



Alberta Municipal Benchmarking Initiative

WHAT IS AMBI?

- 9 Alberta municipalities
- Grant from Alberta Municipal Affairs
- Collaboration to build a framework and allow comparison
- Develop an ongoing benchmarking process

A benchmark is an established point of reference against which things can be measured and compared

WHY BENCHMARKING

- Helps to tell the municipal “performance story”
- Sound business practice
- Share knowledge and best practices
- Identifies opportunities for change
- Encourages continuous improvement
- Demonstrates transparency and value for money
- Supports results-based accountability

TWO DIMENSIONS

Efficiency

- a measure of productivity: quantity
- often expressed in cost per unit

Effectiveness

- a measure of value or benefit of service: quality
- often expressed as percentage or rate

PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES

9 Municipalities Participated:

- Medicine Hat
- Lethbridge
- Red Deer
- Airdrie
- Banff
- Cochrane
- Canmore
- Wetaskiwin
- Okotoks

FIRE SERVICES

The aim of the Fire Service is:

- to reduce the impact of events to people, property and the environment by rapidly responding to fires, rescues, and hazardous materials and other incidents with well-equipped and well trained responders.
- Of particular importance to a Fire Service is to deliver a vibrant, energetic and effective community program for prevention and education that focuses on being a safe community.

FIRE SERVICE BENCHMARKS

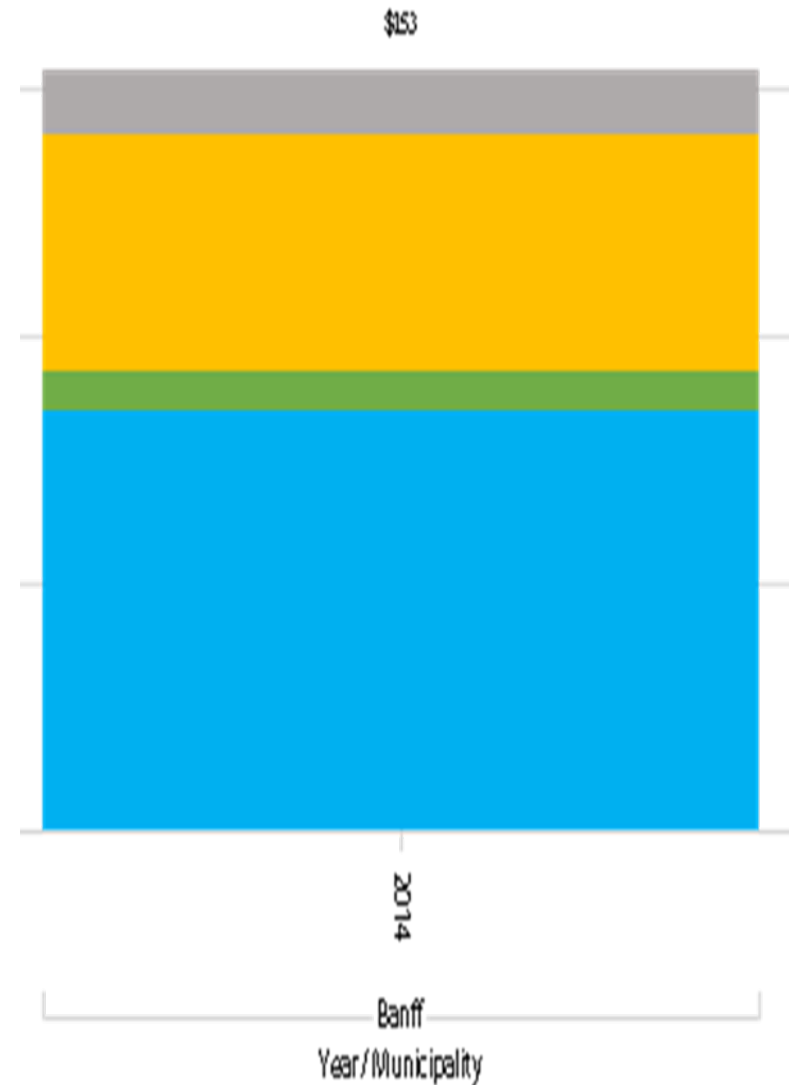
11 benchmarks measured

- 7 efficiency measures
- 4 effectiveness measures
- Trend over years measured
- Comparison to others
- 7 most applicable benchmarks to Medicine Hat are covered in this presentation
- 3 most relevant comparators presented

