



**To:** Kelliann Dean, Deputy Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs  
Deputy Mayor Laurie Murley, President, UNSM  
Marie Walsh, President, AMANS  
Rod Nielsen President, Fire Services Association

**From:** Fire Services Study Steering Committee

**Date:** August 3, 2017

**Re:** Municipal Review of Fire Services in Nova Scotia

As you are aware, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia, with the financial support of the Province of Nova Scotia, engaged a consultant to facilitate a frank and open discussion on fire services. The consultant was asked to meet with representative stakeholders to ascertain and prioritize key issues at the local level, to consider opportunities to address these issues, and to facilitate the sharing of best practices, lessons learned and possible areas for collaboration.

The work of the consultant was overseen by a Project Steering Committee comprised of representatives from UNSM, AMANS, the Fire Services Association and the Fire Marshal's Office. The task of the Project Steering Committee was to select the consultant, to ensure the terms of reference were met and to facilitate the work of the consultant.

Pomax Consulting was engaged to undertake the review. Their report is attached in Appendix B.

### **Project Steering Committee Observations**

The Consultant has fulfilled the terms of reference. The Project Steering Committee recognizes the hard work of the consultant in documenting stakeholders' views and concerns. The recommendations of the consultant make sense, in that the issues are complex and not solved by one group alone. The need to work together is paramount.

During the stakeholder consultations, it became evident that there were varying degrees of understanding with respect to fire services in Nova Scotia, particularly around authority and

areas of responsibility. Because these views are reflected in the report, the Committee felt it was important to provide the accurate information along with the reported views in Appendix A. It is important that those reading the report understand that the views presented by the participants are not necessarily accurate.

### **Next Steps**

The Project Steering Committee makes the following recommendations:

- A stakeholder committee comprised of representatives from municipalities, the province and fire services be struck;
- The first order of business for the steering committee will be to develop an action plan to explore the following as it relates to fire services:
  - Funding model
  - Fire service standards
  - Organizational structure
  - Milestones and timelines
  - Short and long-term goals
  - Clarification and education of roles and responsibilities (i.e. provincial legislation)
  - Identify areas for collaboration (i.e. fire service coordinators)

Fire services are important for all Nova Scotians. Municipalities, fire services, and the province must work together to address challenges and seize opportunities to strengthen this important emergency service.

Sincerely,

Members of the Fire Service Review Project Steering Committee:

Rod Nielsen, President, Fire Services Association of Nova Scotia

Wayne Thorburne, Councillor, Town of Bridgewater

Bonnie Coulter, Director of Corporate Services, Town of New Glasgow

Shawn Andrews, Director of Fire, Emergency, IT Services, Municipality of Guysborough

Fred Jeffers, Nova Scotia Fire Marshall

Anne Partridge, Executive Director, Grants and Programs, Municipal Affairs

Janice Wentzell, Executive Director, Association of Municipal Administrators

Betty MacDonald, Executive Director, Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities

**POMAX Report on Consultation  
Points of Clarification Highlighted by  
Fire Services Review Project Steering Committee**

<b>Funding</b>			
#	Fire Services Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Fire Services	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
1.	Fundraising	<p>Volunteer support for fundraising is declining due to other commitments, increasing time required for other department duties such as training, equipment maintenance and a reluctance to participate in fundraising activities</p> <p>Fire services are the only community service required to fundraise for equipment and operational needs <b>Fire services are not the only community service required to fundraise for equipment and operational needs</b></p>	<p>Recruitment and retention of volunteers may suffer if fundraising is required and impact the number of volunteers available to respond to emergencies</p>
2.	<p>Reimbursement for delivering services <b>are perceived as</b> provincial responsibilities, (i.e., medical first responder, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials, hydro responses and standby, traffic control) <b>These services are generally not a provincial responsibility but rather private or municipal.</b></p>	<p>Fire departments respond to these incidents but must fund training and equipment from within with no reimbursement from the province</p> <p>Volunteers are required to take on these extra responsibilities and related training</p> <p><b>Volunteers are not required to take on these extra responsibilities, they chose to do so</b></p>	<p>Local taxpayer is subsidizing provincial services with funds that may be required for community fire protection needs and circumstances</p> <p><b>The province does not provide any of these services, they are provided by fire services through registration with the municipality</b></p>

**POMAX Report on Consultation  
Points of Clarification Highlighted by  
Fire Services Review Project Steering Committee**

<b>Funding</b>			
#	Fire Services Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Fire Services	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
3.	Provincial funding – a matching capital fund is available to fire services at two year intervals but it requires initial funding of equipment by the fire department which is then reimbursed by the province <b>In actuality this funding is available at 3year intervals</b>	<p>Fire departments in less affluent communities cannot afford the initial expense to purchase or replace equipment and apparatus</p> <p>Equipment may be kept in service long past its life expectancy</p>	<p>Apparatus may not be reliable to respond to emergencies. Possible delays in response or failure to operate at an emergency scene</p> <p>Fire fighters may use equipment (e.g. breathing apparatus) that should no longer be in service. A health and safety issue.</p>
4.	Area Rated Taxation Model (Taxes for some services [recreation, transportation, fire, etc.] may be calculated differently for the area that receives a specific or greatest benefit, rather than generally sharing the cost across the whole municipality.)	<p>Some communities are well funded while many do not have the tax base to provide resources adequate to meet the needs and circumstances of the community</p> <p>Some fire departments have to fund raise to provide basic operational needs such as fuel for the vehicles</p> <p>Communities with strong assessment base and high community involvement support their fire services</p> <p>Funding is determined by geographical boundaries (each ratepayer association coverage area) not by risk in a given community</p> <p>Fire departments may hold onto their boundaries regardless of impact on response times because they want the funding from that particular area</p>	<p>There is a risk that some communities are not able to provide a fire protection system appropriate to their needs and circumstances even within the same municipal jurisdiction Provision of the “best available” response times is superseded by local politics and funding interests</p>

**POMAX Report on Consultation  
Points of Clarification Highlighted by  
Fire Services Review Project Steering Committee**

<b>Funding</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Fire Services Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Fire Services</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety</b>
5.	Accountability for funding	<p>There is no mandated accountability mechanism regarding fire service funding</p> <p>Some fire departments are subject to strict and expensive auditing requirements while others are not required to provide any</p>	Uncertainty regarding how funds are spent and the impact on adequacy of community fire protection

<b>Funding</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Municipal Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety</b>
1.	Funding for fire services is done in silos per individual fire departments in a given municipal unit. Municipalities are required to collect funds as determined by the local ratepayers' association with no means to rationalize fire service funding within the municipal budgeting process.	<p>Elected representatives and municipal administrators have little control or authority over funds provided for fire protection.</p> <p>Municipal governments are not able to effect potential efficiencies over the broader municipal unit, i.e., fire department insurance coverage, rationalization of equipment and apparatus, provision of specialized services.</p>	<p>Fire safety concerns brought to elected municipal officials are not addressed</p> <p>The community may not receive the best possible fire protection with available funding.</p> <p>Best approach to fire safety in a community is not provided – i.e., fire prevention/public education as well as emergency response</p>
2.	Inequity of funding – funding of a fire department is often determined by the economic circumstances of individual rate payer areas within a municipal unit including such issues as property assessment values, financial demographics, perceived fire protection needs	<p>Fire departments that are well funded under the current system protect the status quo</p> <p>Fire departments that provide fire service in economically stressed areas are not funded to the level required to meet the needs and circumstances of that area</p> <p>Many municipalities are experiencing infrastructure deficits but are prevented from rationalizing the cost of fire services and</p>	Impact on purchasing of updated/reliable apparatus and equipment required for community and firefighter health and safety

Funding			
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
	and political influence of fire commissioners	equipment because fire departments continue to operate independently and in silos	
3.	Volunteer cost savings	Municipalities recognize the low cost of a volunteer fire service but are intimidated by the fear of resignations if they attempt to exert control over service levels or standards of service	Introduction of appropriate service levels and delivery standards are inhibited
4.	Reimbursement for delivering services deemed provincial responsibilities, (i.e., Medical First Responder, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials, hydro responses and standby, traffic control) <b>These services are generally not a provincial responsibility but rather private or municipal.</b>	EHS is a private business* but municipalities are subsidizing this enterprise through provision of emergency first responder services in their communities	Funding for local fire service needs are limited in order to fund provincial responsibilities

\*EHS is actually contracted to the province and committed to province-wide service standards.

