

## **Preamble**

In the spring of 2020, the Cariboo Regional District (CRD) commissioned a review of the fourteen fire departments that fell under their jurisdiction as tax funded and governed under bylaw. The key areas to be reviewed were legislative requirements, governance, financial management, operations, and occupational health and safety (OH&S). A study like this had never been completed previously in this region and was able to shed light on numerous issues. While there were a number of items that were identified to be corrected, it should be noted that there are numerous positive processes and actions currently underway.

As with any project submitted for review, there are limiting factors that can have an adverse effect on the completion and/or vision. The key drivers in this case can be broken down into several groups:

1. Is it relevant to the organization;
2. Will it require a change in culture;
3. Is it economically feasible in the current and projected timespan.

Most, if not all recommendations, meet the requirements of numbers one and two. With changes in culture, there may be resistance as change is often difficult in the fire service. The ability of Staff to implement these changes will be taxed as alternative solutions will need to be used in some cases. As we have learned throughout this program, we must become change agents in order to motivate, invent, and implement the vision as presented.

Items under number three will need to be further prioritized and completed in conjunction with the Departments and Finance so as to find a proper balance between fiscal responsibility and success.

### **History**

During the late 1970s' and into the early 90s', there was a surge in the creation of local fire brigades, run by societies throughout the Cariboo Regional District. In nineteen eighty-two, a number of these departments approached the Regional District to examine the feasibility of becoming a tax funded organization administered by the Regional District rather than relying on donations and grants. This led to the creation of the Protective Services department of the Regional District as well as the implementation of the Fire Services Bylaw (CRD, 2016) and was staffed by one supervisor and a part-time clerk.

During the first decade, the expectation was set that the District Chiefs would create and maintain standards within their Districts as they saw fit with the support of the Regional District. While this was an easy way to keep relationships progressing positively, it led to fourteen separate sets of Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs'), numerous levels of service, unreasonable expectations of service from the residents, and inflated budgets. The concept of standardization was discouraged, and the Districts built what they believed would be best for their protection areas.

A new supervisor was brought in with the expectation of streamlining the service and starting a standardization process. Numerous committees were created with the expectation that if it was democratic, any process or procedure that was agreed upon would become the new universal standard. Groundwork was completed for the standardization of new apparatus,

common turnout gear, Standard Operating Guidelines, and a consolidated level of service. During this period, the BC Structure Firefighters Competency & Training Playbook also came into effect to assist in the development and delivery of standardized training throughout the Province.

Those District Chiefs who were not a part of the process did not have buy-in to the new direction. Rather than proposing amendments, the issues of capital purchases and guidelines were made political in conjunction with the area Directors. This led to the dissolution of the standardization process. Elements remained but were watered down to allow the District Chief to once again make the end decisions on budgetary items and operations.

In 2017, the Cariboo Region experienced massive wildfires which resulted in mass evacuations (Judd, 2017) and resulted in the deployment of all fire services within the Region. The fires from 2017 are noted as:

The Plateau Complex of fires on the Chilcotin Plateau covered a combined area of 545,151 hectares, making it the largest fire in B.C.'s recorded history (roughly the same size as Prince Edward Island). This fire was the result of nearly 20 separate fires merging together.

The Hanceville Complex of fires around Hanceville, Riske Creek, Alexis Creek and surrounding areas covered a span of 241,160 hectares

The West Chilcotin Complex of fires in the Chilcotin region covered a combined area of 33,018 hectares. This complex extended into the Coastal Fire Centre and included the 7,368-hectare Precipice fire 52 kilometres east of Bella Coola

The Central Cariboo Complex of fires around Williams Lake, Soda Creek and surrounding areas covered a span of 31,181 hectares, including an Evacuation Order for the entire city of Williams Lake and surrounding areas

Gustafsen fire (5,700 hectares), just west of 100 Mile House; discovered July 6; prompted Evacuation Orders and Evacuation Alerts

2018 was also busy for fire and the notable events are:

Shag Creek: 12,322 ha; north of Itcha Ilgachuz Park; discovered August 1; prompted Evacuation Orders and Alerts

