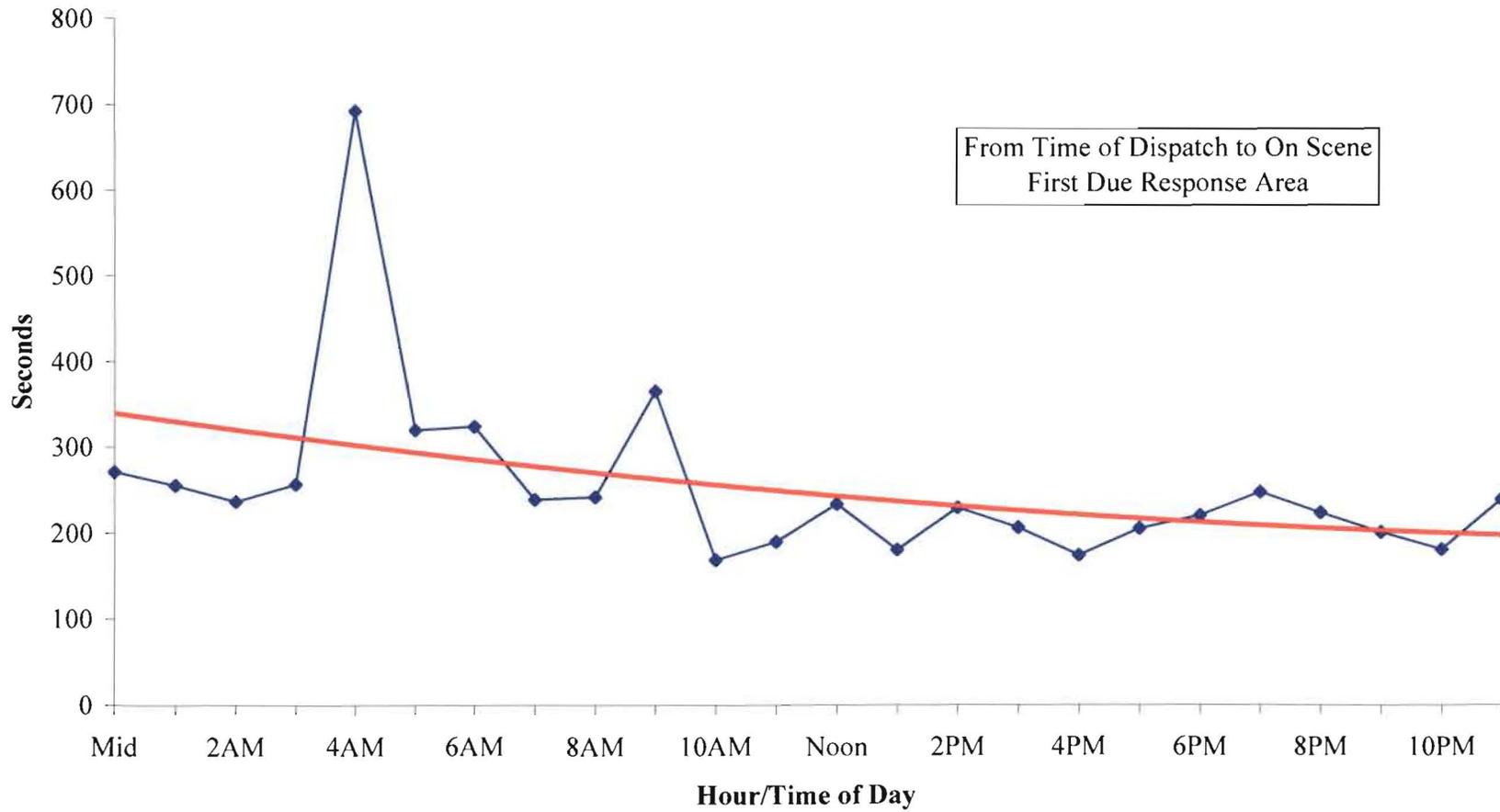
**Rescue 1 (M741) Responses
Target Hours - Weekdays
July 1-September 30 2009**



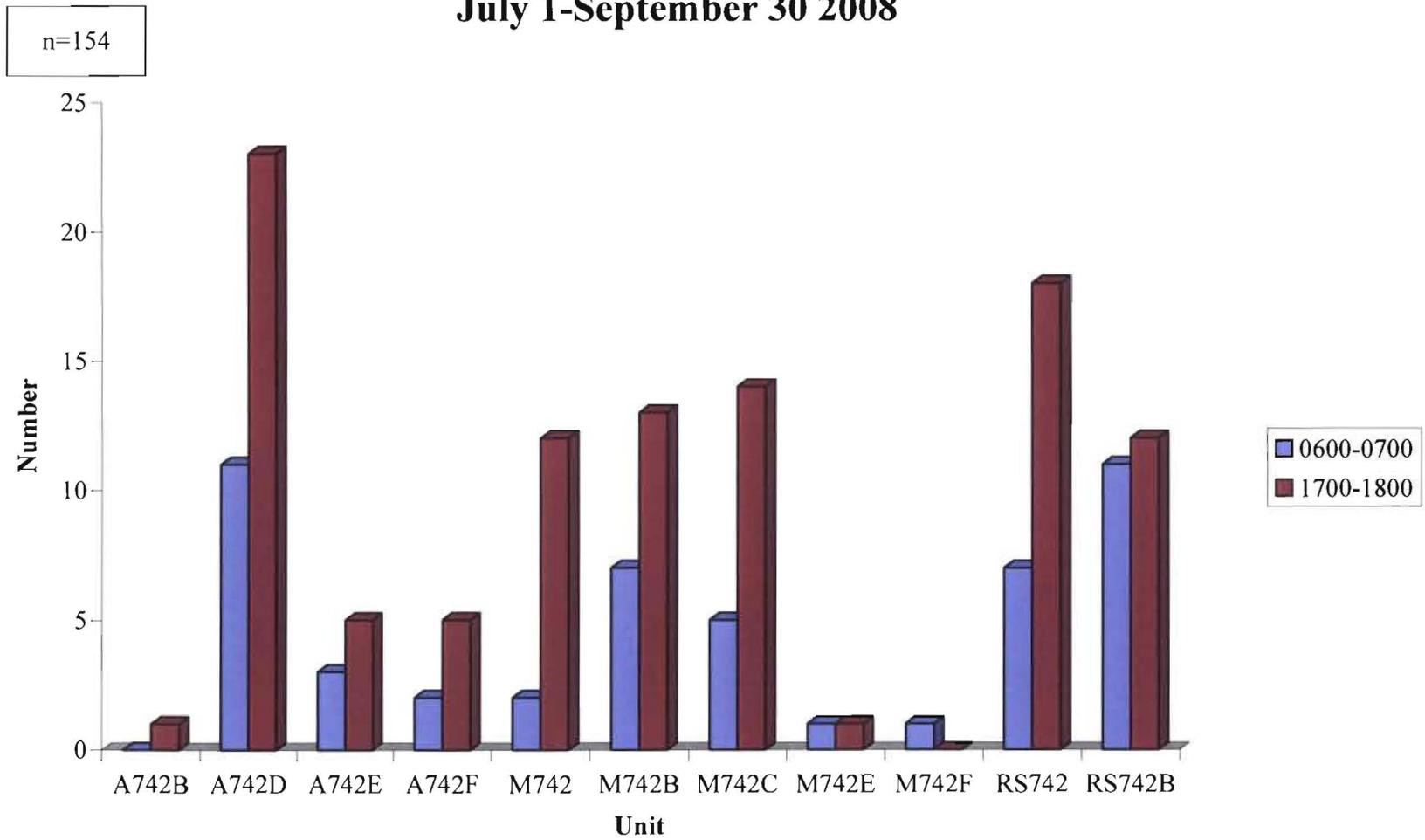
Rescue Company 1 Average Response