Service Delivery Standards			
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Fire Services	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
1.	No province wide standardized training program/curriculum (most voluntarily follow NFPA 1000 series firefighter training)	Fire departments develop their own programs in isolation Member departments of mutual aid systems may have different levels of training Incident commanders cannot be confident in the abilities of members responding departments	Community members cannot assess the competency of their fire department members Health and safety concerns for firefighters and the public Registration of a fire department does not ensure the fire department can competently provide the services it is funded for or meet community expectations
2.	Insurance coverage for volunteers	Workplace insurance is not required to be provided in all municipalities Some communities provide insurance through the Workers Compensation Board while others	Reluctance to become a volunteer firefighter depending on availability and type insurance coverage

<b>Service Delivery Standards</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Fire Service Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Fire Services</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety</b>
		rely on private insurance such as Volunteer Firefighters Insurance Service (VFIS) Some communities do not provide insurance of any kind to volunteers	Hiring and retention of volunteers impacts response capabilities
3.	Development of standards	Development of standards should have input from the fire service practitioners	Ensures realistic and practical standards to be employed in communities Ensures communities are getting the services they are funding
4.	If service delivery standards are developed they need to be flexible to meet local community needs and circumstances	Requires fire departments to clearly define and identify their capabilities to the community	Enables a community to understand, define and fund the level of services appropriate to the needs and circumstances of that community
5.	Without standards fire departments and members are subject to potential legal liabilities	Without approved service delivery standards fire potential liabilities are increased In the absence of local standards fire departments will be subject to scrutiny against industry wide standards	Potential impact on hiring and retention of volunteers
6.	Enforcement of standards - there is no provincial body to enforce standards if they are developed	Adoption of standards would be voluntary in each fire department	Community may not have the level of protection they assume or expect

<b>Service Delivery Standards</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Municipal Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments</b>	<b>What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety</b>
1.	Knowledge and understanding of standards – service delivery and performance	Many municipal representatives do not have a clear understanding of what service delivery and performance standards are regarding the fire service and what the impact would be on their municipalities and the fire services Lack of knowledge and misunderstanding of fire service standards results in a fear of	Best practices/delivery standards that benefit community fire safety are not implemented

Service Delivery Standards			
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
		<p>implementing standards as financial concern and the potential to lose volunteers</p> <p>If the province unilaterally introduces standards for the fire service, there may be significant impacts to municipalities</p> <p>The fire services in Nova Scotia are dependent on volunteers and if onerous standards are introduced then volunteers may decide to leave the fire service and recruiting new volunteers may become difficult</p>	
2.	<p>No provincial guidance/direction standards for fire service operations</p> <p><b>There are provisions within the MGA that provide opportunity for municipalities to provide guidance and direction for fire services (MGA Section 296)</b></p>	<p>There is a range of fire service delivery and performance standards across the province depending on the understanding/interest of the local fire service provider, the rate payer association members and the municipal unit</p> <p>Municipal councilors have no means to measure what they are funding and what they are receiving regarding the provision of fire services from the independently operated fire departments</p> <p>In the absence of provincially recognized standards the default position in legal actions become general fire industry standards such as NFPA for training and deployment</p> <p><b>Municipalities do have the means to measure what they are funding and what they are receiving for services through the MGA section 296</b></p>	<p>Coordination of response, incident command and equipment resources during mutual aid activations are affected</p> <p><b>The MGA Section 302 has provisions for Mutual Aid and Section 296 has provisions for implementation of services</b></p>

	Organization Structure/Governance		
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on Fire Services	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
1.	<p>The <i>Municipal Governance Act</i> states that a municipality <u>may</u> provide fire services - there is no requirement to do so</p> <p><i>Municipal Government Act</i> states "A municipality may maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to provide the service, working with others to provide the service or a combination or means", 1998, c. 18, s.293</p> <p><b>Section 294 and 295 also have provisions where there are no fire services and they are offered by a service provider the municipality shall register them.</b></p>	<p>Fire departments operate independently with little or no provincial or local government oversight</p> <p>Local municipal governments can divest themselves of responsibility for fire protection by registering a fire department to provide service</p> <p>There is no system of responsibility or accountability from the province through the municipal jurisdiction to the individual fire departments</p> <p><b>The province has through legislation (MGA Section 296) enabled the municipalities to have oversight of fire and emergency services</b></p>	<p>Community members may or may not receive or understand the fire protection they expect vs. actual service level being provided</p> <p>Over expectation of emergency response capabilities may result in failure to take personal responsibility for fire safety</p>
2.	<p>There is no designated provincial position/agency responsible for fire service operational matters</p>	<p>Local fire departments deal in isolation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer recruitment and retention</li> <li>• Assistance with mutual aid administrative and operational matters</li> </ul> <p>No advocacy for fire service operational matters at the provincial level</p> <p>No enforcement of provincial mandates such as municipal addressing</p> <p>No direction for fire service standards or service levels so fire departments develop their own standards in isolation</p>	<p>Long term viability of the volunteer fire service in jeopardy and no affordable alternative</p> <p>Mutual aid systems may not adequately address the fire protection requirements in a community</p> <p>Fire service matters that would enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of local fire services are not understood or acted upon by the provincial government</p> <p>Citizens may receive less than expected fire protection</p>

Organization Structure/Governance			
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on Fire Services	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
		<p>A common/consistent point of contact within the provincial government would assist the predominately volunteer fire service representatives in efforts to bring fire service matters to the province</p> <p><b>The province has assisted and provided fire services with recruitment and retention models that can be utilized.</b></p> <p><b>There is an advocacy group that has been provided through the Fire Safety Act and Regulations (Nova Scotia Fire Services Advisory Committee) that has a mandate to advise government on fire service issues.</b></p> <p><b>At present fire services do have a common point of contact (Fire Services Association of Nova Scotia) who have direct access to the Nova Scotia Fire Service Advisory Committee and or Council.</b></p>	<p>Without consistent or recognized standards community members do not know what level/quality of service they are receiving</p>
3.	Fire departments operate in silos within municipal units	<p>Each fire department is required to organize itself as an incorporated non-profit organization and develop/organize its own governance model, policies, funding, equipment, staffing</p> <p>Fire departments purchase equipment and provide services based on their immediate needs and agendas</p> <p>Duplication/overlapping of resources (equipment, staffing, station, service provision) within a municipal jurisdiction and/or geographical area</p>	<p>The closest fire station(s) may not respond to emergency calls impacting response times and number of responders</p> <p>Failure to rationalize resources over a broader geographical area may result in inadequate funding of other fire protection components such as fire prevention and public education</p> <p>Fire protection is not delivered efficiently and effectively in many communities in close proximity to each other</p>

	Organization Structure/Governance		
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on Fire Services	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
		<p>Fire chiefs are elected by their associations. The introduction of fire system standards by fire service managers is impeded by the political nature of their positions</p> <p>Fire departments and their boards are responsible only to the local ratepayers' association</p> <p><b>There are provisions in the MGA Section 296 that permits municipalities to assist fire services in the development, governance, policy and funding models</b></p>	<p>Fire protection in a given jurisdiction may not meet the actual needs and circumstances of the community</p>

	Organizational Structure/Governance		
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
1.	<p>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> states that a municipality may provide fire services - there is no requirement to do so</p> <p>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> states "A municipality may maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to provide the service, working with others to provide the service or a combination or means, 1998, c. 18, s.293</p> <p><b>Section 294 and 295 also have provisions where there are no fire services and they are offered</b></p>	<p>There is no direction from the province to assist municipal governments in the delivery of fire services in their communities including organizational model, level of services, funding. Municipalities rely on local fire departments to register to provide services resulting in a variety of service types and levels of service within the municipal structure.</p> <p><b>The province has provided legislation Section 296 to allow municipalities to assist fire services in the delivery of fire services.</b></p>	<p>Community members may not get the services they expect or assume they have.</p> <p>Communities may not get the level of service adequate or appropriate to the needs and circumstances of that area.</p>

	Organizational Structure/Governance		
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
	by a service provider the municipality shall register them.		
2.	There is no designated provincial position/agency responsible for fire service operational matters	<p>Elected officials and municipal managers have no direct access point to the provincial government to deal with fire service operational matters</p> <p><b>There is an advocacy group that has been provided through the Fire Safety Act and Regulations (Nova Scotia Fire Services Advisory Committee) that has a mandate to advise government on fire service issues.</b></p>	Fire safety concerns and initiatives that would benefit community fire safety are not acted upon or implemented
3.	Fire commissioner role, authority and independence	<p>Fire commissioners have wide ranging authority and can operate independently of any municipal oversight in the administration and operation of the fire department, yet municipally elected officials and senior managers are held accountable by the taxpayer for fire service administration and delivery</p> <p>Fire commissioners have the authority to provide fire services beyond the municipality with which they are registered and this could result in one municipality subsidizing fire services in another municipality</p> <p><b>Fire Commissioners/Fire Marshals do not have wide ranging authority and are limited to the authority provided to them in legislation which at present provides them with no administrative or operational authority of fire departments.</b></p>	Lack of municipal oversight could result in inadequate fire protection
4.	Transparency and Accountability – municipalities purchase fire	Elected officials are held accountable by the community for fire services but have no	Fire safety concerns brought to elected municipal officials are not addressed

	Organizational Structure/Governance		
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
	services through the registration of a fire service provider with little influence on fire department administration, operations or quality of service	<p>authority over fire department administration, operations or quality of service</p> <p>While municipal governments have little control over fire departments they are subject to potential legal liabilities regarding fire protection matters</p> <p><b>There are provisions within the MGA Section 296 that permits municipalities to oversight of fire services through policy implementation</b></p>	
5.	Fire departments operate in silos within a municipal unit	<p>Municipalities are not able to implement service levels, performance standards, or training standards in a meaningful way</p> <p>Municipalities are not able to avoid unnecessary duplication of equipment in adjacent fire departments</p> <p>Municipalities are not able to develop shared specialized services in the individual fire department within the municipal unit or between adjacent municipalities.</p> <p>Municipalities have no opportunities to share best practices</p> <p>Initiatives to conduct community wide risk assessments or develop master fire plans on a broad community basis are inhibited by localized special interest groups/fire departments</p> <p><b>There are provisions within the MGA Section 296 that permits municipalities to oversight of fire services through policy implementation</b></p>	<p>Fire safety is not delivered at the optimal level for that community</p> <p>Communities may not have access to specialized services required by the community</p>



# FINAL REPORT



Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities  
Association of Municipal Administrators, Nova Scotia

Municipal Review of Fire Services in Nova Scotia

Pomax Consulting Inc.  
April, 2017





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## Section 1 Foreword

In the interest of ensuring the conclusions and recommendations are appropriately interpreted, an introductory explanation is necessary.

