MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TABER REGIONAL FIRE SERVICES

FIRE MASTER PLAN

FINAL REPORT

Prepared By: Transitional Solutions Inc.
June 2022

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1.0 Executive Summary

Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) is pleased to present a Fire Master Plan for the Municipal District of Taber Regional Fire Services. We would like to sincerely thank the MD of Taber and the Fire Services Staff, who gave their time and expertise freely during the ongoing consultation and research phases for this Master Plan. Our discussions with Regional Fire Service Administration and staff were always candid, respectful, and productive.

The MD of Taber is a dynamic south-central Alberta community of over 7000 residents living in diverse and beautiful landscapes. With the Oldman River and the Bow River within its boundaries, the MD of Taber is truly picturesque. An economy based on agriculture, oil & gas, and manufacturing provides great business, employment, and active living opportunities. Major transportation corridors, including Highway 3, 36 and 25, and several rail lines allow for the efficient movement of goods and services. A rich history throughout its various villages and hamlets, including robust Hutterite Colonies, points to the steadfastness and industrious nature of the region.

The expectation of the MD of Taber Regional Fire Services Master Plan is that it will provide guidance and a template to move the Regional Fire Services (RFS) forward in achieving a world-class rural Fire Service. Using modern methods, policy development, sound business & financial practices and the cooperative implementation and service efforts from all parties, that goal is certainly achievable. The plan will include immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategic planning recommendations.

TSI has developed a Fire Master Plan which:

- Enhances firefighter safety;
- Enhances cost control and containment;
- Increases efficiency and effectiveness;
- Reduces liability to the municipalities; and
- Identifies the right-sized service and approach to meet the region's needs over the next ten years.

Risk Profile and Level of Service

The region faces many risks of varying impact, similar to many rural municipalities. A thorough all-hazards risk assessment, done in collaboration with key stakeholders is the foundation from which the MD can assess its risk tolerance and subsequent Level of Service. Understanding the current and future community risk profile drives the necessity for customizing the Level of Service, which then dictates the operations and subsequent staffing, training, and response.

Governance & Administration

Governance and the administration of fire services that involve multiple municipalities requires an understanding of risk management and what is the most appropriate manner to identify the risks, the resources/capabilities available, and the desire to collaborate. These elements combined with clarity on the political will, financial, and operational capabilities of the partners will drive the governance solutions.

The MD of Taber will be required to identify how they wish to work as a partner with their municipalities internally and in the region to develop a sense of how they want to address risk. Second to this is the

empowerment of administration, specifically the role of the Fire Chief, to allow fire services to operationalize the decisions and report back on the effectiveness of governance decisions.

Operations

Operationally TSI analyzed all aspects related to effective response and service delivery. Although current operations are effective, our findings indicate that a focus on the development of response models and protocols, as well as a consistent approach to readiness could significantly improve operational efficiency.

The MD's commitment to improvements of regional fire stations has not only improved service delivery but has also revitalized the dedication and increased morale in all staff. Staffing levels within the MDTRFS has been consistent in the recent past, but success in recruitment and retention will only be realized if effective training initiatives or programs are implemented. Adequate staffing is one crucial component that ensures high standards of service delivery.

Improved and more consistent training was clearly identified in the engagement process. Training is a cornerstone of the provision of service and remains a key component to the success of the fire service. Consistent, meaningful, targeted, and organized training must become part of the culture of the MDTRFS.

Apparatus and equipment are carefully aligned with the core services delivered by the MDTRFS. Prudent fleet management and designs for future procurement looks to ensure that the theme remains. Improved regular collaboration with the dispatch service provider will increase understanding in operational needs, systems and support required by both entities.

Realizing the immense challenges facing modern fire services, it must be mentioned that the MDTRFS is functioning well and provides a high quality, dedicated service to all stakeholders. What must be clearly envisioned is the immense potential the MD of Taber Regional Fire Service holds, to become a world class fire and emergency service provider.

Finances

The budget for the MD is well put together and supported by data and historical information. There are no visible concerns or issues within the financials planning, preparation, or management. Operational and capital budgeting, financial report and reserve management are working well. Funding for future projects may require increased reserve contributions, securing provincial or federal grants, or funding them via debenture. The MD is well-positioned should the need arise to take on debt for regional fire services.

A recommended implementation timeline is provided at the beginning of this report. It is organized by priorities (immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term) to ensure the governance and chain of command are in place so that operations, training, capital, and upgrades can commence reasonably and efficiently while protecting the Regional Municipalities from liabilities.

Our Project Team has prepared a comprehensive report responding to the objectives, scope and deliverables required in your RFP. Through this report, TSI believes we have fulfilled our understanding of your requirements.

2.0 Acronyms

AFCA	Alberta Fire Chiefs Association
AFRRCS	The Alberta First Responders Radio Communications System
AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
AHS	Alberta Health Services
ATV	All Terrain Engine
BFSCO	Basic Fire Safety Codes Officer
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
DEM	Director Emergency Management
DDEM	Deputy Director Emergency management
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
IC	Incident Command
ICS	Incident Command System
JPRs	Job Performance Requirements
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LOS	Level of Service
MFR	Medical First Response
MD	Municipal District of Taber
MDTRFS	Municipal District of Taber Regional Fire Services
MVC	Motor Vehicle Collision
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OG	Operational Guide
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RFA	Regional Fire Authority
SCBA	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
SOG	Standard Operating Guidelines
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TSI	Transitional Solutions Inc.
UTV	Utility Terrain Vehicle
VHF	Very High Frequency

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3.0 Fire Master Plan Outlook

3.0 Fire Master Plan Outlook

The Master Plan is a long-range plan with many critical stages for the implementation to succeed. The plan has been developed with short-, medium- and long-term goals that will help enable the region to enhance its service capabilities. Short-term recommendations and strategies will provide the foundation for the plan to evolve. As short-term elements have been met, these will foster the development of the medium- and long-term areas below. "Key Recommendations" are mentioned throughout the plan and highlighted in blue text. For conciseness, these recommendations have been summarized in the tables below.