Blackwater River: 8,277.5 ha; east of Blackwater River in the Nazko area; discovered August 1; prompted Evacuation Orders and Alerts

North Baezaeko: 13,433.2 ha; south of Kluskoil Lake Park, 85 km west of Quesnel; discovered August 1; prompted Evacuation Orders and Alerts

Narcosli Creek: 4,636 ha; North of Tzenzaicut Lake, west of the Fraser River; discovered August 7; prompted Evacuation Orders and Alerts. (BC, 2020)

During these intense two seasons, the fire department's membership experienced a high level of operational tempo and associated stresses. Numerous members still suffer psychological issues from the incidents which has had an adverse effect of their families and their Departments. This is a driving factor for the provision of mental health services in the short term. Because of monumental effort to contain wildfires in the interface areas, the Districts redirected their focus from structural firefighting to wildland. This has placed each District in the position that they can

be challenged to effectively provide the basic level of service as listed in bylaw or in the Playbook. (OFC, 2015)

It is now the direction of the Board that we return to basics and meet our declared level of service which is exterior operations. For those that currently meet that level of service may, if willing, advance to interior operations under the guidance of the Protective Services department. In that case, the training requirements will exceed the listed Provincial standards and go to fully certified as NFPA 1001 professional firefighters.

### **Quantified Project Goals**

It would be reasonable to project completion of a number of items in the immediate/short-term range as they are relatively simple corrections. Additional information sharing will be necessary at the Board level to proceed on several venues as there are financial impacts associated with their implementation and/or completion. With the current economic climate affecting not only this region, but the world, some recommendations will have to either be shelved or discarded depending on the relative impact it would have to the organization.

For medium and long term aspects of this project, it will be the responsibility of staff to review and prioritize what that model could look from several aspects and again will need to be discussed with senior management and the Board as there will be far reaching impacts to budget, staffing, and administrative burden at all levels within the applicable department(s). The changes being implemented will have a positive impact on the organization as a whole and will be recognized immediately. If done correctly, they will enhance member safety, enable cost savings, and reduce liability to the region. For an outline of all project goals, see appendix “A”.

With the time constraints of this practicum, several specific goals were identified for implementation/completion. While these could be considered “low hanging fruit”, they are a motivational tool for the team to start to build momentum and get into the mindset of success.

The following goals were initiated and completed during this practicum:

1. Budget approval of additional staff to provide proper support to the Districts;
2. Reorganization of the Protective Services department to exclude Emergency Planning as this function removed all staff from supporting the Fire Districts while the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated (see appendix “B”);
3. The shutdown of several joint occupational health and safety committees as they did not meet the threshold of twenty members. A safety representative was appointed in its stead as per Worksafe BC guidelines (Government of BC, 2020);
4. That the CRD Protective Services transition to a face-to-face communication model with VFD chiefs and departments where staff visit each department 2-4 times annually;
5. That the CRD confirm its managerial reporting lines and organizational structure to all VFD fire chiefs and senior officers;
6. That CRD Protective Services institute and enforce expectation that all active duty firefighters will have applicable PPE (Coat, pants and helmet) that is less than 10 years of age from date of manufacture;
7. That all future apparatus purchases, regardless of vehicle type, have equal numbers, or more, Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) than firefighter sitting positions to ensure every firefighter on a fireground has respiratory protection available;

8. That all CRD firefighters who may operate any apparatus regularly perform pre- and/or post-trip inspections on the apparatus on a regular basis as per the requirements of both their airbrake endorsement and commercial vehicle regulations.

A number of projected goals were not completed due to external factors such as COVID, overland flooding, and landslides. It was because of these factors that the approval for reorganization was accepted and funded by the Board. (Johnston, 2020) Moving forward, the abilities of the department will be enhanced and unencumbered to achieve positive change in a timely manner.