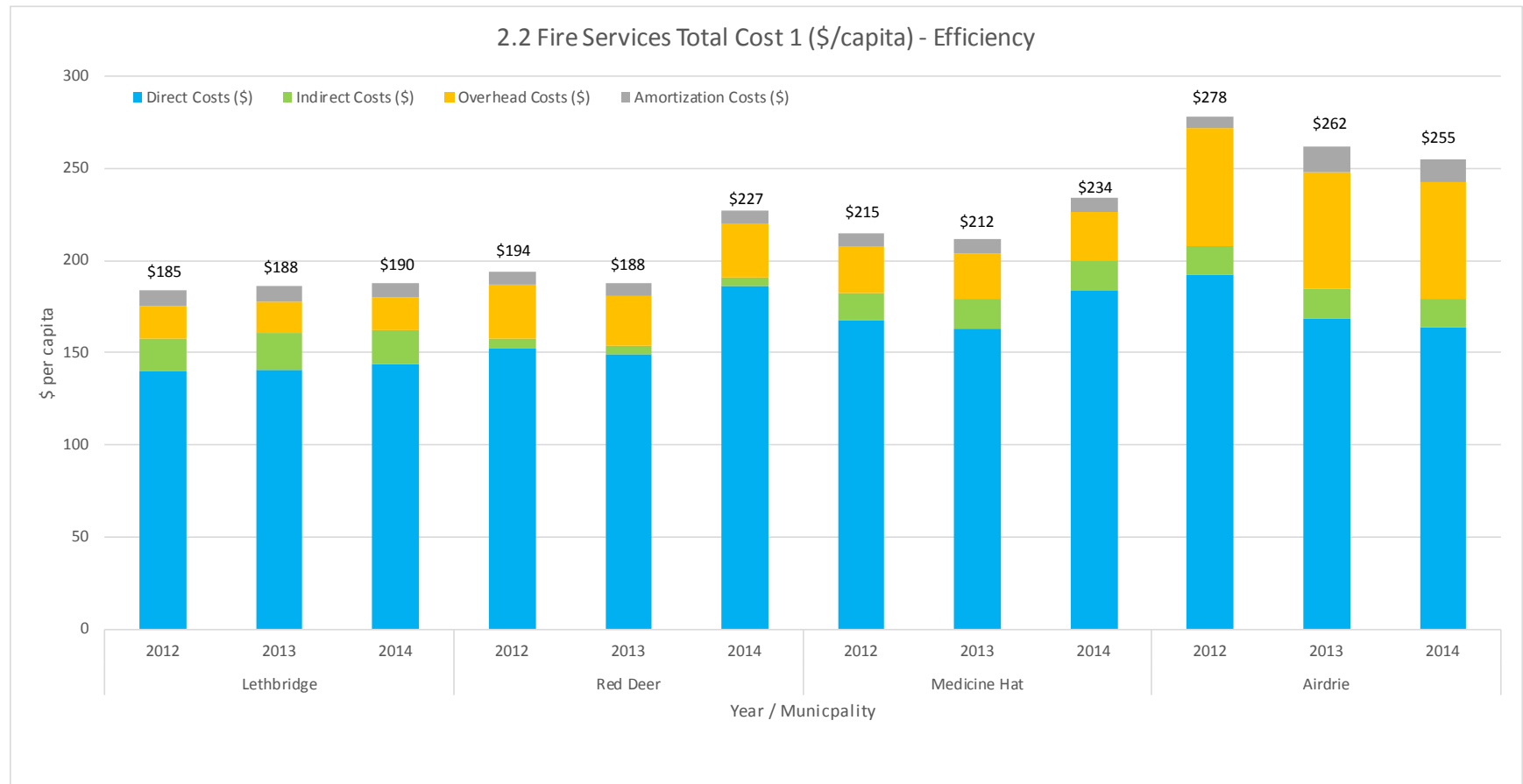
STACKED GRAPHS

Stacked graph helps tell the story

- Amortization
- **Overhead**
- **Indirect Costs**
- **Direct Costs**



FIRE SERVICES TOTAL COST (\$/CAPITA)