3.1 Initial and High Priority

Category	Recommendation	Time	Reference
Risk Profile	• The initial response to all events be evaluated to ensure proper number of resources, capabilities and staff are dispatched & respond to reflect best practices, align with NFPA, industry & OHS standards. • Amend the Fire Permit Process Policy to better align with the Provincial Ban system.	Immediate Immediate	4.0 4.0
Governance & Administration	• Review and finalize clear mutual aid agreements with all applicable municipalities for response and other activities. • Consider changing the rank nomenclature to provide a clear chain of command for consistent reporting and authority structure. • Administrators review training needs annually. • Rewrite Bylaw 1956 – MD of Taber Fire Services Bylaw to reflect the following: ○ The Regional Fire Chief, in concert with the District Chiefs, can decide on the implementation and removal of all Fire Bans, then inform Council. ○ The Regional Chief and named Fire Guardians will issue fire permits.	Immediate Immediate 0 – 3 months 3 – 6 months	5.0 5.0 7.4 4.0
LOS & Operational Standards	• Establish regular business meetings with all Officers and staff to ensure internal communications with the MDTRFS are consistent and effective.	Immediate	7.1
Training Programs	• Enroll in the MFR Program as part of the LOS. • Weekly training nights be consistent at all stations. • Review how training is recorded. • Consider the use of the AFCA Core Competency Framework and NFPA 1500 as key training curriculum resources.	Immediate 0 – 3 months Immediate 0 – 3 months & ongoing	6.0 7.1 7.4 7.4
Recruitment & Retention	• Identify minimum and maximum staffing requirements for each station.	0 – 6 months	7.5

3.2 Short Term: The First 12 Months

Category	Recommendation	Time	Reference
Risk Profile	• Hold annual recruitment drives for all six Stations. • Complete a Risk Assessment that includes the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, CAO, and Council, share that information with the firefighting staff in all six Stations.	3 – 6 months and ongoing 3 – 6 months and ongoing	4.0 4.0, 6.0 & 7.1
Governance & Administration	• Review records management to include KPIs for evaluation of performance and the effectiveness and efficiency of Fire Services.	6 – 12 months	5.0 & 7.1
LOS & Operational Standards	• The MD engage the Fire Service to complete a thorough risk and hazard assessment. Align the service level to the results of the hazard assessment. • Consider the use of industry-built evaluation tools and resources to assist in the development of LOS document and supporting training matrix (www.abfirechiefs.ca).	3 – 6 months 6 – 12 months	4.0, 6.0 & 7.1 6.0
Incident Response	• MDTRFS administration develop response models/protocols for the regional service to establish a standard of cover as part of a community risk reduction plan.	6 – 12 months	7.1
Fire Station, Apparatus & Equipment	• Conduct a complete and accurate inventory, including all tools, equipment, and PPE. • Implement an equipment inventory system to accurately track all tools, equipment, PPE, and apparatus. • Analyze the functionality of the Panasonic tablets, ensure functionality and train in use.	0 - 6 months 6 - 12 months 6 – 12 months	7.3 7.3 7.3
Training Programs	• Use of a Records Management System to record all theoretical and practical training. Ensure training is in place for the use of the Records Management System(s).	0 – 3 months	7.4
Recruitment & Retention	• Establish an annual awards recognition program to ensure retention .	12 months & ongoing	4.0

3.3 Medium Term: 1 to 3 Years

Category	Recommendation	Time	Reference
Risk Profile	• Clearly identify Fire Prevention as a portfolio with clear guidelines and expectations for the Fire Service Administration and ensure this portfolio is assigned to a capable member of this leadership team.	1 year	4.0
Governance & Administration	• Remove OG #3 and add it as an appendix to Bylaw 1956. • Rewrite Bylaw 1956 to include the appendix Level of Service. • For the purposes of working on their existing Agreement, initiate discussions with the Town of Taber for the purposes of operational collaboration while operating with autonomy.	1 year 1 year 12 – 24 months	6.0 6.0 5.0
LOS & Operational Standards	• Amend the Operational Guideline to reflect the risk assessment and recommendations.	1 year	6.0
Fire Stations, Apparatus & Equipment	• Install backup generators to all, or key fire stations within the region. • Champion Station 4 renovations for an academy/classroom on second floor if lease is continued.	12 – 18 months 1 – 3 years	7.2 7.2
Training Programs	• Creation of a formal regional training program driven by qualified members, or a training committee, overseen by the Deputy Fire Chief or designate. • The development and inclusion of Officer training and mentorship. • Build training capacity internally to support a formal regional training program. • Theoretical and practical training initiatives be guided using formal lesson plans.	12 – 18 months 12 – 18 months 18 – 36 months 18 – 36 months	7.4 7.4 7.4 7.4
Recruitment & Retention	• MDTRFS administration develop an effective and robust recruitment program or campaign.	12 – 18 months	7.5

3.4 Long Term/Ongoing: 3 to 10 Years

Category	Recommendation	Time	Reference
Risk Profile	• Create a pre-incident plan procedure with established targets for plans completed.	3 – 5 years	4.0
Governance & Administration	• Develop either a template agreement for all the municipalities in the area or a Master Agreement for all to sign. • Ensure agreements continue to ensure adequate capital funding for Regional Fire Services. • Funding for future capital projects may require increased reserve contributions. • That policy makers from all regional municipalities (including the Town of Taber) meet for facilitated direction setting and strategic planning to improve collaboration within the region.	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing 3 – 5 years & ongoing	5.0 8.5 8.5 5.0
LOS & Operational Standards	• Establish and implement a long-term strategic plan to build expertise and capacity in Fire Prevention.	5 – 10 years	7.6
Fire Stations, Apparatus & Equipment	• Future renovations and construction focus on the use of modern Fire Service practices for maximizing operational efficiency.	5 – 10 years	7.2
Training Programs	• The Fire Service budget for and reimburse tuition costs to individual members who succeed in taking outside courses from accredited schools.	3 – 5 years	7.4

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4.0 Risk Profile

4.0 Risk Profile

A Risk Profile justifies all aspects of Fire Service, including service levels, management, operations, station location, apparatus, equipment, recruitment, training, and response. It also promotes officer development, teamwork and trust between Fire Administration, staff, and community. Understanding the department and community risk profile, assessing the risks in context with risk tolerance, then developing mitigation strategies that are monitored and intentionally managed increases the risk maturity of the collective region.