When the consulting team presented the draft report to the UNSM and AMANS steering committee, the greatest discussion centred around the committee's impression that the consultants were placing the bulk of responsibility for the current fire services circumstances squarely on municipalities. That isn't the case. Even though we clearly state that existing legislation provides municipalities with the authority they need to determine their own destiny when it comes to establishing and operating fire services—alone or with others as the legislation states—we also acknowledge the practicality of taking action within that authority.

The responsibility for the existing state of fire services in Nova Scotia falls to three parties:

- the province, which should provide greater support to municipalities in the form of regulation, expertise, and monitoring;
- the fire services, some of which we heard are possibly over resourced and politically motivated to protect their interests while others are lacking for apparatus and equipment; and
- the municipalities.

Even though one of our conclusions is that provincial legislation places the authority for the level and type of fire services with municipalities, we are also fully aware that financial and political considerations often complicates exercising that prerogative. So, while we identify that the *Municipal Government Act* places authority with municipalities, readers should not extrapolate statements of that nature to the point of 'blaming' municipalities. The responsibility for fire services in Nova Scotia lies with the province, municipalities, and fire services. And even though we identify facts, there is no intention to place blame.



## Section 2 Project Background

Pomax Consulting was engaged by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM), and the Association of Municipal Administrators, Nova Scotia (AMANS) to conduct a review of Nova Scotia's fire services from the municipal perspective.

### The Intent of the Assignment

- Conduct a review of fire services in Nova Scotia:
  - Facilitate discussion with representative stakeholders.
  - Identify and prioritize issues, concerns, and opportunities for municipalities.
  - Consider options to address issues.
  - Facilitate sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and possible areas for collaboration.

### The project objectives included identifying

- (and) prioritizing key issues in the delivery of fire services, including the perspective of fire service providers, and those who oversee and finance fire services at the municipal level;
- possible options to address issues;
- best practices in the delivery of fire services in rural and urban areas; and
- areas for better collaboration.

### Project deliverables encompass

- a report outlining results of the consultations and participants' issue identification; and
- a final report on the findings of the consultations, including the list of prioritized issues and recommended possible solutions.

### Accountabilities

The consultant was accountable to the project steering committee (the steering committee), and responsible for

- designing the consultation engagement process; and
- managing the project methodology, consultations, and project logistics.

The project steering committee (Table 1) provided advice, local knowledge, and process consultation.

### *Additional Information Provided in the Request for Proposals*

- The Municipal Government Act (MGA) does not require municipalities to provide fire suppression services.
- Municipalities currently provide varying levels of fire services across the province.
- The public expects municipalities to offer adequate levels of service.
- There have been long-standing issues with fire services throughout the province.

- A provincial report on fire services served as background on issues but was not the primary focus for this exercise.

### **Mandate**

The scope of work did not include conducting an extensive literature review of previous reports or research to support best practices, areas for collaboration, or possible solutions. The mandate was to

- lead a review to identify and prioritize issues, concerns, and opportunities for municipalities as they relate to fire services;
- facilitate an open and frank discussion with representative stakeholders to ascertain and prioritize key issues at the local level; and
- consider opportunities to address these issues, and to facilitate the sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and possible areas for collaboration.

### **Stakeholders**

This project provided an opportunity for stakeholders from member municipalities and fire services to offer their views, concerns, and knowledge about fire services. We want to thank all participants for their valuable feedback. We also appreciate the steering committee’s support, advice, and assistance with the consultation meetings.

**Table 1:** Project Steering Committee

Betty MacDonald	Executive Director, Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities
Shawn Andrews	Director of Fire, Emergency, and IT Service Municipality of the District of Guysborough
Harold J. Pothier	Fire Marshal Department of Municipal Affairs, Province of Nova Scotia
Councilor Wayne Thorburne	Representing the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities Bridgewater, Nova Scotia
Bonnie Coulter	Representing the Association of Municipal Administrators Director of Corporate Services, Town of New Glasgow
Rod Neilsen	President, Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia

## **2.1 Governance and Authority for Fire Services in Nova Scotia**

In Nova Scotia, as in many other provinces, the decision as to community fire service provision is made by each municipality. The authority for this determination is found in the *Municipal Government Act* which states: “A municipality may maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to provide the service, working with others to provide the service or a combination of means”, 1998, c. 18, s.293.

As in other provinces, the legislation uses the word ‘may’ rather than ‘shall’, which means that municipalities are not compelled to provide fire and emergency services.

Section 294 of the Act says

**Registration as fire department**

- 294 (1) A body corporate may apply to a municipality for registration as a fire department.
- (2) A municipality shall not refuse to register a body corporate that complies with this Act if the
- (a) municipality is satisfied that the body corporate is capable of providing the services it offers to provide;
  - (b) body corporate carries liability insurance, as required by the municipality;
  - (c) body corporate does not provide the fire services for profit; and
  - (d) municipality does not provide the same services for the same area.
- (3) A fire department, including a fire department of a municipality, village or fire protection district, shall register in each municipality in which it provides emergency services.
- (4) A registered fire department shall provide the municipality with a list of specific emergency services it will endeavour to provide and the area in which the services will be provided.
- (5) Registration continues in force until withdrawn by the municipality for cause or the fire department requests that the registration be revoked.

And section 296 says, with respect to policies

**Policies**

- 296 (1) The council may make policies respecting full-time, volunteer and composite fire departments and emergency service providers in the municipality.
- (2) Policies for fire departments and emergency service providers may include
- (a) requirements and procedures for registration;
  - (b) personnel policies with respect to those members who are employees of the municipality;
  - (c) the manner of accounting to the council for the use of funds provided by the municipality;
  - (d) an annual meeting to report to the public respecting fire and emergency services;
  - (e) such other matters as are necessary and expedient for the provision of emergency services in the municipality.
- (3) The council may require proof of compliance with its policies before advancing any funds. 1998, c. 18, s. 296.

Emergency fire response, in the majority of municipalities across the province, is delivered by volunteer departments. The Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) operates a composite fire department with a contingent of full-time firefighters in urban areas as well as in a number of locations where volunteer availability is scarce during some hours. The Cape Breton Regional Municipality Fire Services consists of a mix of career and volunteer services spread throughout the municipality.

## 2.2 Methodology

Pomax used qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain an understanding, from the municipal perspective, of the most significant issues and opportunities for fire services in Nova Scotia. Methods included consultation with the steering committee, an online survey (Appendix A), facilitated meetings, research, relevant report and documentation review, and written feedback submitted to Pomax.

In consultation with the steering committee, Pomax engaged mayors, wardens, senior municipal administrative staff, clerks, treasurers, elected officials, fire chiefs, fire service coordinators, Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia board of directors, and provincial representatives in the review (Appendix B):

Principles used to ensure an effective consultation included

- **Inclusivity:** anyone with an interest in the issue, as identified by the steering committee, was invited and encouraged to be involved in the process.
- **Transparency:** making certain that participants understood the objectives, and how their input may influence fire services' decisions.
- **Timeliness:** there was opportunity to participate, provide input, and engage with the project team.
- **Collaboration:** all those involved had the opportunity to exchange views and information, to listen, and to have their concerns and ideas heard.
- **Adaptability:** the process offered an online survey and in-person meetings as methods to encourage involvement. Some municipal officials took the opportunity to telephone the consultants to express their views, while others used email.
- **Respectfulness:** the process respected the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of those involved.
- **Accountability:** Pomax is accountable to the steering committee and stakeholders for effective consultations that achieve the desired outcome of gaining an understanding, from the municipal and fire services perspective, of the most significant issues and opportunities in relation to fire services.

### 2.2.1 Stakeholder Survey

The project steering committee provided Pomax with contacts for over 250 individuals with an interest in Nova Scotia fire services. Through distribution of an online survey (Appendix A), the contacts were invited to attend, or have representation attend, a facilitated meeting. The survey served as an RSVP, and included a polling question as to the most important fire services issues. The letter requesting participation included an invitation for recipients to forward the request to other interested representatives.

**Table 2: Stakeholder Groups Invited to Participate**

Stakeholder Groups	#
Municipal Chief Administrative Officers, Clerks, Treasurers	55
Elected Officials	51
Fire Service Coordinators	8
Fire Service Association Board of Directors	40
Fire Service Association Representatives	69
Association of Nova Scotia Villages	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>253*</b>

*\*Does not include the number of times the invitation was forwarded by a recipient*

- Consultations between Pomax and the steering committee identified overarching issue categories, which were then listed in the survey.
- Potential meeting participants were asked to complete the survey in advance of the consultations.
- Respondents were requested to identify, from the topic categories, the three most important fire service concerns from municipal or fire service perspectives (Table 4).
- The advance poll was conducted in order to gain a general overview of the most important issues and allowed Pomax staff to ensure the consultations remained focused, while also providing opportunity for discussion of other issues.
- Issue categories were crafted to ensure they did not limit survey or consultation feedback.
- Of the 253 stakeholders sent the survey and invited, 109 responded; 97 indicated that they would attend a facilitated meeting (Table 3).
- Actual attendance for all meetings was 130, or 51.4% of the 253 invited to participate (Table 5).

**Table 3: Online Survey Participants Indicating Intent to Attend Facilitated Meetings**

Participants	%	Count
Municipal elected officials, and administration staff	57.7%	56
Those involved in the delivery of fire services	42.3%	41

*\*12 skipped the question*

- Of the 109 participants who completed the survey, 89 responded to the top three most important issues
  - 31 or 34.8% percent indicate that funding fire services is the most important issue.
  - 21% selected fire service standards as the most important.
  - 19.1% chose organizational structure as the most important.