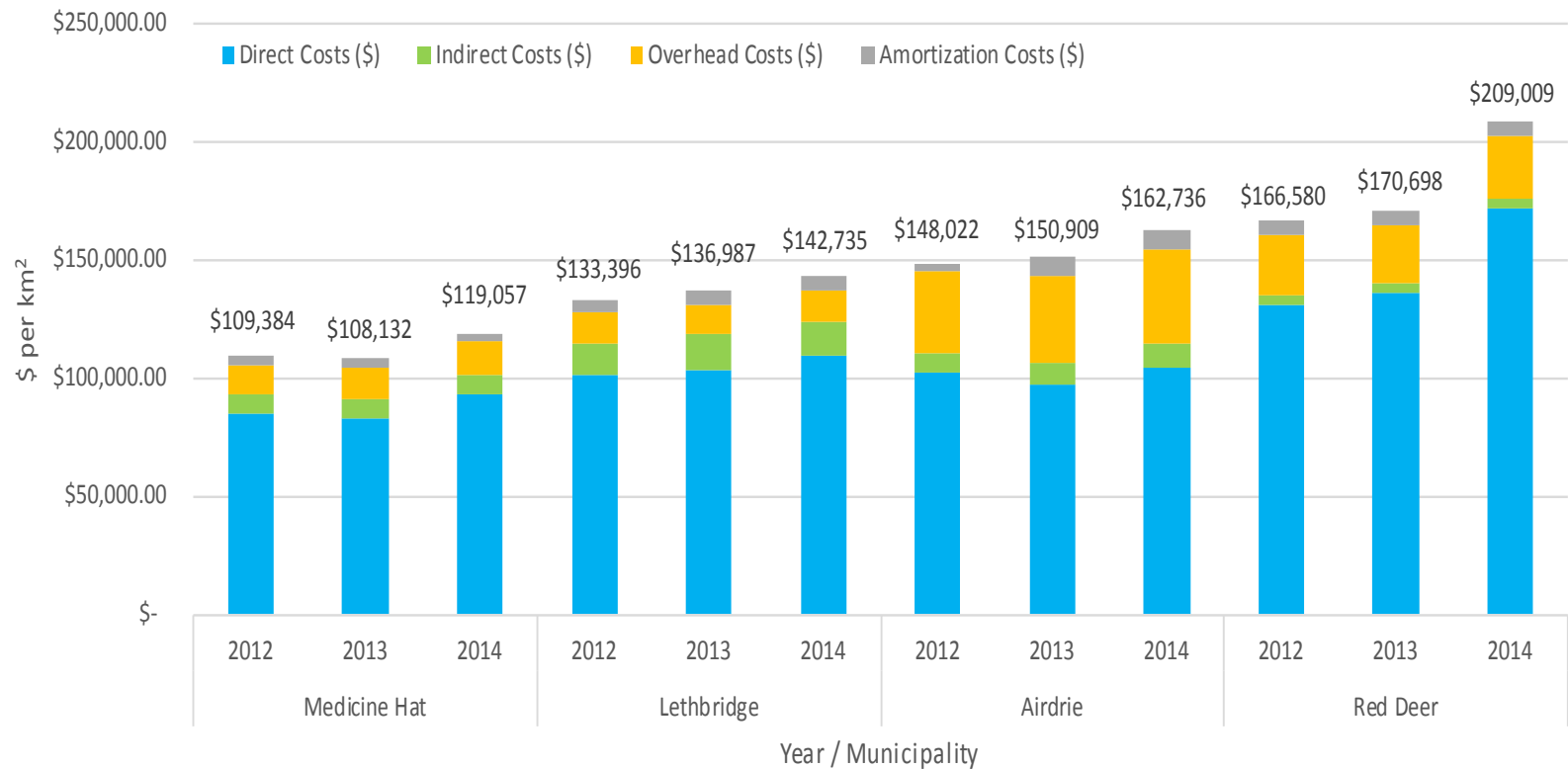
FIRE SERVICES TOTAL COST (\$/CAPITA)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Lethbridge and Red Deer - integrated Fire and EMS Services
- Airdrie and Medicine Hat - stand alone Fire Services
- Lethbridge does not include costs for 40% of their fire fighting staff (AHS Contract)
- Medicine Hat isolated in comparison – more services
- Medicine Hat increase in 2014 due to retroactive payment from collective bargaining