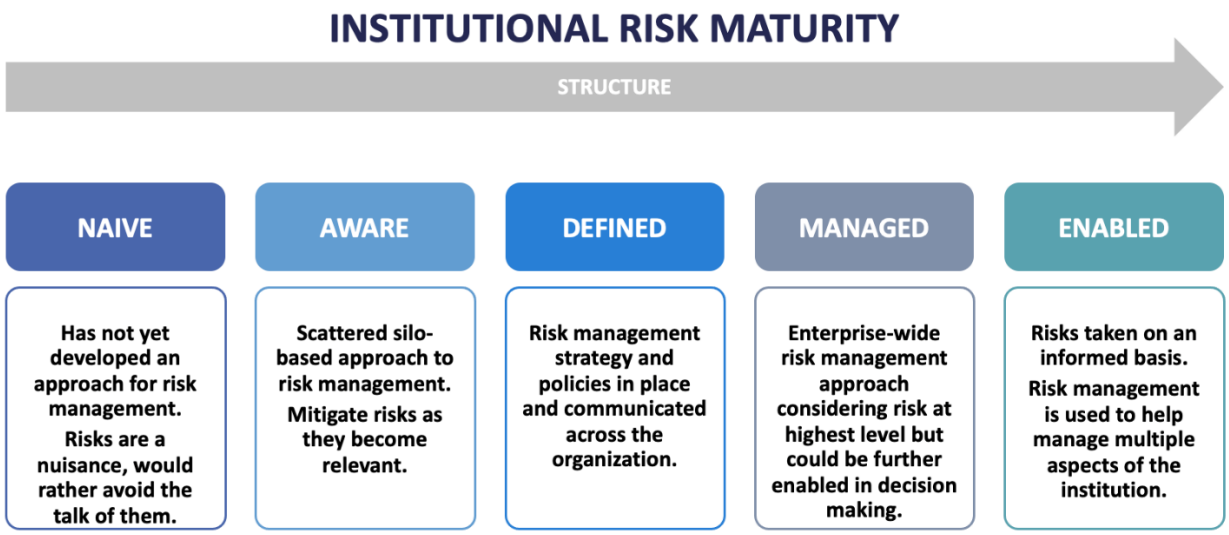


Figure 1 - Institutional Risk Maturity Spectrum

Risks, hazards, threats, and vulnerability are terms that are often confused with each other. A clear understanding of each of these principles is necessary to apply assessment criteria to occupancy or region:

- *Risk* is the potential for loss, damage, or destruction within the MD that we are trying to protect because of a threat exploiting a vulnerability. It is the intersection of assets, threats, and vulnerabilities. Risk is often expressed in terms of a combination of the consequences of an event (including changes in circumstances) and the associated *likelihood* of occurrence (ISO, 2009).

- *Hazards* are events or physical conditions that can cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural loss, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss—generally categorized as *natural, biological, technological, intentional, and terrorist* (FEMA, 2013).

- *Vulnerability* is considered a weakness or gap in our fire protection that could be exploited by threats or gaps in our fire protection that compromises our communities and public safety. These are intrinsic properties of something resulting in the susceptibility to a risk source that can lead to an event with a consequence (ISO, 2009).

- *Threats* are anything that can exploit a vulnerability, intentionally or accidentally, and cause harm, damage, or destroy an asset. Threats could be actual, conceptual, or inherent. A threat is what we're trying to protect against (Public Safety Canada, 2017).

A risk and vulnerability assessment identifies and gives Fire Services the ability to recognize threats or hazards and the probability or potential that these factors will exploit a vulnerability, or gap, in your protection and result in a threat, event, exposure, disaster or some form of loss.

Generally, a matrix is used to determine the probability and potential consequences of the hazard. Regular reviews of risk and vulnerability within the MD, including target hazards, should occur annually or, by some manageable schedule, as assigned by those organizations designated through governance (EMA), bylaw, or as delegated by Fire Services Administration. As completed using a Threat Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (HIRA or THIRA), a sample matrix is provided in Figure 2. This data clarifies all stakeholders to appreciate where the most significant risks exist so that risk treatments can be applied most effectively.

Level of Risk	Description	Hazards
>50	Extreme	Flood, Forest/Wildland Fire, Freezing Rain, Hazardous Materials Incident, Human Health Emergency, Snowstorm/Blizzard, Tornado
41 – 50	Very High	Drinking Water Emergency, Geomagnetic Storm, Oil/Natural Gas Emergency, Terrorism/CBRNE
31 – 40	High	Agricultural and Food Emergency, Critical Infrastructure Failure, Drought/Low Water, Nuclear Facility Emergency
21 – 30	Moderate	Civil Disorder, Cyber Attack, Earthquake, Human-Made Space Object Crash, Landslide, Transportation Emergency, Windstorm
11 – 20	Low	Building/Structural Collapse, Dam Failure, Explosion/Fire, Extreme Temperatures, Hurricane, Natural Space Object Crash, Radiological Emergency
<10	Very Low	Energy Emergency (Supply), Erosion, Fog, Hail, Land Subsidence, Lightning, Mine Emergency, Sabotage, Special Event, War and International Emergency

Figure 2 - Sample THIRA Risk Matrix (Ontario Emergency Management, 2012)

4.1 Overview

The MD is no less vulnerable to risks and hazards than other communities. The only avenue to address each type of risk or hazard that can occur or has happened within the MD is to anticipate and prepare for such an event. An example would be overland flooding or grass fires in the spring and fall.