**Table 4: Most Important Issues for Fire Services**

What are the most important issues for fire services?	Very Important	Moderately Important	Least Important	Total
Governance and oversight	10	8	16	34
Organizational structure (reporting relationship between departments and municipalities)	17	13	10	40
Fire service standards	19	17	10	46
Fire services coordinator role and responsibilities	0	10	13	23
Provincial/municipal relationship related to fire services	3	15	11	29
Adequacy of fire-service operations	8	8	14	30
Fire service funding	31	14	5	50
Other issue (identified by respondents):				20
Honorariums	Training			
Volunteer recruitment and retention	Capability of service delivery			
Firefighter safety	Number of fire stations			
Ratepayer relationships	Collaboration/mutual aid agreements			
Amalgamation				

### 2.2.2 Document Review

In the course of conducting this project, Pomax reviewed reports and other information that served as background knowledge for the discussions with stakeholders. The scope of work did not include conducting an extensive literature review of previous reports or Acts of Legislation. The documents reviewed include:

- Fire Safety Act 2002. c. 6, s. 1.
- Fire Safety Regulations, made under Section 51 of the *Fire Safety Act*
- Fire Services Senior Officials Committee Report, December 14, 2012
  - Nova Scotia Fire and Associated Services
- Annual Reports of the Office of the Fire Marshal
- *Municipal Government Act, Part X Fire and Emergency Services*
- List of fire departments in Nova Scotia
- Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia Discussion Paper
  - Standards of Service, Nova Scotia Fire Service, (B MacKinnon, CD, May 2004)
- Report of the Nova Scotia Legislature Select Committee on Fire Safety (J. Carey, MLA, 2002)
- Setting the Course: A Report to Address Fire Service Training in Nova Scotia (F. G. Holllett, 1994)
- Progress on Recommendations Contained in the Interim Report to the House of Assembly by the Select Committee on the Volunteer Fire Service (J. C. Moody, 1984)
- The Graham Commission (1974), Chapter 14: Fire Protection (J. F. Graham, 1974)

### Section 3 Consultation Meetings

The project steering committee advised the Pomax team members that municipal representatives and fire service participants may be more candid if separate meetings were held. Therefore, eight meetings were facilitated at four locations throughout the province, with a total of 130 attending (Table 5). Survey responses indicated that most municipalities would be represented at one or both of the consultation meetings (Appendix A). At each venue, municipal representatives met at 2:00 PM, and those involved in the delivery of fire services met at 6:00 PM.

Open forums are an effective method of encouraging stakeholder dialogue, collaboration, and information sharing. Meeting formats were informal in order to engage participants with specific foci resulting from the earlier survey. Each meeting was opened by explaining the reason for the project, objectives, and how the information gathered would be used. The results of the online survey were discussed by the facilitators, and attendees were invited to comment. This proved to be a successful approach, as participants responded by offering meaningful information, insights, and viewpoints.

**Table 5: Facilitated Consultation Meeting Attendance\***

Location	Date	Municipal # Attending	Fire Service # Attending	Steering Committee Member Attending
Bridgewater	September 12	33	17	Wayne Thorburne
Kentville	September 13	19	6	Harold Pothier
Truro	September 14	19	22	Bonnie Coulter
Baddeck	September 15	7	7	Shawn Andrews

*\*includes occasions where participants attended both meetings*

The stakeholder survey identified primary fire service delivery issues. Consultative sessions confirmed that the three topics identified in the survey (Table 4) are key stakeholder concerns.

1. Fire services funding
2. Fire service standards
3. Organizational structure/governance (reporting relationship between departments and municipalities)

#### Consultation session participants told us that

- There is a great deal of misunderstanding and/or unfamiliarity (politically, administratively, and within the fire service) regarding the multitude of delivery mechanisms, and levels of fire service, across the province. This misunderstanding and lack of awareness is a result of municipal and fire service silos with few forums or opportunities for communicating and sharing of ideas and best practices.
- Fire service matters do not seem to be “top of mind” for the province and local governments, or the public, resulting in varying levels of commitment to fire protection throughout the province.

- While there were many references to fire industry standards, such as those developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there is limited understanding of the scope and requirements of those standards.
  - A primary concern for all stakeholders is that changes to fire service delivery will have financial implications and may result in a decline in volunteering, upon which the municipalities rely.
  - All participants in the consultations expressed respect and appreciation for those who volunteer their time and skills to provide their communities with fire services.
- 
- The tables that follow report what the consultants heard from participants during the facilitated sessions. Information is recounted from the perspective of fire service partakers and, separately, municipal attendees. The tables are lengthy; therefore, it is important to read the headings to keep in mind whether the information being reported is from the viewpoint of fire services or municipalities.
  - Pomax is aware that some of the information we heard, and stated in the tables, may not be correct or may be misinterpreted by participants. We have not corrected those statements since our role is *to report on the perspective of those attending*, not to reinterpret it.

<b>Funding</b>			
#	Fire Services Perspective	What we heard about the impact on fire services	What we heard about the impact on public safety
1.	Fundraising	<p>Volunteer support for fundraising is declining due to other commitments, increasing time required for other department duties, such as training, equipment maintenance, and a reluctance to participate in fundraising activities.</p> <p>Fire services are the only community service required to fundraise for equipment and operational needs.</p>	Recruitment and retention of volunteers may suffer if fundraising is required and impact the number of volunteers available to respond to emergencies.
2.	Reimbursement for delivering services deemed provincial responsibilities (i.e., medical first responder, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials, hydro responses and standby, traffic control)	<p>Fire departments respond to these incidents but must fund training and equipment from within, with no reimbursement from the province.</p> <p>Volunteers are required to take on these extra responsibilities and related training.</p>	Local taxpayers are subsidizing provincial services with funds that may be required for community fire protection needs and circumstances.
3.	Provincial funding—a matching capital fund is available to fire services at two-year intervals, but it requires initial funding of equipment by the fire department, which is then reimbursed by the province.	<p>Fire departments in less affluent communities cannot afford the initial expense to purchase or replace equipment and apparatus.</p> <p>Equipment may be kept in service long past its life expectancy.</p>	<p>Apparatus may not be reliable to respond to emergencies. Possible delays in response or failure to operate at an emergency scene</p> <p>Fire fighters may use equipment (e.g., breathing apparatus) that should no longer be in service. A health and safety issue</p>

<b>Funding</b>			
#	<b>Fire Services Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on fire services</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on public safety</b>
4.	Area Rated Taxation Model (Taxes for some services [recreation, transportation, fire, etc.] may be calculated differently for the area that receives a specific or greatest benefit, rather than generally sharing the cost across the whole municipality.)	<p>Some communities are well funded, while many do not have the tax base to provide resources adequate to meet the needs and circumstances of the community.</p> <p>Some fire departments have to fundraise to provide basic operational needs, such as fuel for the vehicles.</p> <p>Communities with strong assessment base and high community involvement support their fire services.</p> <p>Funding is determined by geographical boundaries (each ratepayer association coverage area), not by risk in a given community.</p> <p>Fire departments may hold onto their boundaries regardless of impact on response times, because they want the funding from that particular area.</p>	There is a risk that some communities are not able to provide a fire protection system appropriate to their needs and circumstances, even within the same municipal jurisdiction. Provision of the 'best available' response times is superseded by local politics and funding interests.
5.	Accountability for funding	<p>There is no mandated accountability mechanism regarding fire service funding.</p> <p>Some fire departments are subject to strict and expensive auditing requirements, while others are not required to provide any.</p>	Uncertainty regarding how funds are spent and the impact on adequacy of community fire protection

<b>Funding</b>			
#	<b>Municipal Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on municipal governments</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on public safety</b>
1.	Funding for fire services is done in silos per individual fire departments in a given	Elected representatives and municipal administrators have little control or authority over funds provided for fire protection.	Fire safety concerns brought to elected municipal officials are not addressed.

<b>Funding</b>			
#	<b>Municipal Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on municipal governments</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on public safety</b>
	municipal unit. Municipalities are required to collect funds as determined by the local ratepayers' association with no means to rationalize fire service funding within the municipal budgeting process.	Municipal governments are not able to effect potential efficiencies over the broader municipal unit, i.e., fire department insurance coverage, rationalization of equipment and apparatus, provision of specialized services.	The community may not receive the best possible fire protection with available funding.  Best approach to fire safety in a community is not provided—i.e., fire prevention/public education as well as emergency response.
2.	Inequity of funding—funding of a fire department is often determined by the economic circumstances of individual rate payer areas within a municipal unit, including such issues as property assessment values, financial demographics, perceived fire protection needs, and political influence of fire commissioners.	Fire departments that are well funded under the current system protect the status quo.  Fire departments that provide fire service in economically stressed areas are not funded to the level required to meet the needs and circumstances of that area.  Many municipalities are experiencing infrastructure deficits but are prevented from rationalizing the cost of fire services and equipment, because fire departments continue to operate independently and in silos.	Impact on purchasing of updated/reliable apparatus and equipment required for community and firefighter health and safety
3.	Volunteer cost savings	Municipalities recognize the low cost of a volunteer fire service but are intimidated by the fear of resignations if they attempt to exert control over service levels or standards of service.	Introduction of appropriate service levels and delivery standards are inhibited.
4.	Reimbursement for delivering services deemed provincial responsibilities, (i.e., Medical First Responder, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials, hydro responses and standby, traffic control)	EHS is a private business* but municipalities are subsidizing this enterprise through the provision of emergency first responder services in their communities.  *EHS is actually contracted to the province and committed to province-wide service standards.	Funding for local fire service needs are limited in order to fund provincial responsibilities.