FIRE SERVICES TOTAL COST (\$/SQUARE KM)

2.4 Fire Services Total Cost 3 (\$/square KM) – Efficiency

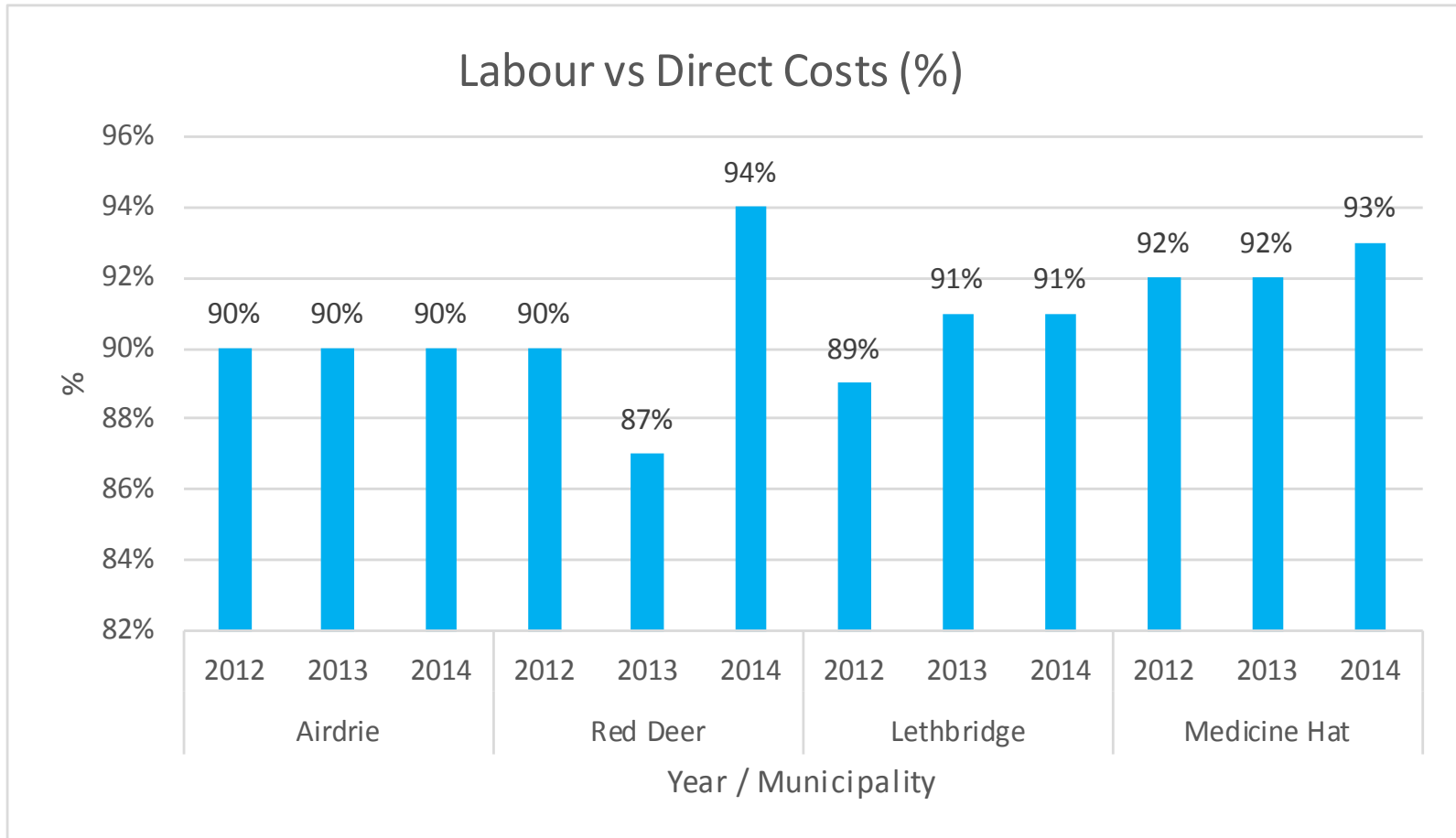


FIRE SERVICES TOTAL COST (\$/SQUARE KM)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Relatively speaking Medicine Hat is spread out over a wide area
- Low comparative cost considering geographical area covered