These events are anticipated and can be mitigated before they happen or may be planned for so that resources are in place should an immediate response be required. Fire Services commonly use a seasonal approach to natural hazards. The challenge is to expand the scope to include all types of risks and hazards. To assist with risk and vulnerability, the MD Fire Service should implement a pre-incident planning program that would consist of all Stations and the risks identified for their specific areas. Using industry-standard risk assessment tools and establishing a systemic pre-planning methodology will support these efficiencies.

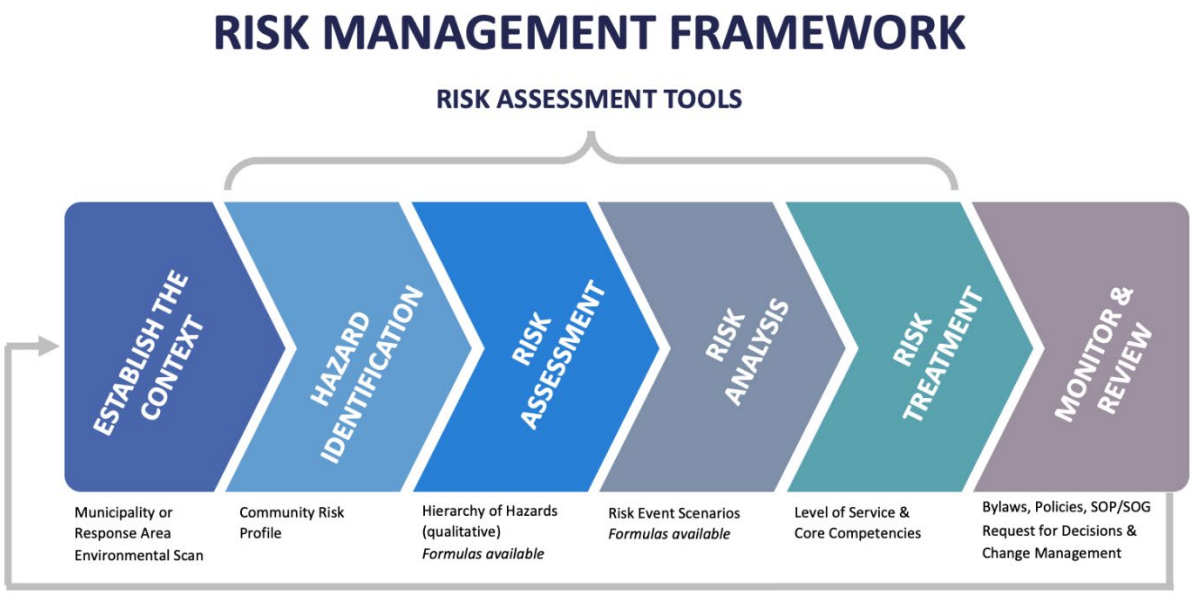


Figure 3 - Systemic Pre-Planning Risk Assessment (TSI, 2020)

4.2 Hazard Assessment

Values at Risk

FEMA created Community Lifelines in 2017 to reframe incident information, understand and communicate incident impacts using plain language, and promote the unity of effort across the whole community to prioritize efforts to stabilize the lifelines during incident response.

Community Lifelines provide a common lens that all responders can use to assess whether critical lifesaving and life-sustaining services are at risk or disrupted and, if so, which core capabilities are required to provide those services. A lifeline enables the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and is essential to human health and safety or economic security. Lifelines were developed to support response planning and operations.

Table 1 identifies critical community lifelines throughout the region that trigger or becomes compromised because of an unplanned event and require additional considerations when considering risk assessment, risk treatments, and subsequent service levels.

Keeping what is at risk top of mind can put pre-incident planning into perspective. Impacts to community lifelines and critical infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, recreational or municipal facilities, can be devastating to a community and its ability to provide essential services. Pre-incident planning is not required in defining a Level of Service but should be included as a component of Fire Service functions.

After understanding the risk, the hazards and the values at stake, the next step is to understand the most appropriate methods of mitigating the risks for the community are. The risk tolerance of the region will drive the considerations about which and how many layers of protection to apply. This consideration will take into context budget, capacity and capability.

Table 1 - MD of Taber Regional High-Risk Sites

COMMUNITY LIFELINE	HIGH-RISK SITES IDENTIFIED (VALUES AT RISK)
	Cellular phone infrastructure AFFRACS infrastructure
	Oil & Gas compressor stations Gas plants Pipelines & well sites Critical infrastructure Electricity
	Critical infrastructure: Water Public works Agriculture: diverse crops, irrigation districts, large native grass lease pastures Manufacturing facilities include; food processing, i.e., Lamb Weston Hutterite colonies
	Sewage Product on rail and highway
	Hospitals EMS Seniors residences
	Schools Recreational: six campgrounds, golf courses Governance, administration, and infrastructure buildings Fire Permitting system
	Roadways Increase in traffic from feedlots Railway

Regional Hazards

Through our time invested in the MD during the Summer of 2021, it was learned that the MD of Taber faces a variety of hazards throughout the region involving the following hazard types shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Risks & Hazards of MD of Taber Hot Zones