### **SWOT**

A Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis considered as a working model to identify strength, weakness, opportunities and threats. The analysis carried out is based on the information at hand. The core purpose behind conducting a SWOT analysis is to identify external and internal factors seen as an important element to achieve the objectives. This helps them to surpass expectations by focusing on their own strength. The purpose of analyzing external opportunities and challenges help the organization to recognize the major developments and implications. It also capitalizes the opportunities and helps in formulating strategies accordingly. In most of the cases, SWOT identifies the source of competitive advantages. Despite its enormous benefits, it has some major limitations. As SWOT is a static approach, it will lose its effectiveness gradually. This also doesn't provide an alternative solution for a particular threat. (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015)

For this particular project, due to the dynamics of variety of taskings to cover, a SWOT was an essential analysis to complete in order to assist in the rankings of importance and assigning a timeline to each recommendation. It was realized that even though all

recommendations were ranked and plotted, some will never be completed due to financial concerns, required staffing, and the unpredictability inherent in volunteer-based organizations. It is also realized that even though we currently enjoy political and administrative support to accomplish our goals, this can change without notice depending on the whim of the Board. With that said, it behooves staff to ensure positive outcomes at each step by using proper resources and exercising fiducial restraint whenever possible.

**Strengths:**

- Enhanced organizational capacity;
- Budgetary support;
- Political and administration support;
- Correct staff to complete required changes

**Weaknesses:**

- Geographic separation;
- Inconsistent levels of training;
- Lack of proper training facilities;
- Distrust of District staff.

**Opportunities:**

- New district chiefs willing to learn;
- Freedom to try alternate solutions;
- Delivery of proper mentorship;
- Standardize processes.

**Threats:**



- Change(s) in political support;
- Loss of funding due to economic downturn;
- Resistance to change;
- Improper program development.

### **Environmental Analysis**

Based on the SWOT listed above, we are positioned for success. What is realized is that everything does boil down to compliance with legislation. Each section identified is tied directly to a standard or Act. This includes records management, OH&S, training, and operational response. We also need to understand that unlike police and ambulance services, fire departments are a discretionary optional community service, with no legal requirement to exist in any manner whatsoever, anywhere in British Columbia under either Canadian or Province of BC Legislation.

However, regional and local government entities regularly do create and operate fire departments in the interest of public and community safety. Fire departments only have the power and authority granted under local bylaw. These bylaws must create and define the fire departments operations. In the case of a service established by a regional district, the operating boundaries of the department are the boundaries of the local service area. A fire department has no authority to act at, or to respond to, an incident outside that defined service area unless specific instructions exist in the bylaw or separate agreement. Care must be taken to ensure that the department bylaw provides the full range of powers needed to respond effectively to incidents within its jurisdiction.

Regardless of the organizational or governance model, or the services offered, a series of significant and prescriptive regulatory and legislative requirements must be met to provide fire services. The CRD, and its individual communities, having made the decision to provide local fire protection, are thus obligated to comply with the requirements as set out.

All fire departments in British Columbia, except wildland, must comply with the BC Structure Firefighter Competency and Training Playbook, WorkSafeBC, and other federal, provincial and local legislation. Governance of fire department performance and expectations in any jurisdiction takes place in the form of bylaws, policies, and operational guidelines. In the case of the CRD, all 14 member VFD's have been required to adopt similar bylaws and a single set of CRD policies and standard operational guidelines (SOG's).

These comprehensive and diverse compliance requirements on fire service operations and performance are in place to:

- Protect and improve firefighter safety;
- Ensure that fire services can meet community needs;
- Increase the safety of fire service “customers”;
- Improve fire service performance.

Like the empowerment to exist, there is no standard range of services defined for a fire department. A department is authorized to provide only those services which are stipulated in its service establishment and operational bylaws. Since fire departments typically respond to a very wide range of incident types, it is important that any bylaw or empowering document facilitate such breadth of potential service and not be unwittingly restrictive.

## CRIMINAL CODE OF CANADA SECTION 217.1 (Government of Canada, 2003)

Section 217.1 of the Criminal Code, also known as Bill C-45 or the “Westray Bill”, became law on March 31, 2004. Bill C-45 (2003) established new legal duties for workplace health and safety and imposed serious penalties for violations that result in injuries or death. The Bill provided new rules for attributing criminal liability to organizations, including corporations, their representatives and those who direct the work of others. The Criminal Code Section reads as follows: “217.1 Every one who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task.”

