



VILLAGE OF BARRINGTON

Barrington Fire Department Statement for the January 9, 2008 STB Open House

The Barrington Fire Department delivers many public safety services, most notably fire protection and emergency treatment and transport of medical patients. We provide these important services to more than 20,000 men, women and children in the Village of Barrington and within the Barrington-Countryside Fire Protection District. We have three fire stations, manpower and equipment strategically located throughout our service area. At each of our three fire stations, a crew of three firefighter/paramedics responds in either an ambulance or fire pumper, depending on the nature of the call. We protect more than 50 square miles, including three communities (Barrington, Barrington Hills and South Barrington) that share the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern rail system. Throughout our jurisdiction, residents and commuters depend upon major arterial state highways and county roadways that are intersected by the E, J and E rail line. We rely on these same highways and roadways for prompt

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**PRESIDENT & BOARD
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FAX (847) 381-7506

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FIRE
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response to emergency calls and expedient transport of emergency medical patients to local hospitals. For the year 2006, our response time average to emergencies throughout our area was less than four minutes. Our response time average to emergencies in the Village of Barrington was less than three minutes. I'm proud to state that our response time, a vital component to the timely delivery of emergency services, is far superior to the national standard of four to six minutes.

The proposed increase in freight traffic will drastically impede our ability to maintain this superior level of service to the community at-large, and will degrade our rapid response to emergency fire and medical services. We are challenged with vital time and distance issues beyond our control every single day. Time, especially response time, has a great deal to do with our ability to make a difference. For example, the first four-to-six minutes following cardiac arrest is the window of time for successful resuscitation. This same timeframe is all-important when dealing with heart attack, drowning, trauma, diabetic, or choking

patients. All of these emergencies can result in cardiac arrest if prompt emergency medical treatment is not received in a timely manner. Fire doubles in size every minute. A delayed response to a structure fire of five or more minutes could mean the difference between rescuing fire victims and fire fatalities, not to mention minimal property damage versus total destruction. These are life and death situations, mission-critical functions that will be impacted by increased freight train traffic that blocks access for our responding equipment.

Most of our ambulance patients are taken to Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital which is located near the Village of Barrington. At least a third of our patients who we now transport to Good Shepherd Hospital would potentially be diverted to St. Alexian Hospital in Hoffman Estates or Northwest Community Hospital in Arlington Heights due to increased freight train traffic or a stopped freight train blocking rail crossings and access to Good Shepherd Hospital. Because of time and distance issues, emergency medical patients taken to hospitals in Hoffman Estates or Arlington Heights

are at-risk of increased harm (irreversible heart damage for cardiac patients, extended timeframes for resuscitation during transport) before they can reach a hospital for further life saving intervention. Additionally, those trips mean that the ambulance and paramedic crew will be unavailable to respond to another call (fire or emergency medical) for an hour and a half if not more, depending on traffic, time of day and weather. Until they return to their fire station, that station's pre-determined response area requires coverage by one of our other three fire stations (which in turn gives one fire station two coverage areas for response. This has a compounding effect of much longer response times and more coverage areas unprotected by the closest emergency resources. For a department of our size, and for the quality of life that we have worked so hard to achieve, this is unacceptable.

Given the direct impact of increased rail traffic on essential local emergency services, blocked rail crossings (especially those crossings on Route 14,

Route 59, and Lake-Cook Road) bring about serious life threatening issues that will no doubt have an adverse impact on life and property.

I implore the Surface Transportation Board to require grade separations at our E,J and E rail crossings so that the men, women and children who live in, or travel through our area, are not placed at increased risk.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James E. Arie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

James E. Arie
Fire Chief



00179 DWL,

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James E. Arie
Fire Chief



VILLAGE OF BARRINGTON

00370 DUPL

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James E. Arie
Fire Chief