Hazard Type	Regional Hazards
Natural Hazards (FEMA) Biological, Extra-terrestrial, Geophysical, Hydrological, Climatological, and Meteorological	A potential incident resulting from acts of Nature: ⚠ Severe weather ⚠ Damaging winds ⚠ Tornado ⚠ Ice storms ⚠ Blizzards ⚠ Wildland fires ⚠ Overland flooding/torrential/prolonged Rains
Biological Hazards (Centre for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters) Human Epidemics and Pandemics; Animal and Livestock Epidemics; Plant and Agricultural Epidemics; Bacterial Outbreaks; Insect Infestations; and Animal Toxins and Vectors.	⚠ Infectious disease outbreak ⚠ Pandemic
Technological Hazards Infrastructure hazards; Industrial hazards; Transportation hazards; and Structural fires and failures. Power Failures; Telecommunications System Failures; Computer Network Failures; Critical Water or Sewer System Failures; Major Gas Disruption Line (Main) Breaks; Food Shortages; Overburdened Public Health Facilities; and Economic Failure.	*Hazards that result from failures in the physical things humans have made. There is no question that human activity is the major contributing factor. Infrastructure hazards are the potential failure of processes, systems, facilities, technologies, networks, assets, and services essential to health, safety, security, or economic well-being.* ⚠ Train derailment ⚠ Loss of containment ⚠ Bridge compromise ⚠ Motor vehicle collisions
Intentional Hazards (FEMA, 2013) Civil Incidents; Criminal Acts (violent &non-violent); Cyber Attacks; Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Materials; Terrorism; War, Humanitarian Crises; and Complex Humanitarian Emergencies	*These hazards do not result from negligence, oversight, or Mother Nature. A potential incident resulting from the intentional actions of an adversary.* ⚠ Explosions ⚠ Civil unrest & disorder ⚠ Blockade of major roadways ⚠ Violent acts/terrorism/cyber attack

Regional Vulnerabilities

Known vulnerabilities which can hamper the MD's ability to mitigate risks:

Lack of people volunteering to be firefighters, adequate coverage

Access to water in the winter

Geographical challenges crossing the Old Man and Bow Rivers

From a risk perspective, the MD is no different from most rural municipalities in that it struggles with volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention. It, therefore, is vulnerable in terms of trained personnel being available to respond at all times of the day.

During the interviews conducted with the firefighters, administration, and council, there wasn't a clear understanding of risk within the municipal boundaries. However, most identified the volunteer labour force as a risk. There was an understanding of the requirements to manage other risks by identifying hazards and vulnerabilities, but not precisely the risks.

All-Hazards Risk Assessment & Management

The use of an all-hazards approach in coordination with pre-incident planning focuses on developing capacities and capabilities that will minimize harm, personal injury and the loss of assets or property. It also promotes public safety. It takes what seems like a monumental task and eases it into a scalable, manageable plan to mitigate the hazards and risks.

Current and future risks can be identified using planning and development with the inclusion and input of the MD's Fire Prevention team in the process. This allows Fire Prevention to provide expertise in planning and development to ensure fire prevention best practices, such as access to apparatus and water supply capacities, are utilized and identified early in the building and development process. It also ensures that proper fire prevention and mitigation systems will be in place. This process would additionally provide adherence to both building and fire codes. It also allows the MD to access the services of a Fire Protection Engineer for large industrial and commercial projects outside of the scope of Fire Administration.

Public Safety Canada has a practical risk assessment and planning tools available to conduct all-hazards risk assessments. A risk-rating matrix allows for decisions about which risks need treatment and the priority for treatment implementation. The comparison is made based on likelihood and impact estimates to prioritize risks. The risk-rating matrix plots the likelihood on the x-axis and the impacts on the y-axis. Then, by measuring those components of risks, a clustering of risks can be shown, which helps establish acceptable or intolerable risk levels leading to decisions on priorities. Risk treatments can then be applied to develop, select, and implement controls to eliminate or mitigate risks. The all-hazards risk assessment process can be used within the Fire Services as a proven methodology to incorporate risk assessment, pre-incident planning and response activities.

There are numerous risk assessment tools available to the Fire Service. Public Safety Canada provides an All-Hazards Risk Assessment Methodology & Guidelines publication to support risk assessment activities.

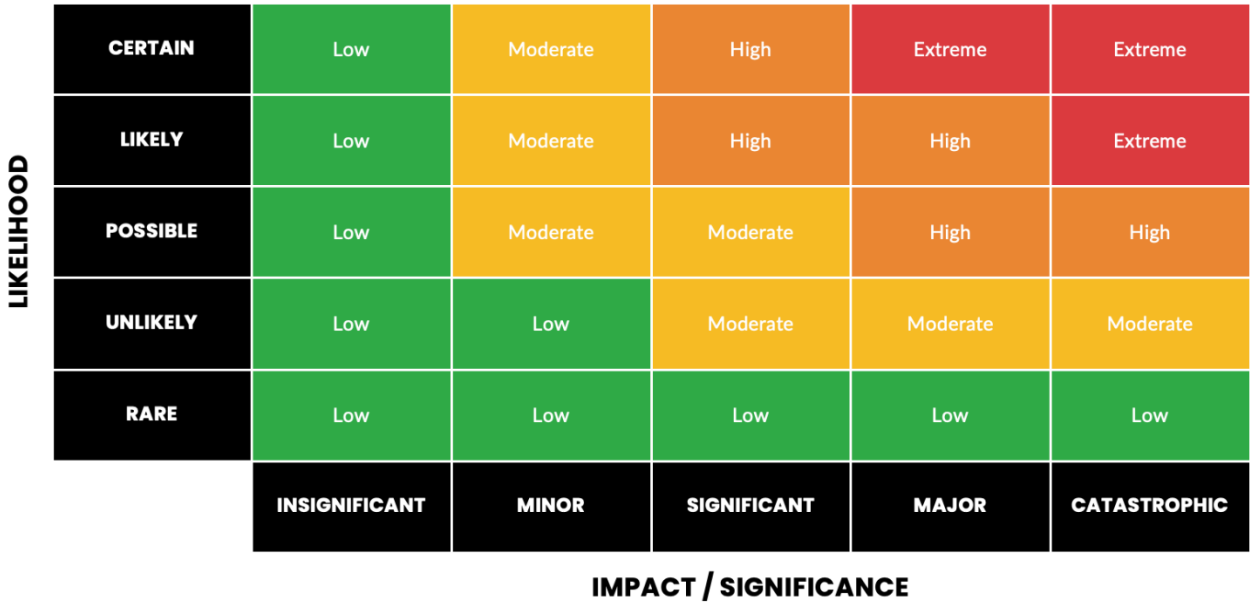


Figure 4 - Risk Assessment Matrix Infographic

4.3 Pre-Incident Planning

Pre-incident planning should be adopted as a regular practice within fire prevention and fire operations to gather information on specific target hazards.