The amendment also added Sections 22.1 and 22.2 to the Criminal Code imposing criminal liability on organizations and its representatives for negligence (22.1) and other offences (22.2).

The main provisions of Section 217.1 are as follows:

- Creates rules for establishing criminal liability to organizations for the acts of their representatives.
- Establishes a legal duty for all persons "directing the work of others" to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of workers and the public.
- Sets out the factors that courts must consider when sentencing an organization.
- Provides optional conditions of probation that a court may impose on an organization.

To date, there are eight cases where individuals were charged under the new provisions in the Criminal Code. These provisions of the Criminal Code affect all organizations and

individuals who direct the work of others, anywhere in Canada. There are several critical pieces of provincial legislation that dictate how and why fire services perform specific actions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (Government of BC, 2015) and BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CHARTER (Queen's Printer, 2003)

The Local Government Act applies to the CRD. Both the Local Government Act and Community Charter allow for the creation and management of local or regional areas within the province at the discretion of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). Both documents describe the powers transferred from the province, and the authorities that regional or local government may initiate. One of the authorities conferred is the ability to constitute and manage a fire department.

SOCIETIES ACT (BC, Societies Act, 2015)

The Societies Act allows for the creation of an organization for numerous lawful purposes, one of which being a local fire department. The Societies Act describes the requirements and powers of the Society Board and stipulates that the Society may not carry on activities restricted by its bylaws and policies or contrary to its stated purpose. The Society Board is responsible for the establishment and compliance with said bylaws and policies.

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRE SERVICES ACT (BC, Fire Services Act, 2020)

The BC Fire Services Act identifies the services and actions to be undertaken by a governing body related to specific aspects of local fire safety. The Province does not fund local fire service delivery costs. The Office of the Fire Commissioner of BC (OFC) does provide guidance and advice, particularly related to education and prevention, and will support fire investigations under certain circumstances.

The power and authority of the Fire Services Act is typically transferred to the Local Assistant to the Fire Commissioner of BC (LAFC), as designated by the AHJ, which in this case would be the regional district. In the absence of a designated LAFC, the powers and authority are conferred upon the local police force having jurisdiction.

Anticipated replacement legislation, identified as the BC Fire Safety Act, received 3rd Reading in the Legislature in 2016, but has yet to receive Order in Council (OIC) and come into force. The new Fire Safety Act is undergoing further review and once amendments are complete, and the necessary associated regulations are approved, the information will be disseminated. The new Fire Safety Act is likely to eliminate the LAFC role and transition more responsibility to regional government.

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRE SERVICE MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS - STRUCTURE FIREFIGHTER COMPETENCY AND TRAINING PLAYBOOK (OFC, 2015)

The Playbook, considered a benchmark document when completed in 2014 and amended in 2015, sets the industry recognized minimum standard in BC for firefighter competency and training levels and is expressly tied to the established fire service delivery level identified by the AHJ. The AHJ may be a local government, regional government, Society, Improvement District or other entity as permitted by legislation. The only fire services legally exempt from this standard are BC Wildfire and First Nations fire services, although many are voluntarily working to comply. The key component to the Playbook is the explicit requirement for the AHJ to determine, train to, and maintain compliance with their identified service level. The AHJ must establish a minimum service delivery level for a community through bylaw or policy from the three options provided in the Playbook: Exterior, Interior or Full-Service. The fire department must train, equip and perform to that service level, as a minimum. Detailed records management

of training, personnel, and response is a central component of the Playbook Standard. These requirements for Playbook compliance reinforce the existing requirements of the WorkSafe BC Workers Compensation Act and OH&S Regulations. The Playbook core skills are derived from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 – Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications and NFPA 1021 – Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications.

It is important to recognize that the Playbook is not all-encompassing in relation to the breadth of fire service activities and delivery of services. The Playbook provides direction only in regard to structural firefighting. It does not address additional services such as driver/operator, incident command, incident safety, technical rescue, vehicle rescue or first responder medical, many of which are provided by CRD fire services. The AHJ must research and apply additional training and operational procedures – such as NFPA Standards - to ensure functions, in addition to those covered by the Playbook, are performed safely and effectively.