Time By Time of Day July 1-September 30 2008



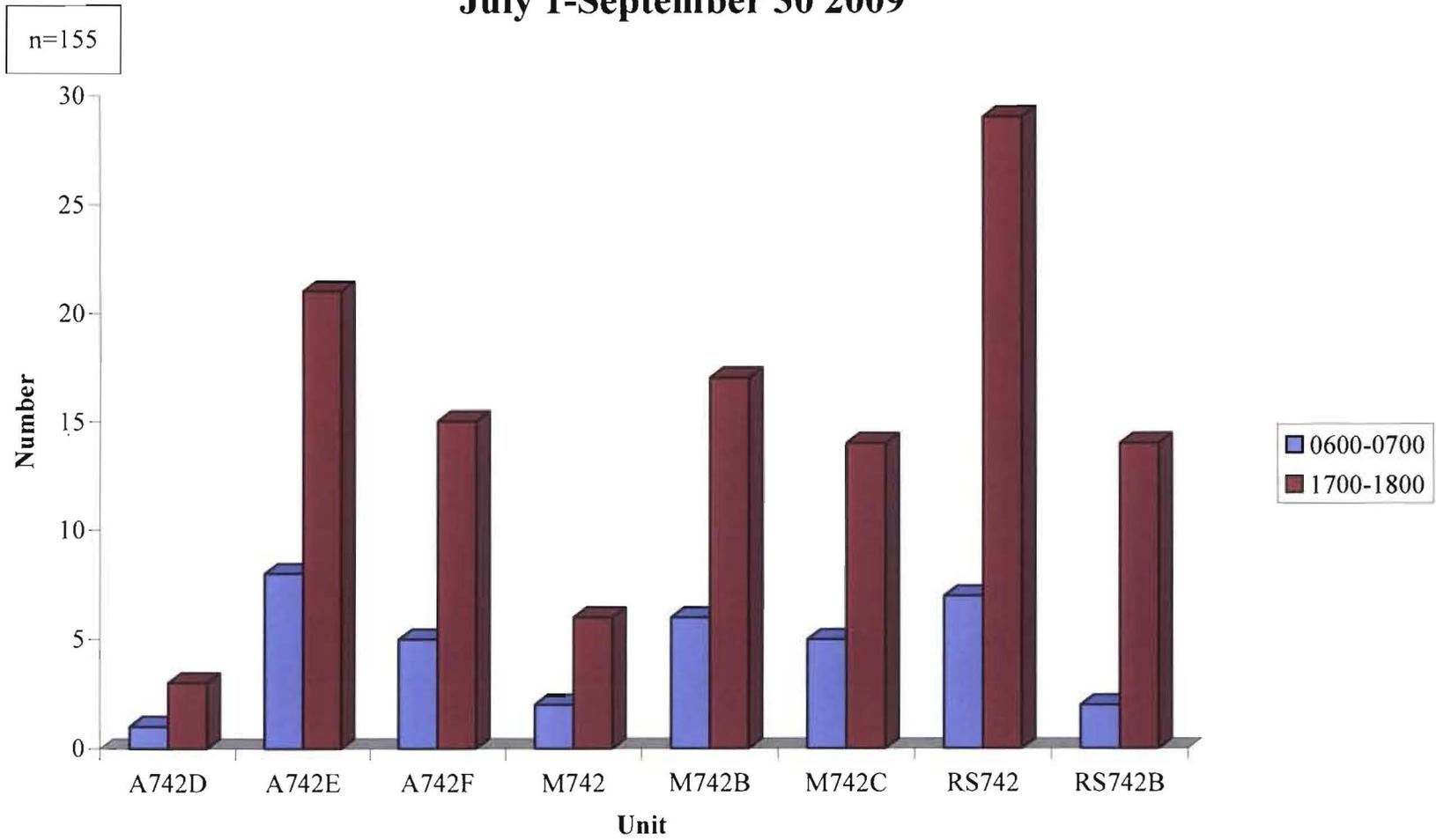
Rescue Company 1 Average Response Time By Hour/Time of Day July 1-September 30 2009



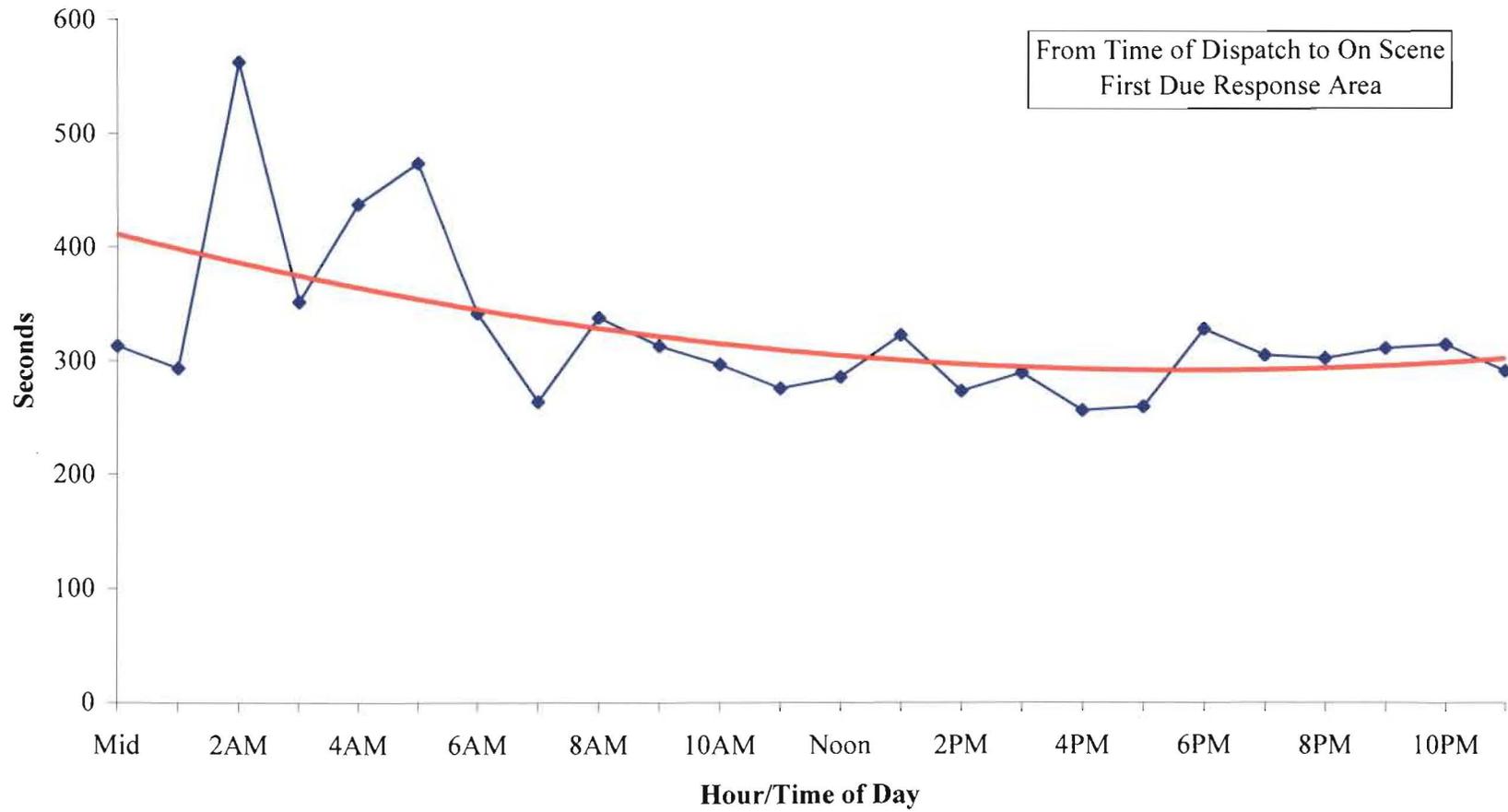
**Rescue 2 Responses
Target Hours - Weekdays
July 1-September 30 2008**



**Rescue 2 Responses
Target Hours - Weekdays
July 1-September 30 2009**



Rescue Company 2 Average Response Time By Hour/Time of Day July 1-September 30 2008



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Rescue Company 2 Average Response Time By Hour/Time of Day July 1-September 30 2009