All this pre-gathered information would be an invaluable asset for fire command and staff should an incident occur. It must be accessible and supplied in a usable form. It could be available in hard copy form (binder) and kept as part of the apparatus inventory, online as a computer-aided dispatch system component, or both. Pre-incident planning also instigates the relationship between your Fire Department and its commercial, industrial, and institutional stakeholders, allowing each party to understand and explore response capacities, capabilities, and expectations.

Information could include:

1. Building layout and size
2. Type of occupancy, commercial, industrial, institutional
3. 24-hour building manager or maintenance contact information
4. Type of construction
5. Identify local hazards and potential for an incident to occur
6. Location of the main fire alarm panel
7. Hazardous materials storage areas
8. Fire protection systems and equipment
9. Familiarization with on-site evacuation plans
10. Initial response capabilities and capacities - (minimums)
11. Initial response actions
12. Gauge industry capabilities
13. Gauge industry expectations

Pre-incident planning is a cost-effective, proactive endeavour that should be implemented as part of the local fire & emergency services operations involving a collaborative approach with Fire Prevention and Operations. Creating an OG in this regard will ensure compliance by staff. Setting a goal for minimums, such as completing one Pre-incident Plan every quarter, would bode well for the QMP (Quality Management Plan), and assist in the justification for training and a demonstrated need for appropriate

apparatus. It also promotes officer development, teamwork and trust between Fire Administration and Staff.

Fire Permitting

TSI learned that the Fire Permitting process is fragmented in alignment with the Alberta Provincial Fire Ban process allowing for burning when a full fire ban is in place. An amendment to the Fire Ban system, including Bylaw 1956 and the Fire Permit and Ban process policy, is recommended to better align with the Provincial Ban system, ensuring that if there is a full ban and fire risk is high, there will be no burning of any kind in the MD.

Consideration needs to be given to who issues fire permits and how long they are issued. TSI recommends that the Fire Chief and Guardians, as named in Bylaw 1956, be responsible for issuing fire permits in their area or perhaps have one place where residents can obtain fire permits, including an online system if applicable. The recommendation is that permits continue to be issued for not longer than a year, with the caveat that they will be suspended immediately if a fire ban is in place. Weather in the MD is severe and can change quickly; weather is an identified hazard, and this hazard must be controlled by controlling when burning is permitted, through a strong fire ban system.

Section 7.5 of the Bylaw 1956 MD of Taber Fire Service Bylaw states that Council may by resolution designate a ban on open fires; in Section 7.6, Council by resolution may cancel a ban. In extreme weather conditions or a rapidly spreading grassland wildfire, it is almost impossible for the Regional Fire Chief and/or their designate to mitigate any further risks without a resolution of Council, which is a timely process. Ensure the Regional Fire Chief and or their designate in consultation with the District Chiefs can issue and remove a fire ban by amending Section 7.5, subsection a) and b) and Section 7.6 Bylaw 1956 MD of Taber Fire Service Bylaw.

4.4. Risk Profile Recommendations

The following recommendations are in support of mitigating the risk profile of MD of Taber:

1. Hold annual recruitment drives for all six stations. Run training courses annually to certify the recruits in the accepted NFPA 1001 level one and two standards.

2. Establish an annual awards recognition program to ensure retention. Creating an annual awards program would serve the needs of the chief, administration, and council to recognize the firefighters and community. Further, awarding and celebrating the successful completion of milestones, i.e., NFPA 1001 Level one and two standards, should involve the firefighters, their families, and council members if so desired. The MD Fire Service has grown, and with that growth has come many accomplishments by the volunteers in terms of training and time commitment. These achievements need to be recognized and rewarded; everyone builds culture and pride.

3. Complete a Risk Assessment that includes the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, CAO, and Council, share that information with the firefighting staff in all six stations. This can be done internally, or an external agency can be hired to conduct the first risk assessment. Using a simple risk matrix would be the first step in identifying risks and priorities to manage them while identifying the probability of the identified event occurring.

4. Create a pre-incident plan procedure with established targets for plans completed. Adopt pre-incident planning into regular fire prevention and operations practices. The protocols for this hazard assessment and pre-incident plans should be captured in a SOG.

5. It is recommended that the initial response to all events be evaluated. This will ensure that the correct number of resources, capabilities, and staff are dispatched and respond to reflect best practices and align with NFPA, industry, and OHS standards.

6. Rewrite Bylaw 1956 - MD of Taber Fire Services Bylaw. Confirm it reflects the following:
    a. The Regional Fire Chief, in concert with the District Chiefs, can decide on implementation and removal of all Fire Bans, then inform Council;
    b. The Regional Chief and named Fire Guardians will issue fire permits; and

7. Amend the Fire Permit Process Policy. Align it to the Provincial Ban system.

8. Clearly identify Fire Prevention as a portfolio. Have clear guidelines and expectations for the Fire Service Administration and ensure this portfolio is assigned to a capable member of the regional chiefs who has the capacity to manage the portfolio. Fire prevention is a separate function that focuses on root causes and public safety in support of fire suppression and the QMP.

5.0 Governance & Administration

5.0 Fire Service Governance and Administration

5.1 Current Governance Overview

Before identifying governance options for the delivery of Fire Services within the Municipal District, it is critical to understand what exists today and analyze whether the existing model is deemed the best approach for all affected stakeholders. Doing so requires looking at options, reviewing their advantages and disadvantages to make an informed assessment of how governance could be improved.

The Municipal District has recently started to operate a separate Fire Service from the Town of Taber in March 2017. Currently, there are two regional agreements the MD of Taber retains with the Town of Vauxhall and the Village of Barnwell. In addition to these, there are Mutual Aid Agreements in place for operations with the Towns of Taber, Picture Butte and Bow Island, Counties of Vulcan, Forty Mile, Newell, Warner, Cypress, Lethbridge, Willow Creek, and pending agreements with the Towns of Coaldale and Cardston County.