In general, the AHJ will typically provide governance, oversight, and ensure compliance with the Playbook, while training and implementation will largely occur within the local fire department.

BRITISH COLUMBIA WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT (BC W. , 2020) and  
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OH&S) REGULATION (BC W. , Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, 2020)

All fire services must operate within the stringent safety requirements of the WorkSafe BC, Workers Compensation Act regardless of the department governance type or staffing model. In addition to the numerous requirements within the Act and the WorkSafe BC OH&S Regulation that apply to fire services, Part 31 of the Regulation expressly identifies fire service-

specific safety program requirements. Areas include firefighter protective clothing, equipment maintenance and testing, safety committees, documentation, and safe work procedures. Full compliance with all components of both the Act and the Regulation is expected given the risk inherent within firefighting operations. The Act and Regulation apply without exception to all firefighters, career or volunteer, as well as fire departments and AHJ's.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MOTOR VEHICLE ACT (BC G. o., MOTOR VEHICLE ACT, 2020) and REGULATION (BC G. o., Motor Vehicle Act Regulations, 2020)

Fire services must operate within the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Act, and its Regulations, and all drivers of emergency vehicles must be educated on, and exercise the responsibilities identified within the Act and Regulation. Driver licensing and training, vehicle pre- and post-trip inspections, commercial vehicle inspections, vehicle maintenance documentation, and apparatus design and function must all meet the legislative requirements regardless of the department governance type or staffing model.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT (BC G. o., BC Laws, 2020) and REGULATION (BC G. o., Employment Standards Regulation, 2020)

Portions of the Employment Standards Act and its accompanying Regulation apply to all volunteer and paid-on-call firefighters in the CRD. It is important that the CRD, and specifically the Protective Services department, be aware of the application of this legislation in volunteer fire departments. CRD Human Resources personnel should be consulted on areas of concern or conflict to avoid potential liability risk. Specific attention should be paid to Parts 10-14 which describe processes and regulations related to complaints, investigations and enforcement.

BYLAWS (CRD, 2016)

As stated earlier, in BC there is no legislated requirement for a community to offer fire protection services. Under the Local Government Act the Regional Board, through bylaw, may establish and make regulations for a fire department. It is a voluntary optional service provision for regional government to offer fire protection, as well as to identify the level and mix of services provided. If the AHJ does not choose to provide the service in a specific area, fire departments may still arise under the umbrella of a Society, Fire Brigade or Improvement District. All fire departments must meet the legislative requirements as described above.

The CRD Bylaw 5014 – A bylaw of the Cariboo Regional District to provide for the operation of Fire Departments describes overall roles, services, jurisdiction, rules, and regulations for VFD operations. Additionally, the CRD has recognized each of its 14 VFD's under a unique Bylaw for the designated fire protection area. Each bylaw is current and has undergone revision over time. Each details the financial and administrative requirements for both parties.

### **Stakeholders**

As this project is targeted towards a singular audience, the list of stakeholders is minimal. That being said, it will have an impact on both the fire departments as well as the residents within the protection district as it directly ties into their taxes and the level(s) of service provided. Our financial model is undergoing change to have at minimum, 50% of expected operational budget to cover expenses until the budget is approved, to be available in reserve to prevent dramatic change in the mill rate for those areas. With that change in policy, most districts will see increases for the next several years.

The following list shows which communities would be considered stakeholders:



1. Ten Mile
2. Barlow Creek
3. Kersley
4. Wildwood
5. 150 Mile House
6. Miocene
7. 108 Mile House
8. Forest Grove
9. Lone Butte
10. Interlakes
11. Deka Lake
12. West Fraser
13. Bouchie Lake
14. Lac La Hache

In addition to these communities, other stakeholders identified would be the Board of the CRD as fire departments are increasingly political, the Cities of Williams Lake and Quesnel and the District of 100 Mile House, due to mutual aid agreements and fringe service agreements, and finally, internal CRD staff as they are the individuals tasked with completing these recommendations.