<b>Service Delivery Standards</b>			
#	<b>Fire Service Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on fire services</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on public safety</b>
1.	No province-wide standardized training program/curriculum (most voluntarily follow NFPA 1000 series firefighter training)	<p>Fire departments develop their own programs in isolation.</p> <p>Member departments of mutual aid systems may have different levels of training.</p> <p>Incident commanders cannot be confident in the abilities of members of responding departments.</p>	<p>Community members cannot assess the competency of their fire department members.</p> <p>Health and safety concerns for firefighters and the public</p> <p>Registration of a fire department does not ensure the fire department can competently provide the services it is funded for or meet community expectations.</p>
2.	Insurance coverage for volunteers	<p>Workplace insurance is not required to be provided in all municipalities.</p> <p>Some communities provide insurance through the Workers Compensation Board, while others rely on private insurance, such as Volunteer Firefighters Insurance Service (VFIS).</p> <p>Some communities do not provide insurance of any kind to volunteers</p>	<p>Reluctance to become a volunteer firefighter depending on availability and type of insurance coverage</p> <p>Hiring and retention of volunteers impacts response capabilities.</p>
3.	Development of standards	Development of standards should have input from the fire-service practitioners.	<p>Ensures realistic and practical standards to be employed in communities</p> <p>Ensures communities are getting the services they are funding</p>
4.	If service-delivery standards are developed, they need to be flexible to meet local community needs and circumstances.	Requires fire departments to clearly define and identify their capabilities to the community	Enables a community to understand, define, and fund the level of services appropriate to the needs and circumstances of that community
5.	Without standards, fire departments and members are	Without approved service delivery standards, fire liabilities are increased.	Potential impact on hiring and retention of volunteers

Service Delivery Standards			
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on fire services	What we heard about the impact on public safety
	subject to potential legal liabilities.	In the absence of local standards, fire departments will be subject to scrutiny against industry-wide standards.	
6.	Enforcement of standards—there is no provincial body to enforce standards if they are developed.	Adoption of standards would be voluntary in each fire department.	Community may not have the level of protection they assume or expect.

Service Delivery Standards			
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
1.	Knowledge and understanding of standards—service delivery and performance	<p>Many municipal representatives do not have a clear understanding of what service-delivery and performance standards are regarding the fire service and what the impact would be on their municipalities and the fire services.</p> <p>Lack of knowledge and misunderstanding of fire-service standards results in a fear of implementing standards as financial concern and the potential to lose volunteers.</p> <p>If the province unilaterally introduces standards for the fire service, there may be significant impacts to municipalities.</p> <p>The fire services in Nova Scotia are dependent on volunteers, and if onerous standards are introduced, then volunteers may decide to leave the fire service, and recruiting new volunteers may become difficult.</p>	Best practices/delivery standards that benefit community fire safety are not implemented.

Service Delivery Standards			
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the Impact on Municipal Governments	What we heard about the Impact on Public Safety
2.	No provincial guidance/direction standards for fire service operations	<p>There is a range of fire service delivery and performance standards across the province, depending on the understanding/interest of the local fire service provider, the rate payer association members, and the municipal unit.</p> <p>Municipal councilors have no means to measure what they are funding and what they are receiving regarding the provision of fire services from the independently operated fire departments.</p> <p>In the absence of provincially recognized standards, the default position in legal actions becomes general fire industry standards, such as NFPA for training and deployment.</p>	Coordination of response, incident command, and equipment resources during mutual aid activations are affected.

Organization Structure/Governance			
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on fire services	What we heard about the impact on public safety
1.	<p>The <i>Municipal Governance Act</i> states that a municipality <u>may</u> provide fire services—there is no requirement to do so.</p> <p>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> states, “A municipality may maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to</p>	<p>Fire departments operate independently with little or no provincial or local government oversight.</p> <p>Local municipal governments can divest themselves of responsibility for fire protection by registering a fire department to provide service.</p> <p>There is no system of responsibility or accountability from the province through the</p>	<p>Community members may or may not receive or understand the fire protection they expect vs. actual service level being provided.</p> <p>Over expectation of emergency response capabilities may result in failure to take personal responsibility for fire safety.</p>

Organization Structure/Governance			
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on fire services	What we heard about the impact on public safety
	provide the service, working with others to provide the service or a combination of means”, 1998, c. 18, s.293	municipal jurisdiction to the individual fire departments.	
2.	There is no designated provincial position/agency responsible for fire service operational matters.	<p>Local fire departments deal in isolation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer recruitment and retention</li> <li>• Assistance with mutual aid administrative and operational matters</li> </ul> <p>No advocacy for fire service operational matters at the provincial level</p> <p>No enforcement of provincial mandates, such as municipal addressing</p> <p>No direction for fire service standards or service levels, so fire departments develop their own standards in isolation</p> <p>A common/consistent point of contact within the provincial government would assist the predominately volunteer fire service representatives in efforts to bring fire service matters to the province.</p>	<p>Long-term viability of the volunteer fire service in jeopardy and no affordable alternative</p> <p>Mutual aid systems may not adequately address the fire protection requirements in a community.</p> <p>Fire service matters that would enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of local fire services are not understood or acted upon by the provincial government.</p> <p>Citizens may receive less than expected fire protection.</p> <p>Without consistent or recognized standards, community members do not know what level/quality of service they are receiving.</p>
3.	Fire departments operate in silos within municipal units.	<p>Each fire department is required to organize itself as an incorporated non-profit organization and develop/organize its own governance model, policies, funding, equipment, and staffing.</p> <p>Fire departments purchase equipment and provide services based on their immediate needs and agendas.</p>	<p>The closest fire station(s) may not respond to emergency calls, impacting response times and number of responders.</p> <p>Failure to rationalize resources over a broader geographical area may result in inadequate funding of other fire protection components, such as fire prevention and public education.</p>

Organization Structure/Governance			
#	Fire Service Perspective	What we heard about the impact on fire services	What we heard about the impact on public safety
		<p>Duplication/overlapping of resources (equipment, staffing, station, service provision) within a municipal jurisdiction and/or geographical area</p> <p>Fire chiefs are elected by their associations. The introduction of fire system standards by fire service managers is impeded by the political nature of their positions.</p> <p>Fire departments and their boards are responsible only to the local ratepayers' association.</p>	<p>Fire protection is not delivered efficiently and effectively in many communities in close proximity to each other.</p> <p>Fire protection in a given jurisdiction may not meet the actual needs and circumstances of the community.</p>

Organizational Structure/Governance			
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the impact on municipal governments	What we heard about the impact on public safety
1.	<p>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> states that a municipality may provide fire services—there is no requirement to do so.</p> <p>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> states, “A municipality may maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to provide the service, working with others to provide the service or a combination of means”, 1998, c. 18, s.293</p>	<p>There is no direction from the province to assist municipal governments in the delivery of fire services in their communities, including the organizational model, level of services, and funding.</p> <p>Municipalities rely on local fire departments to register to provide services, resulting in a variety of service types and levels of service within the municipal structure.</p>	<p>Community members may not get the services they expect or assume they have.</p> <p>Communities may not get the level of service adequate or appropriate to the needs and circumstances of that area.</p>

Organizational Structure/Governance			
#	Municipal Perspective	What we heard about the impact on municipal governments	What we heard about the impact on public safety
2.	There is no designated provincial position/agency responsible for fire service operational matters.	Elected officials and municipal managers have no direct access point to the provincial government to deal with fire service operational matters.	Fire safety concerns and initiatives that would benefit community fire safety are not acted upon or implemented.
3.	Fire commissioner role, authority, and independence	<p>Fire commissioners have wide-ranging authority and can operate independently of any municipal oversight in the administration and operation of the fire department, yet municipally elected officials and senior managers are held accountable by the taxpayer for fire service administration and delivery.</p> <p>Fire commissioners have the authority to provide fire services beyond the municipality with which they are registered, and this could result in one municipality subsidizing fire services in another municipality.</p>	Lack of municipal oversight could result in inadequate fire protection.
4.	Transparency and Accountability—municipalities purchase fire services through the registration of a fire service provider, with little influence on fire department administration, operations, or quality of service.	<p>Elected officials are held accountable by the community for fire services but have no authority over fire department administration, operations, or quality of service.</p> <p>While municipal governments have little control over fire departments, they are subject to potential legal liabilities regarding fire protection matters.</p>	Fire safety concerns brought to elected municipal officials are not addressed.
5.	Fire departments operate in silos.	Municipalities are not able to implement service levels, performance standards, or training standards in a meaningful way.	Fire safety is not delivered at the optimal level. Communities may not have access to specialized services.

<b>Organizational Structure/Governance</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Municipal Perspective</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on municipal governments</b>	<b>What we heard about the impact on public safety</b>
		<p>Municipalities are not able to avoid unnecessary duplication of equipment in adjacent fire departments.</p> <p>Municipalities are not able to develop shared specialized services in the individual fire department within the municipal unit or between adjacent municipalities.</p> <p>Municipalities have no opportunities to share best practices.</p> <p>Initiatives to conduct community-wide risk assessments or develop master fire plans on a broad community basis are inhibited by localized special interest groups/fire departments.</p>	

## Section 4 Challenges, Options, Recommendations

The organization, and delivery of fire services throughout the province are markedly different from one jurisdiction to another which has resulted in many long-standing issues. The Municipal Review of Fire Services in Nova Scotia was initiated by UNSM and AMANS to gain an understanding, from the municipal perspective, of the most significant issues, opportunities, and possible areas for collaboration.