Municipality	Agreement	Date of Issue / Expiry
Town of Vauxhall	Regional fire authority agreement	Most recent signed and dated version from July 2013 expiring July 2023
	A Firehall Lease agreement	September 2013 and expires August 2023
	Mutual aid agreement	May 2017 for term of ten years
	Fire Apparatus dissolution of fire agreement	Signed April 2016 with no expiry
Village of Barnwell	Regional fire authority agreement	Most recent signed and dated version from March 2017
Hamlets of Enchant, Grassy Lake and Hays	Part of the MD of Taber	
D.M.C Oilfield (Private Entity)	Agreement for a Fire Station 4	

In summary, there are currently two inter-municipal agreements and one dissolution letter in effect that provide language for the structure, administration rights, financial obligations, and legal direction of the fire authorities.

Governance Options

Several possible governance models could be adopted to address Fire Services both inside the Municipal District of Taber and beyond its borders. In Alberta's Governance Options for Municipal Regional Services (produced by the Government of Alberta), seven governance models are identified and explained. An eighth option has been added to Growth Management Boards and is covered in Part 17.1 of the Municipal Government Act. Table 3 shows some of the provisions relating to each of the various models.

Table 3 - Governance Options in the Province of Alberta

	Inter-Municipal Agreement	Regional Services Commission	Municipal Controlled Corporation	Cooperative	Society	Part 9 Company	Public Private Partnership	Growth Management Board
Separate legal entity		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Can borrow and incur debt servicing costs		X	X	X	X	X		X
Can directly expropriate land		X						
Can make a profit and distribute to members			X	X			X	
Requires provincial government approval for establishment		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ministry/parties responsible for establishment	Municipalities	Municipal Affairs		Service Alberta			Municipalities and Partners	Municipal Affairs
Legislation restricting types of services provided	MGA			Cooperatives Act	Societies Act	Companies Act	MGA	

- Regional services commissions are restricted to providing services as described by the commission's regulation.
- Municipal controlled corporations may be owned by a municipality or group of municipalities and provide services to a region.
- Societies are restricted to any benevolent, philanthropic, charitable, provident, scientific, artistic, literary, social, educational, agricultural, and sporting activities.
- Part 9 Companies are restricted to promoting art, science, religion, charity, and recreation activities.
- Public-private partnerships may be a separate legal entity depending on the partnership agreement.
- Regional services commission is the only governance option that can directly expropriate land. Expropriation of land for inter-municipal agreements, municipal controlled corporations, Part 9 companies and societies may be completed by a municipality who is a member of that organization to enable that organization to carry out a development.

For a detailed explanation of each governance model, refer to Appendix A.

While many of these models is a potential option, five (Municipal Controlled Corporation; Cooperative; Part 9 Company; Public-Private Partnership; and Growth Management Board) have been deemed inappropriate as they are the least likely to improve the existing delivery of fire protection services. That leaves three regional models (Intermunicipal Agreements; Society; and Regional Services Commission) and an independent provision of service model for consideration.

1. Independent Provision of Service Model

Under this form of governance, each municipality would independently be responsible for the provision of services within its jurisdictional boundaries. The MD would respond only to calls within its boundaries utilizing its fire halls. The MD relies on agreements with its partnering municipalities in Vauxhall and Barnwell.

Here are some of the advantages and disadvantages of an independent provision of service model in Table 4:

Table 4 - Independent Provision of Service Model

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Simple and straight forward service delivery • Less firefighter burn-out as fewer incidents are responded to • Fire Chief & Department has only one master to report to and be accountable to	• Duplication of services • Adversely impacts fire fighter recruitment vis-à-vis a limited pool to draw recruits • Duplication of buildings, equipment & apparatus • Does little to encourage collaboration & cooperation • Cost efficiencies not realized by both jurisdictions • Potential financial losses and hardships for rural neighbours (e.g., longer response times)

For this type of model to succeed, each municipality must have a critical mass concerning population, assessment and tax base, and call volumes to fund the service delivery and recruit and keep volunteer firefighters engaged. Typically, this model exists when an urban and rural municipality is at odds with one another and is unprepared to collaborate.

The costs associated with the utilization of this model, chosen by the MD in relation to some of its regional neighbors, depends on the Level of Service required by each municipality. In the future, this model needs to be monitored for sustainability; including intermunicipal partnerships that will be integral to long-term success.

2. Intermunicipal Agreement Model

Within the confines of an inter-municipal agreement, a few different configurations can occur related to the provision of fire protection services. Three are offered for consideration and review (Regional Authority, Mutual Aid Agreement, and Contract for Services). Each option requires developing an agreement that specifies the terms and conditions upon which the arrangement will function.

2a Regional Authority

Under this form of governance, a regional authority is not a legal entity. Rather it requires one of the participating municipalities to host vis-à-vis the agreement. The regional authority does

assume full responsibility for the delivery of the service(s) and has its own organizational structure. Representation on the regional authority board/council typically consists of elected officials from the participating municipalities and public members at large.

Here are some of the advantages and disadvantages of a regional authority in Table 5:

Table 5 - Intermunicipal Agreement Model (Regional Authority)

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Eliminates potential for duplication of efforts • Facilitates the delivery of a coordinated response to emergency scenes • Property and assets remain with participating municipalities • Easy to withdraw • Can be easily adjusted to accommodate an additional municipality if necessary	• Risk and liability remain with municipalities • All participating municipalities must approve the annual operating and capital budgets • Some loss of autonomy for the participating municipalities • Requires its own administrative structure

Budget approval for the Regional Authority requires all participating municipalities to agree regardless of the size of the required contribution. In other words, budget approval must be unanimous amongst the municipalities. This would mean that the respective Councils would need to approve the Regional Authority budget, including the contribution amount from each municipality. Allocation of costs can occur using any number of formulas. Two of the most common are equalized assessment or population or both. Given the current environment the Regional Authority model is only applicable with the Town of Vauxhall and the Village of Barnwell. The MD will not be engaging in a Regional Authority agreement in the near future.