FIRE SERVICE LABOUR VS. DIRECT COSTS (%)

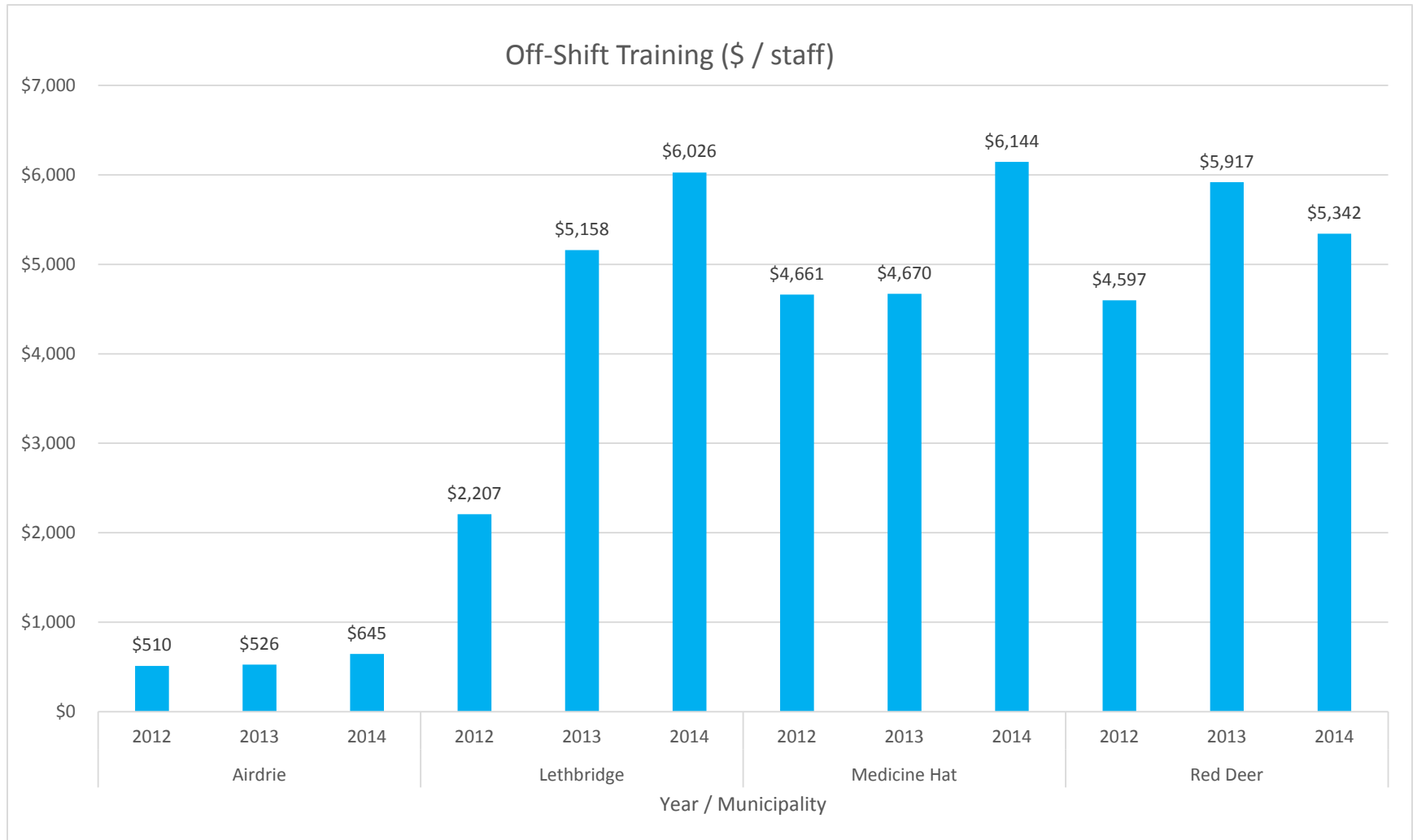


FIRE SERVICE LABOUR VS. DIRECT COSTS (%)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Direct costs are all operating costs to provide the activities of the fire service department; excludes management, amortization and an allocation of overhead
- All fulltime fire services have high labour costs and are similar across comparable municipalities
- Labour cost % are holding steady