Notwithstanding the nature of the issues, which include inequities between the have and have-not jurisdictions, there does not appear to be evidence of impetus by any group or individual organization to spend the time, effort, and resources to design and implement an improved way of providing fire services across the province. We acknowledge that there have been several studies, including this one, in an effort to find a resolution to the variance in fire services, but neither the province nor the majority of municipalities have ‘taken the bull by the horns’. Existing legislation gives municipalities permission to “maintain and provide fire and emergency services”, and we do not see a restriction as to the degree to which that right can be exercised. Nevertheless, there are some very good reasons why municipalities haven’t unilaterally assumed responsibility for fire services, just as there are reasons that the province has not applied greater regulation and control.

The majority of those attending the consultation sessions confirmed the need for change. However, the real stumbling block in the process is that municipal participants, and the province, recognize the financial and political cost involved in assuming responsibility and control of fire services.

We gleaned important themes from our consultations:

1. Fire delivery standards or requirements
  - a. The majority of participants did not have a reasonable understanding of fire service delivery or performance standards, and the drivers that would help inform the level of service required.
2. Legislation
  - a. Many participants were not fully aware of responsibilities and rights, within legislation, to form, register, or monitor fire services.
3. Funding challenges; identified by participants as an inadequate municipal tax base or support from the province.

More specific issues, such as variances in standards, service delivery, equipment, and training, result from these primary themes.

- The *Municipal Government Act* allows municipalities to form fire departments (“A municipality may maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to provide the service, working with others to provide the service or a combination of means,” 1998, c. 18, s.293).

- The Act requires municipalities to register a body corporate to register as a fire department (“294 (1) A body corporate may apply to a municipality for registration as a fire department; (2) A municipality shall not refuse to register a body corporate that complies with this Act ...”)
- And, the legislation provides a municipality with rights.
  - (2) A municipality shall not refuse to register a body corporate that complies with this act if
    - (a) municipality is satisfied that the body corporate is capable of providing the services it offers to provide;
    - (b) body corporate carries liability insurance, as required by the municipality;
    - (c) body corporate does not provide the fire services for profit; and
    - (d) municipality does not provide the same services for the same area.
- And, section 296 says, with respect to policies
  - **Policies**
    - 296 (1) The council may make policies respecting full-time, volunteer and composite fire departments and emergency service providers in the municipality.
    - 296 (2) Policies for fire departments and emergency service providers may include
      - (a) requirements and procedures for registration;
      - (b) personnel policies with respect to those members who are employees of the municipality;
      - (c) the manner of accounting to the council for the use of funds provided by the municipality;
      - (d) an annual meeting to report to the public respecting fire and emergency services;
      - (e) such other matters as are necessary and expedient for the provision of emergency services in the municipality.
    - (3) The council may require proof of compliance with its policies before advancing any funds. 1998, c. 18, s. 296.
- The legislation allows municipalities to
  - operate or register fire departments and emergency services, and
  - set policies and procedures, including control of funds.

But there are two items lacking:

- A structure to advise municipalities on fire service operational, training, and capital needs; and
- Funds.

## 4.1 Discussion

We suggest the following is true: *If municipalities had ample funds for the provision of fire service, none of the themes heard during consultation sessions, or the more specific issues, would be of concern.* This is based on the premise that, with sufficient funds, municipalities would be able to

- undertake studies (risk analyses, master fire plans) to determine the fire and emergency protection needs in their communities; and,
- implement a fire and emergency services protection system commensurate with the needs identified. This would include public education, prevention, suppression, rescue, training, and other identified requirements.

Securing adequate funds could be accomplished a number of ways, depending on the circumstances of a municipality:

- Local taxes
  - Provincial grants (from provincial taxes)
  - Provincial transfer payments (from provincial taxes)
  - Taxes specific to communities (fire districts, rate payers' associations)
- Theoretically, if there were a source of funds that could be used for fire services, which was equally available to all municipalities, then other concerns, such as differing levels of service, training, variances in standards, and so on, would not be issues because municipalities would be providing services at levels that locally elected officials decide are appropriate for the municipality.
  - The fallacy in the hypothesis posed above is that there isn't a source of adequate funds, except for a few municipalities that can provide fire service based on local taxes.

### Situation Not Unique

- The issues brought forward by consultation participants are not unique to Nova Scotia. In one form or another, the same situations occur across Canada, although there may be some differences.
- In more populated areas of Canada, fire services are supported by municipal taxes. Less populated areas experience similar concerns to Nova Scotia. There are differences, though. For example,
  - In British Columbia, the Office of the Fire Commissioner issues the *British Columbia Fire Service Minimum Training Standards, Structure Firefighters Competency and Training Playbook*, but municipalities are responsible for ensuring that fire departments meet the standards.
  - In Ontario, the Office of the Fire Marshal employs advisors who visit municipalities to offer suggestions for training, public education, fire prevention, equipment, and other aspects of fire and emergency services. Advisors can make recommendations to municipalities if fire protection is inadequate and, if necessary, the province, under the *Fire Prevention and*

*Protection Act, can take action to the point of making a regulation. The Ontario Fire Prevention and Protection Act; Subsection 8<sup>1</sup> states:*

*If a municipality fails to adhere to the recommendations made by the Fire Marshal under subsection (7) or to take any other measures that in the opinion of the Fire Marshal will remedy or reduce the threat to public safety, the Minister may recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that a regulation be made under subsection (9).*

- In the Regional District of Central Okanagan, fire service is provided to ratepayer groups, similar to Nova Scotia, while neighbouring addresses or communities may decide not to be part of the ratepayer group receiving protection (there are rules within which those decisions are made). And even though the fire service raises funds through volunteer efforts, fire services are operated by the Regional District, and taxes support the fire service activities.
- Even in the most populated provinces of Canada, there are rural areas where fire service does not meet the standards and services of more populated areas, and training and equipment are not at the same levels.

Therefore, Nova Scotia does not have unique experiences. The difference, when compared to other parts of Canada, is that many other provinces have stronger legislation and standards.

Some options for change—or not changing—are put forward in the discussion in Section 4.2.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ontario Fire Prevention and Protection Act; Part II, Responsibility for Fire Protection Services, Municipal Responsibilities (2) Subsection 8*

## 4.2 Options

#	Options for Consideration	Discussion
1.	<b>Option: Maintain the status quo.</b>	<p>The outcome of maintaining the status quo may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire services continuing to operate and deliver emergency response utilizing diverse and often incompatible standards for apparatus and equipment, training, performance competencies, and incident command systems that may or may not be appropriate or adequate to the needs and circumstances of the community, or as required during major emergencies requiring multi-agency deployments.</li> <li>• Funding arrangements will remain as they are now.</li> <li>• Issues regarding inadequate and/or unnecessary funding are unlikely to be addressed.</li> <li>• Funding levels are likely to continue to be determined by local influencers and ability/willingness of the community to pay rather than by a needs analysis.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Option: Municipalities could assume greater responsibility for fire services within the authority described in Section 296 of the <i>Municipal Government Act</i>.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consultants interpret Section 296 (2)(e) (“such other matters as are necessary and expedient for the provision of emergency services in the municipality”) as broad enough for municipalities to stipulate training and service-delivery levels.</li> <li>• The Municipal Government Act allows municipalities to set policies and procedures under which fire services operate.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Several municipalities stated their concern that some volunteer fire services wield sufficient political influence to prevent action within Section 296 (2), and that the only way to counteract that influence is for the province to take responsibility for fire services or to change legislation.</li> <li>▪ Municipalities stated their concern that implementing stronger policies, procedures, or other requisites may increase the cost of fire services, or volunteers may decide to leave the department.</li> <li>▪ The consultants acknowledge these are legitimate concerns but ones that must be dealt with as part of managing change within the Nova Scotia fire protection industry if the responsibility remains at the municipal level.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Option: Province assumes responsibility, authority, and funding of fire services.</b></p>	<p>Assumption, by the province, for responsibility, authority, and funding of fire services may result in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for rationalization of apparatus, equipment, service delivery, and resources over a broader area.</li> <li>• Centralized authority, responsibility, and accountability for fire services.</li> <li>• A better equipped and resourced entity (the province) to equitably fund fire services, establish and monitor standards, and mobilize to rectify variances when they occur.</li> <li>• Expected improved consistency in training, equipment, operating procedures, and incident command systems in the event of multi-agency deployments for major emergencies.</li> <li>• Fire service costs are spread over a broader tax base, reducing “have” and “have-not” community levels of fire protection.</li> <li>• Opportunities for purchasing and administrative efficiencies and potential savings.</li> <li>• Controversy if a municipality believes there should be equipment, staffing, or training beyond what the province allocates.</li> </ul> <p><b>Considerations associated with this option</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capital and annual operating costs will increase at the provincial level.</li> <li>▪ The province is likely to have to increase staff to provide support and oversight to fire services.</li> <li>▪ New legislation and regulations may be required to allow the province to monitor and enforce regulations and standards.</li> <li>▪ The province, as the entity responsible for funding and monitoring fire services, may be subject to criticism that it is not doing enough to protect municipalities, and will have to defend the level of service it determines is adequate for municipalities. This includes standards for equipment and apparatus, training, operational guidelines, service delivery standards including response times and staffing levels, governance, and funding models.</li> <li>▪ A funding partnership between the province and municipalities may be required.</li> <li>▪ Municipalities may have to forfeit all aspects of fire service to the province.</li> </ul>
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#	Options for Consideration	Discussion
4.	<b>Option: Establish, or enhance, a provincial body or position with responsibility for oversight and guidance regarding fire services, combined with provincial legislation and regulation requiring municipalities to provide a basic level of fire and emergency protection, create</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In most provinces, the responsibilities for fire prevention, public education, investigation, reporting, and (in some cases) emergency response monitoring are centralized in one agency.</li> <li>• A channel would be established through which fire service matters could be brought to the attention of the provincial government with a reasonable expectation of resolution.</li> <li>• Without supporting legislation or regulation, municipalities and registered fire services would not have to accept the advice and guidance of the provincial body. If legislation or regulations were implemented, this would be similar to Option 3.</li> <li>• Municipalities would receive guidance on the level of fire service appropriate to their needs.</li> <li>• Costs for fire and emergency response may increase at the municipal level.</li> <li>• ‘Have-not’ communities may require provincial financial assistance to provide a basic service level</li> <li>• Costs related to advice to, and monitoring of, fire services would be likely to increase.</li> <li>• Oversight and guidance responsibility should extend to providing guidance on resource requirements and limitations (over-resourcing).</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Option: Create a professional regulatory body</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regulatory body would establish fire-service standards for equipment and apparatus, operating procedures, incident command, training, mutual aid agreements, operating procedures, service delivery standards, and specialized services.</li> <li>• UNSM, AMANS, and any other partner could combine their resources to hire a transition project coordinator and provide a budget to support the various activities.</li> <li>• A fire services regulatory body could be funded by membership dues, or a combination of dues and provincial assistance.</li> <li>• Legislation would be required, granting authority to the regulatory body.</li> <li>• Municipalities may require provincial funding assistance to meet standards.</li> <li>• This model does not alleviate the concern expressed by a few municipalities that some fire services are over-resourced unless the regulatory body is also empowered to provide guidance on resource requirement and limitation.</li> </ul>