### **Expected Benefits**

The Regional District, as well as each VFD and its members, are at a cross-roads in the evolution of the Regional District fire service. Do they all step up, accept the need to evolve and act to fix shortcomings and gaps? Or does the Regional District accept the current model, along

with its inherent liability concerns, and leave the fire services status quo? The answers seem clear, and the generation of this project strongly identifies that the Regional District recognizes and acknowledges that they must move forward.

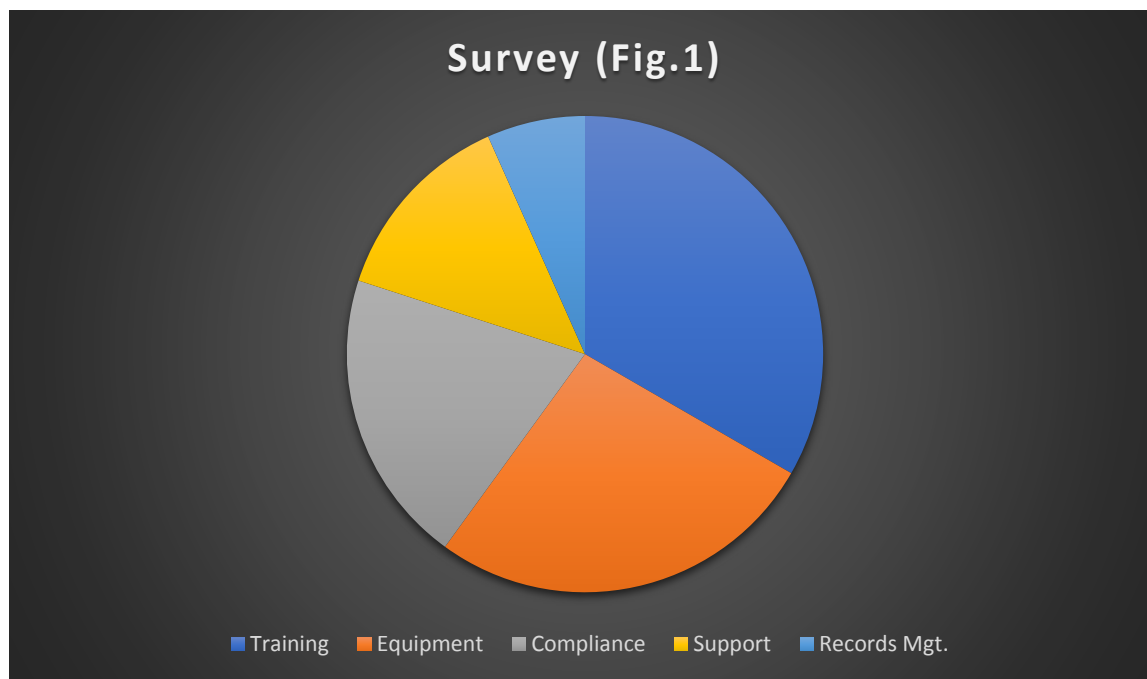
The Regional District has a robust and talented system of eager, skilled, and dedicated firefighters throughout the 14 fire protection areas. The departments and firefighters have strong desire to succeed and evolve their delivery of service to their communities. The Regional District needs to lead this evolution and meet the challenges head-on to ensure that:

- Firefighter safety and health will improve markedly and the Regional District VFD's will become more cohesive;
- Community members will receive improved and more engaged service;
- The Regional District will minimize their risk exposure while simultaneously improving community and firefighter safety;
- Personal pride of chiefs, officers and firefighters will be enhanced through use of modern and effective equipment;
- Community and family support will build through improved training, performance, and engagement;
- Community support will build, and recruitment and retention of firefighters will be enhanced for the longer term.

### **Survey**

After each fire district was given the opportunity to digest the main report and their individual district specific reports, we conducted a basic survey to see what they interpreted as

the main issues impacting their areas. Training was identified as the highest priority at 33%, followed by equipment at 27%, compliance at 20%, support from the CRD at 13%, and records management at 7%. This is represented in figure 1 below. The results are in line with traditional expectations but reinforces where efforts should be directed.