FIRE SERVICES OFF-SHIFT TRAINING COSTS (\$/STAFF)



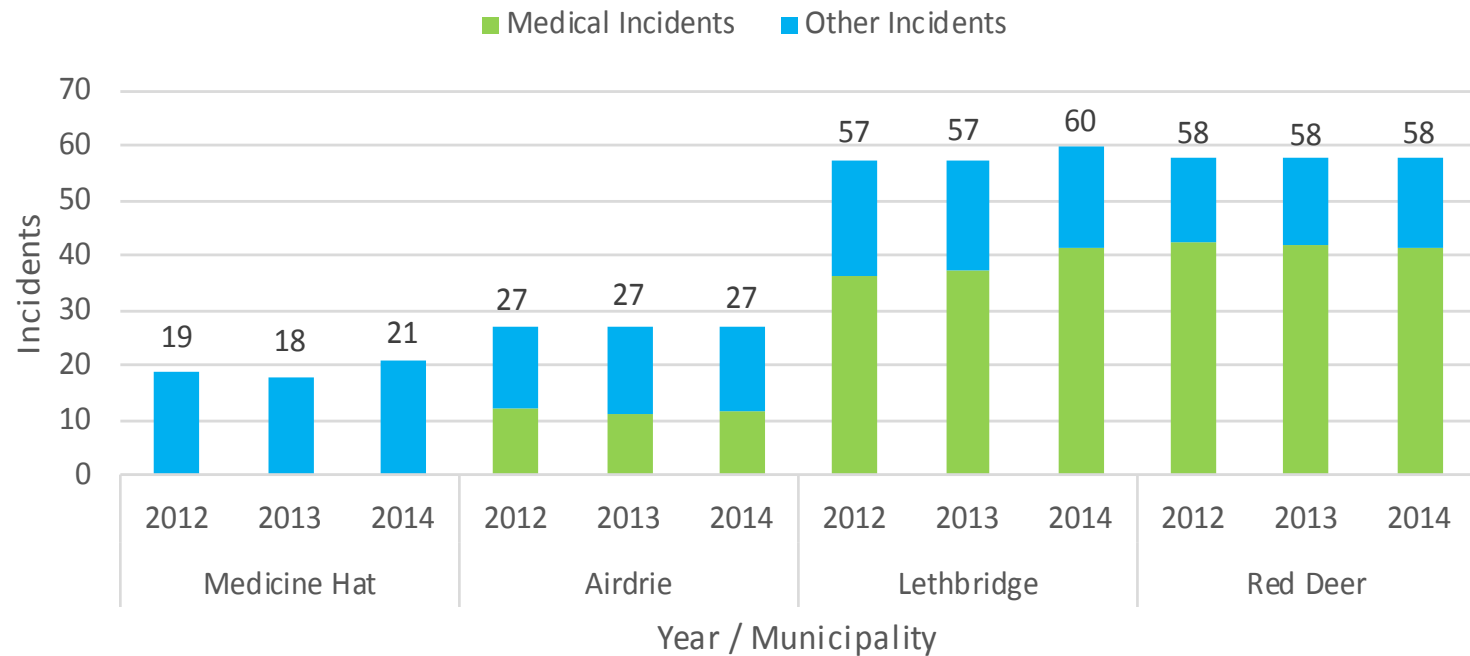
FIRE SERVICES OFF-SHIFT TRAINING COSTS (\$/STAFF)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Off-shift training costs include tuition and conference fees, wages and benefits, and travel expenses
- Medicine Hat uses “training pay” which is time in lieu
- Transitioning from in-classroom, week long training courses to online, on-shift training where possible

EMERGENCY INCIDENT RESPONSES (#/1000 POP)