#	Options for Consideration	Discussion
6.	<b>Option: Funding partnerships between the province and municipalities that enable all municipalities to purchase equipment required for safe and effective emergency response, commensurate with the needs and circumstances of the community.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assists municipalities that are not able to fund needed equipment and apparatus through the current provincial assistance program which requires municipalities to provide the up-front costs and then apply for partial reimbursement by the province.</li> <li>• May raise controversy if the municipal and provincial definition of “equipment required for safe and effective emergency response” differs.</li> <li>• This model does not alleviate the concern expressed by a few municipalities that some fire services are over-resourced.</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Best Practices

Best practices, which apply equally to rural and urban areas, include activities to determine the risk of incident occurrence, prevent incidents from occurring, and finally, response requirements.

Municipalities, which, because of limited tax base or other restraints, are not able to unilaterally implement planning strategies or best practices, could achieve economies of scale by partnering with one or more communities to accomplish activities such as risk analyses, operational and organizational reviews, and master plans.

#### 4.3.1 Community Fire Risk Assessments

Municipalities should conduct a risk assessment to determine fire and emergency service protection requirements. A risk assessment includes a detailed analysis of the possibility of a fire occurrence and the potential consequences. This includes

- a historical review of fire occurrences over a period of time sufficient to develop an understanding of the number and type of responses that occur in the community;
- a review of major facilities within a community (health care, commercial/industrial, and institutional); and
- an analysis of the potential impact on the community, should a fire occur in one of these occupancies. These consequences may be life and safety, economic, or environmental.

Following an analysis, a community can determine the methods best suited to manage these risks based on its ability to provide resources including fire prevention, public education, and emergency response.

#### 4.3.2 Fire Master Planning

Fire master planning is a tool for communities to determine current and future fire protection needs and includes the community risk analysis noted in section 4.3.1. The plan should address potential changes in the community over a future five or ten-year period, including

- **Management and mitigation of fire risks:** fire prevention, public education, and emergency response
- **Analysis of emergency response needs:** assessment of fire frequency, type, and geographic location; response times and station locations; types of equipment needed (water pumping capacity, specialized equipment); and number of responding personnel
- **Response capacity:** assessment of local capabilities and access to additional resources through automatic aid and mutual aid systems

### 4.3.3 Fire Service Coordinators

Some municipalities in Nova Scotia have banded together to introduce the position of fire coordinator to assist communities in the administration of fire service delivery. Consultation participants indicated that overall costs were reduced by a combination of the rationalization of apparatus and equipment, and the delivery of specialized services. Although the fire service coordinator position has no direct authority or responsibility regarding command and control during emergency responses, or over local fire department administrative, funding, or operational matters, all indications from participants were that the positions were of significant assistance in facilitating inter-agency coordination and cooperation.

## 4.4 Discussion—Key Issues

As a result of assessing the province-wide survey, holding several conferences with the steering committee, eight consultation sessions with municipal and fire representatives, and receiving three telephone calls from town and city managers, the following primary issues were identified. Everything else noted in this report falls out of these three key issues. Not all of them are applicable to all municipalities.

1. **Cost:** Most municipalities in the province understand the cost of providing fire and emergency services and do not see an opportunity to raise those funds from local taxpayers and donations. The province understands that setting province-wide standards means that there will be an operational, administrative, and financial challenge to bring many fire services up to those standards, and the province is likely to face criticism for not doing enough.
2. **Political circumstance:** Some municipalities report that several volunteer fire services, which are well financed as a result of fundraising and being in more affluent areas of the province, have political clout and do not want to see a change that might affect the way they conduct business or provide services. Therefore, some municipalities in this situation are reluctant to ‘plant a political minefield’ by taking on responsibility for fire services.
3. **Responsibility:** Municipalities understand that if they take on responsibility for direct operation of fire services that it is the start of a new set of accountabilities for adequate protection levels, decisions balancing cost against service, and possible controversy. The status quo means that there will be varying levels of service provision across the province, but it may be the lesser of two very difficult choices.

## Section 5 Recommendations

	Recommendations	Discussion
1	<p><b>UNSM and AMANS establish a committee to lobby, and work with, the province to review fire and emergency service legislation, and establish regulation, guidelines, and an oversight body similar to the Offices of the Fire Marshal in British Columbia, Ontario, and other provinces.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Existing legislation allows municipalities to provide fire services in the form that best suits each community, and allows them to set operational and administrative parameters. However, the application of this authority has practical, financial, and political implications.</li> <li>b. Several studies have been completed in the province in previous years. Further consultation or studies, (other than for the purposes indicated in this recommendation), will delay necessary decisiveness and action.</li> <li>c. This recommendation will not eliminate instances of political influence from some fire services, as related during consultation sessions, but it will mitigate it.</li> <li>d. Guidelines and oversight resulting from this recommendation should be adaptable to the specific needs of groups of municipalities based on size and economic circumstances.</li> <li>e. The interaction between UNSM, AMANS, and the province will provide an opportunity to clarify responsibilities and cost recovery pertaining to support services provided by fire departments such as emergency medical, hazardous material, standby, hydro, and other duties.</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>UNSM and AMANS lobby the province to fund and support risk analyses and fire master plans for municipalities or groups of municipalities. This action will identify and quantify the fire and emergency services protection needs of each community, thereby enabling decisions based on objective information.</b></p> <p><b>Notwithstanding recommendations 1 and 2, municipalities should lobby their local Member</b></p>	<p>In the interim, while working towards revised legislation and regulation with the province, and to avoid inaction while legislation is being enacted, neighbouring municipalities should explore pooling resources to complete risk analyses and, if possible, fire master plans. Pooling resources may create economies of scale, thereby lessening the cost impact on any one community.</p>

	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
	<b>of Legislative Assembly to assist with finding funds to conduct fire risk analyses, thereby quantifying fire services and emergency response requirements.</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>UNSM and AMANS provide clarification, via written information bulletins, about existing fire-applicable legislation and municipalities' rights and responsibilities.</b>	We discovered a variety of opinions and interpretations with respect to legislation, and the source of legislation, during our consultations.



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## Appendix A: Online Survey



## Nova Scotia Fire Services Review

Thank you. Your participation in the fire service review is appreciated.

Please continue with your RSVP by completing this very short survey.

## Nova Scotia Fire Services Review

### Contact Information

#### 1. Contact Information

Name

Municipality

Position

Email Address

## Nova Scotia Fire Services Review

### RSVP

#### 2. Will you be attending a consultation meeting?

Yes

No

Municipal representatives are invited to the afternoon session from 2:00 to 4:00.  
Fire service representatives are invited to the evening session from 6:00 to 8:00.

#### 3. Are you involved in the delivery of fire services, or municipal administration?

4. Which meeting will you attend?

- Bridgwater - 2:00 pm (municipal)
- Bridgwater - 6:00 pm (fire service)
- Kentville - 2:00 pm (municipal)
- Kentville - 6:00 pm (fire service)
- Truro - 2:00 pm (municipal)
- Truro - 6:00 pm (fire service)
- Baddeck - 2:00 pm (municipal)
- Baddeck - 6:00 pm (fire service)

## Nova Scotia Fire Services Review

### Fire Service Issues

5. Please indicate the top three issues for fire services; 1 being very important; 2 moderately important; 3 least important.

