

## Prince George City Council Presentation

### Fire Rescue Standard of Cover Update Executive Summary

The Prince George Fire Rescue Service was reviewed in 2015 with a final report provided to Council in 2016. The report contained 24 major recommendations of which 18 are now complete including the new Hall 1. Four recommendations are being addressed and two remain outstanding: the development of a fire training site and a staffing increase for Hall 1.

In the period since the report's completion the Department, like all career fire departments in BC, is subject to an evolving regulatory model that is increasingly complex and includes mandatory training requirements which are being further revised. Fire inspection and fire investigation requirements will be subject to change when the Fire Safety Act Regulations are finalized. As well the Emergency Program Act is being rewritten, adopting the Sendai Model and this is expected in early 2023 in response to the increase in fires and floods, particularly since 2017.

Firefighting continues to be recognized as being very dangerous with 13 cancers now recognized by WorkSafe as being presumptive to employment as a firefighter. In a similar way heart disease is presumptive for firefighters as is post traumatic stress.

At the same time, the Department is facing the additional challenge of a 41% increase in responses compared with 2015. This increase was particularly apparent in 2021 where during the Heat Dome in June, the Department responded to three times as many incidents as the previous June. The busiest single day in 2021 saw 40 responses, the highest number for the previous year was 17.

The final report for the Standard of Cover update will be provided in Q4 and will include recommendations for additional staffing based on the significant increase in workload, population and risk. The report will also address the need for a compliant training facility to ensure Prince George firefighters are fully trained to respond to all structure fires and other emergencies including hazardous materials, rail and road accidents, industrial accidents, technical rescues and emergency medical responses.