### **Cost & Budget**

While the direction is to complete the recommendations contained in the report, it is the direction of the Board to “hold the course” and reduce any net impacts to existing budgets with the exception of those items contained in the capital plan. In order to be successful, it was admitted by the Board that sufficient staff levels do not exist within Protective Services. After debate, the motion was carried to hire a new Regional Fire Services Coordinator and to also

separate the Emergency Management function from Protective Services. This has resulted in 5.5% increase to Protective Services and a 125% increase to Emergency Management (see Fig. 2). In real dollars, this translates to approximately a five thousand dollar increase to each fire district and twelve dollars to every resident in the Regional District as Emergency Management is a function of the entire Regional District and not a special tax level for designated areas.

Costing is shown below:

(Fig.2)

<b>New Positions Added:</b>																			
New Manager of Emergency Planning																			
Additional Fire Services Supervisor																			
505,419	1319	1321	1323	1324	1326	1327	1329	1330	1331	1332	1333	1364	1365	1367	1375	1380	1385		
	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	18,895	47,644	174,354	
	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	
520,582	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	1,429	5,231	
	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	19,462	49,073	179,585	
148,366	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	
	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	5,547	13,986	51,182	
	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	25,008	63,059	230,767	
<b>Budget without additional positions</b>																			
328,570	1319	1321	1323	1324	1326	1327	1329	1330	1331	1332	1333	1364	1365	1367	1375	1380	1385		
	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150	41,968	74,354	
	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	
338,427	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	424	1,259	2,231	
	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	14,574	43,227	76,585	
96,452	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	28.5%	
	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	4,154	12,320	21,827	
	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	18,728	55,547	98,412	
Increase to budget	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	6,280	7,512	132,355	

To augment capacity, staff has been using grant funds to start offsetting costs in the final fiscal quarter of 2020. We were successful in applying for and receiving funds from the Red Cross to action certain programs through the Community Partnership Program. The Community Partnerships Program is a project-based grants program that funds community organizations to respond to community recovery needs and resilience-building priorities. (Canadian Red Cross, 2020)

In this quarter, we purchased two fit testing machines, current curriculum for each district, instructor resources, and paid for several courses. If considered equal for each district, it has reduced costs for this fiscal year by eight thousand two hundred and will have a cumulative effect for the next five years of roughly 5% operationally as an offset. Assuming a 1.3% increase in costs per year, this will save approximately ninety-six thousand dollars over this five-year time period.

Average operational budgets for the districts will be running in the area of two hundred thousand dollars. For the next several years, a number of districts will have an inflated budget to match the previously mentioned direction of the Board to ensure 50% of operational funds in reserve to bridge from the end of the fiscal year (December 31) to the receipt of taxes from the Province at the end of May. This reduces the chance that funds will be taken from general reserves which impacts interest revenue for the entire CRD.

### **Further Study**

Given the vast scope and dynamics of this project, there must be a constant cycle of evaluation and correction. Even though staff has clear unencumbered direction to proceed on the implementation of this project, updates to Administration and the Board should occur quarterly to ensure that positive direction is maintained and further encouraged. The potential for positive change is enormous, but will require tight management of objectives, strategies, and benchmarked goals.

When it comes to long term project planning and management, several challenges and difficulties can arise which require a total rethink of the project's future or scope, all the way up

to having to abandon it or adopt a whole new working approach. Loss of focus, the slowing of progress, a lack of immediate results, poor diligence and losses in productivity are only a few of the perils that can strike long-term projects.

As these goals are achieved, it must be recognized that others will not. In this case, it is the responsibility of the team to determine if unfinished recommendations should be re-prioritized or can it be combined with another recommendation to provide economy of effort. As stated earlier, some of these recommendations will not be completed due to complexity, fiscal requirements, political pressures, or they simply do not apply to our organizational model.

### **Conclusion**

The Cariboo Regional District has many talented and dedicated firefighters within the regional fire service. Getting to an even better place is desirable for the Regional District, as well as the members of each VFD and the community they serve. As firefighters, the VFD members are part of a strong brotherhood and sisterhood that is unique to community volunteerism. They deserve a great deal of praise and respect.