	1	2	3
Governance – oversight	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizational structure - reporting relationship between fire and municipalities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fire service standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fire Services Coordinator role and responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provincial/municipal relationship related to fire services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adequacy of fire services operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fire service funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other Issue (please specify)



## Appendix B: Representation at Consultation Meetings



The following table shows the position, and location of those who responded positively to attending a facilitated meeting. Position and municipality information is presented as provided by respondents.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Municipality</b>
1st vice chair	Nova Scotia Firefighters school
CAO	Antigonish County County of Kings District of Chester District of Saint Mary's Municipality of the County of Pictou Municipality of the District of Barrington Region of Queens Town of Antigonish Town of Mahone Bay Town of Middleton Town of Port Hawkesbury Town of Westville Town of Windsor Trenton West Hants
CBRM alternate	CBRM
Chair	Greenwood
Chair Fire and Emergency Services Committee	Lunenburg
Chair of Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association	Cape Breton
Chief	East Hants Glace Bay Town of Oxford Westville
Chief / Deputy Chief	Town of Trenton
Chief Admin Officer	Victoria County
Chief Director Fire Services	CBRM
Clerk	Village of Cornwallis Square
Clerk Treasurer	Village of Bible Hill Village of Chester
Commissioner	Village of Bible Hill
Commissioner / protective services rep	Village of Bible Hill
Councillor	District Chester Colchester County Cumberland District of Lunenburg MacAloney

<b>Position</b>	<b>Municipality</b>
	Mahone Bay MODG Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Pictou Region of Queens Town of Bridgewater West Hants
Councillor/ liaison Firefighters Assoc.	County of Pictou
Deputy CAO	District of Lunenburg
Deputy Chief Operations	Halifax
Deputy Fire Chief	Cape Breton Regional Town of Trenton
Deputy Mayor	Town of Antigonish
Deputy Warden	West Hants
Director	Lunenburg
Director of Finance	Antigonish County Town of Middleton
Director of Fire, Emergency, and IT Services	Guysborough
Executive Director	Nova Scotia Firefighters school
Fire Chief	Argyle Bible Hill Bridgewater Pugwash St. Mary's Truro Yarmouth
Fire Chief / Safety Compliance	Town of Amherst
Fire Chief/FSANS rep	Queen's
Fire Commission/ Fire Chief	Kings County
Fire Service Coordinator	Municipality of Barrington
Fire Service Coordinator/Administrator and FSAN Director For Lunenburg Fire and emergency service	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Fire Services Coordinator	Cumberland Richmond County
FSANS Alternate Director	Argyle
FSANS Director	Hants Richmond Yarmouth
FSANS Director for Pictou County	Pictou County
FSANS Director/Fire Chief	Kings



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<b>Position</b>	<b>Municipality</b>
Manager Protective Services	County of Annapolis
Mayor	Town of Antigonish Town of Berwick
Mayor	Town of Digby
President CFFA	Colchester
President Kings County Fire's Association	Kings County
Protection Services	Municipality of the County of Colchester
Supervisor of Building and Enforcement Services	County of Kings
Vice President of FSANS	Pictou
Warden	Barrington District of Shelburne Kings County Municipality of the District of Shelburne Victoria County

The following tables provide actual attendance according to the sign in records from each meeting.

**Bridgewater - September 12, 2016 - 2:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	Frank Fawson	District of Lunenburg
2	Richard MacLellan	RQM
3	Rasmano Fiske	RQM
4	Don Zwicker	District of Lunenburg
5	Wayne Thorburne	Town of Bridgewater
6	Bill Falkenham	FSANS
7	Rob Frost	District of Barrington
8	David Kendrick	District of Barrington
9	Tammy Wilson	District of Chester
10	Karl Nauss	Mahone Bay
11	Bruce Blackwood	Municipality of Chester
12	Andy Veinotte	Municipality of Chester
13	Danny Muise	Municipality of Argyle
14	Roger Taylor	District of Shelburne
15	Jim Wentzell	Town of Mahone Bay
16	Michael Graves	Town of Bridgewater
17	Bill McInnis	Town of Bridgewater
18	Dave Devenne	Town of Mahone Bay
19	Timothy Habinski	Annapolis County
20	Cheryl Mason	County of Annapolis
21	Martha Roberts	County of Annapolis
22	Michael Ernst	Municipality Dist Lunenburg
23	Don Townsend	Municipality Dist. Shelburne
24	Ray Cambria	Village of Chester
25	Brenda Mulrooney	Guest
26	John Ferguson	Mun. of County of Annapolis
27	Tom Mulrooney	Chester Commissioner
28	Iris Tolliver	Village of Chester
29	Chris Kennedy	Municipality Dist. Lunenburg
30	Alex Dummaresq	Municipality Dist. Lunenburg
31	Peter Haugnn	Town of Lunenburg
32	Bea Renton	Town of Lunenburg
33	<i>Illegible signature</i>	

**Bridgewater - September 12, 201 - 6:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	Joseph Boudreau	Wedgeport Fire
2	Art Rose	Port Maitland Fire Dept.
3	Lynn Seeley	Mutual aid Assn Yarmouth Co.
4	Wayne Thorburne	Town of Bridgewater
5	Moyal Conrad	Queens Co.
6	John Cunningham	NS Fire Fighters School
7	Johnathan Harmon	Vice President LRFES
8	Paul Gould	Quinan & Dist. Vol. Fire
9	Michael Nauss	Bridgewater Fire Dept
10	John Verrall	Yarmouth Fire Department
11	Brain Gray	Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency
12	Bill Falkenham	FSANS
13	Arthur Backman	Chester Basin Fire Commission Lunenburg East Fire & Emergency
14	Wendy Rafuse	Chester Basin VFD
15	Lyle Russell	Lunenburg East Fire & Emergency
16	John Robart	Oakhill & District Fire Dept
17	Corey Zink	Oakhill District Fire Dept

**Kentville - 13 September 2016- 2:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	Don Clarke	Town of Berwick
2	Don Regan	Town of Berwick
3	Tom MacEwan	County of Kings
4	Terry Brown	County of Kings
5	Ken Pineo	Village of New Minas
6	James Redmond	Village of New Minas
7	Brenda Stimpson	Village of New Minas
8	Lous Coutinto	Town of Windsor
9	Scott Burgess	Town of Windsor/Windsor Fire Dept
10	Bill Farrell	Village of Cornwallis Square
11	Allison Duggan	Mun. County of Antigonish
12	Glen Horne	Mun. County of Antigonish
13	Cathie Osborne	Mun. Dist. West Hants
14	Rachel Turner	Town of Middleton
15	Doug Armstrong	Town of Windsor
16	Bruce Snell	Mun. of Digby
17	Kevin Thomson	Kings Co. Fire Fighter Association
18	Jennifer Daniels	Mun. West Hants
19	Harold Pothier	Office of the Fire Marshal

**Kentville - 13 September 2016- 6:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	Mark Phillips	Town of Kentville
2	Jeff Skaling	Chair – Kings County Fire Service Chiefs Official Steering committee
3	Philip Porter	FSANS Director for Kings County
4	Patrick Armstrong	Annapolis County Fire Services, President
5	Michael Lockett	Annapolis County Fire Services FSANS Director NS Firefighters School 1 <sup>st</sup> VC
6	Harold PPOthier	Office of the Fire Marshal

**Truro - 14 September 2016 - 2:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Position</b>
1	Bill Mills	Truro	Mayor
2	Scott Fraser	Colchester	Dir. Corporate Services
3	Geoff Stewart	Colchester	Council
4	Bob Taylor	Colchester County	Mayor
5	Carl Chisholm	Town of Antigonish	Mayor
6	David Parker	County of Pictou	Firefighters Liaison
7	Shannon Mury	Richmond County	Fire Service Coordinator
8	David Westlake	Colchester County	Protection Services
9	Marvin MacDonald	District of Saint Mary's	CAO
10	Kevin Kennedy	Village of Bible Hill	
11	Lois MacCormick	Village of Bible Hill	Commissioner
12	Bob Christianson	VBH	Staff
13	Bonnie Coulter	Town of New Glasgow	CFO
14	Alta Munroe	Town of Pictou	Council
15	Don Fletcher	Cumberland	Council
16	Mike Carter	Cumberland	FSC
17	Doug Williams	Cumberland	Council
18	Kelly Rice	Town of Westville	CAO
19	Christine Blair	Colchester County	Councillor

**Truro - 14 September 2016 - 6:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Position</b>
1	Dwane Mellish	Bible Hill	Fire Chief
2	Brian Farrow	Amherst	D/C
3	Greg Jones	Amherst	Fire Chief
4	Andy Yarrow	Pugwash	Fire Chief
5	Tory Rushton	Oxford	Fire Chief
6	Raymond Anderson	Trenton	Fire
7	Wayne Allain	Trenton	Fire Chief
8	Ken Dunn	Westville	Fire Chief
9	Dave Sponagle	Thorburn FD	FSANS Director, Pictou Co.
10	Tom Steele	Westville Fire Dept	Deputy Chief
11	Jim Roper	FSANS	Vice President
12	David Westlake	Protection Services Colchester	
13	George Muise	CBRM Fire Service	
14	Greg Smith	Antigonish	Director
15	Mike Carter	Cumberland FSC	
16	Crawford Macpherson	Colchester	Director Community Development
17	Nigel Leggett	Valley Kempton Fire Brigade	
18	Meryl Smith	Colchester Fire Fighters Assoc	President
19	Bonnie Coulter	Town of New Glasgow	CFO
20	Blois Currie	Town of Truro	Chief
21	Terry MacAloney	Enfield Fire Dept	
22	Malcolm Noble	East Hants Fire Services	

**Baddeck - 15 September 2016 - 6:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Position</b>
1	John Chant	Glace Bay Vol Fire Dept	Chief
2	Jim Prince	CBRM Director	Vol Chief
3	Raymond Ferguson	Richmond County	Director FSANS
4	Addison Underwood		
5	P. Munishand		
6	Shawn Andrews	FSANS Guysborough	Director
7	<i>Illegible signature</i>		



**Baddeck - 15 September 2016 -2:00 p.m.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Position</b>
1	Bernie MacKinnon	Cape Breton Region	Chief
2	Merrill MacInnis	North Shore & Dist. Vol Fire Victoria County	
3	Fraser Patterson	Victoria County	Deputy Warden
4	Duart MacAulay	Mun. of the County of Inverness	
5	Maris Freimanis	Town of Port Hawkesbury	CAO
6	Joe O'Connor	Inverness	CAO
7	Shawn Andrews	Municipality of Guysborough	