Emergency Incident Responses (#/1,000 population served) – Effectiveness

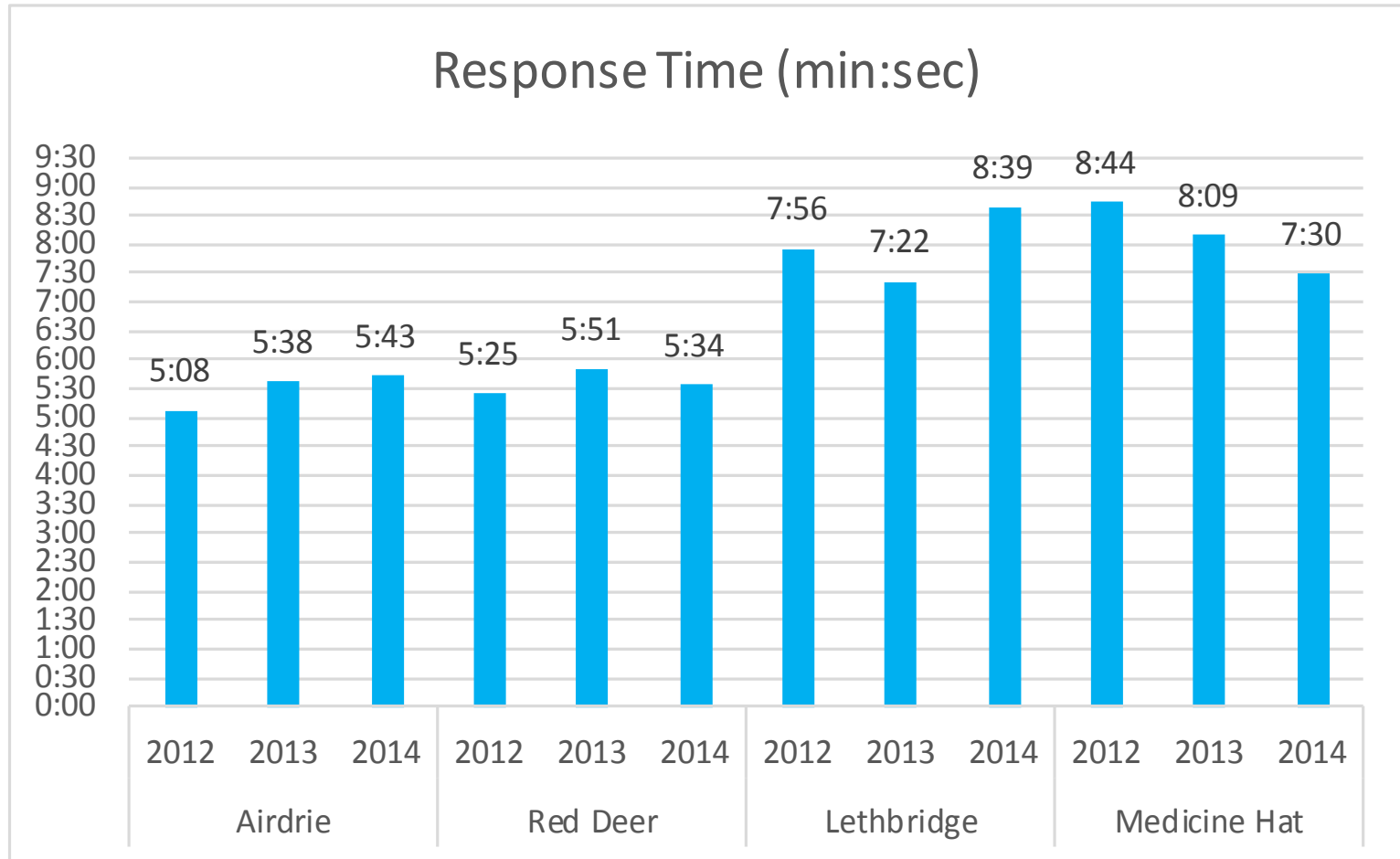


EMERGENCY INCIDENT RESPONSES (#/1000 POP)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Medicine Hat is the only service in the benchmarking project not involved in medical first response
- Non-medical calls per 1000 population are very close across the comparator group

FIRE SERVICES RESPONSE TIME (MIN:SEC)