While the review identified opportunities for improvement, it also highlighted many areas of strength. The foundation of the fire service within the Regional District is very strong, and while the recommendations may appear numerous and/or complex, they are just a set of individual steps on the journey to a stronger organization. Many of the issues identified can be quickly resolved, or at least improved, to achieve legislative compliance and the addressing of easier goals within the recommendations will facilitate generation of a positive attitude toward addressing the larger challenges. In turn, this will lead to a broader mindset whereby the bigger challenges can be overcome. The volunteer-based service delivery model for fire services has its

limitations, but it benefits greatly from the presence of outstanding individuals who are committed to community.

## **Appendices**

### **A – References**

#### References

BC, G. o. (2015, May 14). *Societies Act*. Retrieved from BC Laws:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/15018\\_01](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/15018_01)

BC, G. o. (2020, November 25). *BC Laws*. Retrieved from Employment Standards Act:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96113\\_01](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96113_01)

BC, G. o. (2020, September 1). *Employment Standards Regulation*. Retrieved from BC Laws:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/396\\_95](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/396_95)

BC, G. o. (2020, April 6). *Fire Services Act*. Retrieved from BC Laws:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96144\\_01](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96144_01)

BC, G. o. (2020, August 14). *MOTOR VEHICLE ACT*. Retrieved from BC Laws:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96318\\_01](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96318_01)

BC, G. o. (2020, September 24). *Motor Vehicle Act Regulations*. Retrieved from BC Laws:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/26\\_58\\_00](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/26_58_00)

BC, G. o. (2020, April). *Wildfire Season Summary*. Retrieved from Government of BC:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/about-bcws/wildfire-history/wildfire-season-summary>

BC, W. (2020, April 6). *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*. Retrieved from Worksafe BC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation>

BC, W. (2020, April 6). *Workers Compensation Act*. Retrieved from Worksafe BC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/workers-compensation-law/workers-compensation-act>

Canadian Red Cross. (2020, November 23). *Community Partnerships*. Retrieved from Red Cross Canada:

<https://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/current-emergency-responses/community-partnerships>

CRD. (2016, February 26). *CRD Bylaws - Fire Services*. Retrieved from Cariboo Regional District:

[https://www.cariboord.ca/uploads/bylaws/fireprotection/5014\\_-\\_CRD\\_Fire\\_Departments\\_Bylaw\\_2016.pdf](https://www.cariboord.ca/uploads/bylaws/fireprotection/5014_-_CRD_Fire_Departments_Bylaw_2016.pdf)

Government of BC. (2015, December 16). *Local Government Act*. Retrieved from BC Laws:

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/r15001\\_01](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/r15001_01)

Government of BC. (2020, April 15). *Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee (JOHSC)*. Retrieved

from Governmemnt of BC: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/all-employees/safety-health-well-being/workplace/planning/johsc>



Government of Canada. (2003). *Offences Against the Person and Reputation*. Retrieved from Justice Laws Website: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-46/page-51.html#:~:text=217.1%20Every%20one%20who%20undertakes,from%20that%20work%20or%20task.>

Johnston, A. (2020, 11 13). *Minutes/Agendas* . Retrieved from Cariboo Regional District: <https://www.cariboord.ca/agendas-minutes/agendasminutes>

Judd, A. (2017, July 10). *Williams Lake wildfires continue to rage as evacuations remain in place*. Retrieved from Global News: <https://globalnews.ca/news/3586887/williams-lake-wildfires-continue-to-rage-as-evacuations-remain-in-place/>

OFC, B. (2015, May). *British Columbia Fire Service Minimum Training Standards*. Retrieved from Government of BC: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/fire-safety/playbook.pdf>

Queen's Printer. (2003, May 29). *British Columbia Community Charter*. Retrieved from BC Laws: [https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/03026\\_00](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/03026_00)

Sammut-Bonnici, T. &. (2015). *Benefits & Limitations of SWOT Analysis*. Retrieved from Source Essay: <https://sourceessay.com/benefits-and-limitation-of-swot-analysis/>