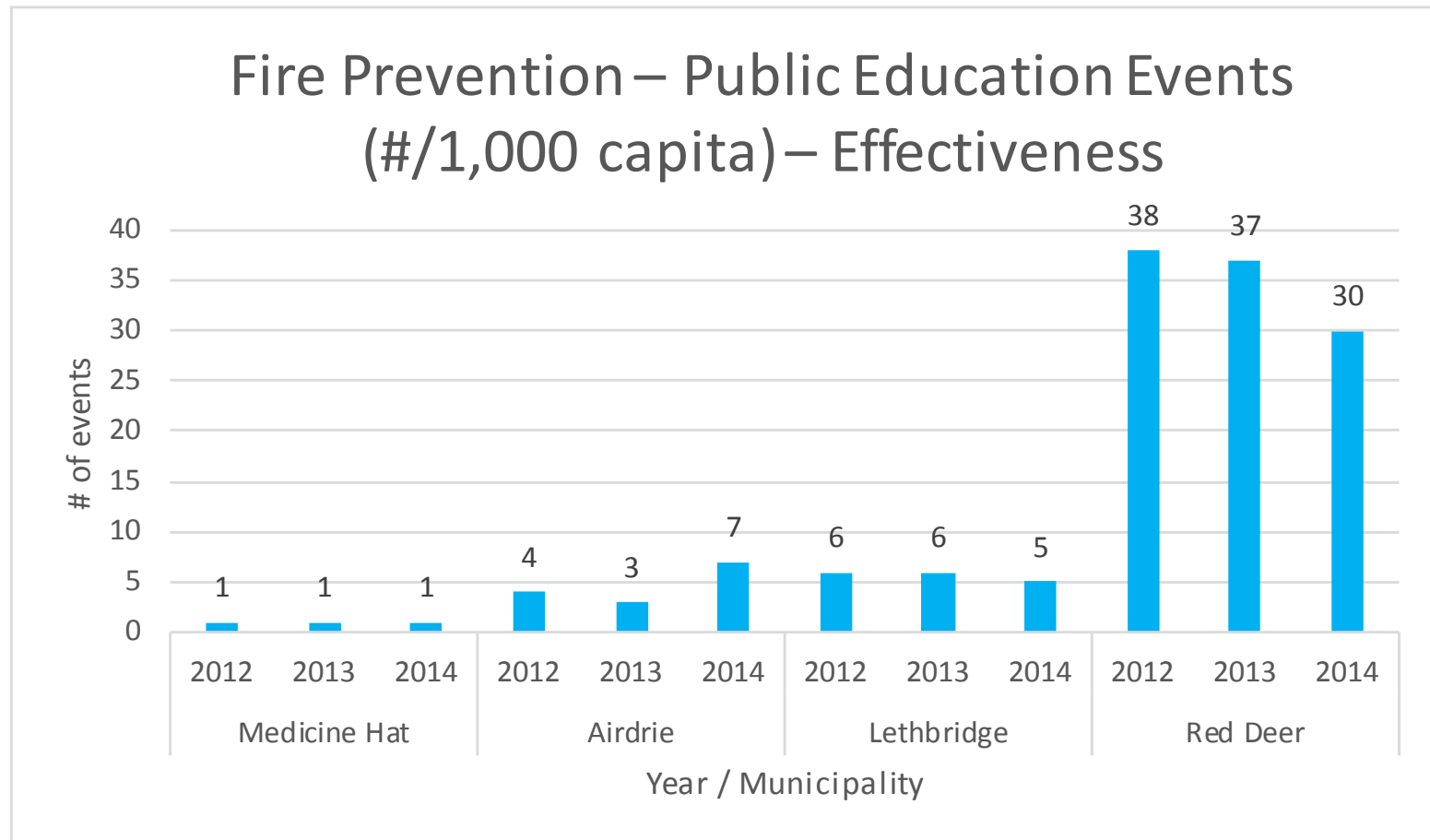


FIRE SERVICES RESPONSE TIME (MIN:SEC)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Benchmark required 90th percentile performance reporting
- Airdrie reports on average response time
- The Fire Service Response Coverage Optimization Plan is lowering response times
 - Traffic preemption
 - Mobile technology
 - Dispatch improvements

FIRE PREVENTION – PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENTS (#/1000)



FIRE PREVENTION – PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENTS (#/1000)

Medicine Hat's Story:

- Medicine Hat, Airdrie, and Lethbridge reported on number of events per 1000 population
- Red Deer reports on number of customers contacted
- Resident focused fire prevention programs are included in the 2017-2018 Business Plan

FIRE SERVICE CONCLUSIONS

- The Fire Service Response Time Optimization Plan is working
- Goal of the Plan is to avoid cost increases into the future while improving response coverage
- Fire Services should investigate the provision of medical first response to increase service value to residents
- Fire Services goal is to have Fire prevention programs become more prevalent and customer focused.
- Continuing the shift from reactive to proactive