2b Mutual Aid Agreement

Mutual Aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries. This may occur due to an emergency that exceeds local resources, such as a disaster or a multiple-alarm fire. Mutual Aid may be ad hoc, requested only when an emergency occurs. It may also be a formal standing agreement for cooperative emergency management continuingly, such as ensuring that resources are dispatched from the nearest fire hall, regardless of which side of the jurisdictional boundary the incident is on. Typically, Mutual Aid is reciprocal in nature and may or may not involve the exchange of financial resources.

Mutual Aid Agreements require the municipal authorities to sign the agreement and then the various emergency responders to enact a mutual aid call when necessary. In many locations throughout rural Alberta, the ability to respond to an incident is hindered by personnel's availability, particularly during daytime weekdays when firefighters may not be readily available. Mutual Aid is often used to address this issue.

The advantages and disadvantages of this model are shown below in Table 6:

Table 6 - Intermunicipal Agreement (Mutual Aid)

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Easy to create agreement • Enhanced ability to respond to major incidents • When local resources are unavailable, enables requesting municipality to rely upon its municipal neighbours to assist in service delivery • Provides urban fire departments an opportunity to respond to additional incidents thereby keeping the volunteers interested	• Responding departments may be located long distances away

It is noted that the MD has multiple Mutual Aid Agreements with its neighbours. On the surface, this appears to function for the municipalities, but after reviewing all the documentation, there is the possibility of increased liabilities without proper agreements in place.

The agreements are reciprocal and do not involve any costs in some instances. In other cases, the jurisdiction providing the service, invoices the receiving jurisdiction based upon a predetermined amount identified in the Mutual Aid Agreement.

2c Contract for Services

This form of the inter-municipal agreement involves one municipality agreeing to provide fire protection services to the other on a fee-for-service basis. Usually, the larger municipality has the capacity and resources to provide services to the smaller resource-strapped municipality. The supplying municipality accepts full responsibility for providing the Level of Service the requesting municipality requires.

The advantages and disadvantages of this model are included in Table 7:

Table 7 - Intermunicipal Agreement (Contract for Services)

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Municipalities who have difficulty in recruiting and resourcing a fire department are still able to provide fire protection services to their residents • Becomes one less service area the requesting municipality must administer and manage • Expertise and manpower may not be readily available in the requesting municipality • Simple fee for service • Potential for increased service level	• May have cost consequences that the requesting municipality cannot afford • Requesting municipality now relies upon another jurisdiction to provide the service • Municipality contracting the service no longer has direct control over the provision of services

This governance arrangement can also be found throughout the province, particularly in small urban jurisdictions. The principal reason for this is the inability to recruit a sufficient firefighter base to provide a reliable and consistent Level of Service. Quite simply, there are not enough people around who are interested and willing to commit to train and respond 24/7.

The most compelling reason for adopting this model is that the municipality providing the service typically has at its disposal additional resources that can augment and support the Level of Service required by the receiving municipality. With the existing MD-owned apparatus and equipment located in the area, multiple neighbouring municipalities, and the Town of Taber within the MD boundaries, there is the possibility of using a contract for service if there is a clearly delineated response model, responsibilities, and the ability to recoup costs for either municipality.

The costs associated with a service contract depend on the Level of Service required by the receiving municipality. A clear understanding of the service level is needed so that the providing municipality can quantify its requirements to provide the services.

Each of the above inter-municipal agreement models possesses clear and distinct pros and cons. Each provides a different method for fire protection services. In the first instance, it creates an authority that provides the services. In the second instance, a mutual aid arrangement simply requires the participating municipalities to help one another when needed. And lastly, one municipality provides another municipality the resources to provide some or all the services at a cost. And while examples of all three models can be found throughout the Province, the Mutual Aid Agreement and Contract for Services are much more common than the Regional Authority.

3. Society Model

Under this style of governance, a Society becomes the service provider. It delivers services consistent with its bylaws and objects and those that have been agreed to with the municipality(s) in which the Society intends to operate.

Here is a listing of the advantages and disadvantages in Table 8:

Table 8 - Intermunicipal Agreement (Society)

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Relatively easy to form • Can own property and borrow funds • Separate legal entity • Direct influence by each Council vis-à-vis their respective appointees (assumes Council Members are members and have been appointed to the Society Executive) • Easy to change bylaws and objects	• Board has limited power • No power to requisition

To adopt this style of governance simply requires the municipality(s) to enter into an agreement with an Association (the Society) whereby the Association accepts responsibility for the delivery of specified fire protection services that the municipality(s) require.

The Association will require financial resources to facilitate the delivery of service. This will include operating as well as capital costs. Participating municipalities will be required to contribute funding to the Association's annual budget. Under this model, an Association would need to be created whose purpose would be articulated in its bylaws and objects to match the requirements of the MD and its partners.

The costs associated with this model vary considerably depending upon the service level the participating municipalities require. Adopting this model would require the establishment of an association and the necessary organizational structure.

4. Regional Services Commission Model

A regional services commission requires two or more municipalities to agree to provide a specified service(s). Commissions fall within the sphere of jurisdiction of the province and are covered off in Part 15.1 of the Municipal Government Act.

Here are the advantages and disadvantages of a regional services commission.

Table 9 - Regional Services Commission Model

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Separate legal entity • More efficient and effective deployment of resources for emergency response • Reduction in duplicated services providing cost efficiencies and savings • Participating municipalities continue to have the ability to influence decision making processes vis-à-vis their appointed representatives	• Commission assumes all risk and liabilities • Participating municipalities cannot refuse the requisition • Loss of autonomy

As a distinct legal entity, a Commission would operate at arm's length to both municipalities. The two municipalities would therefore relinquish the provision of fire protection services to the commission, which also would have the authority to requisition municipalities. Both jurisdictions are obligated to provide the commission with the funds contained in the requisition, whether in agreement or disagreement with the amount. That means the commission board (elected councillors from both municipalities) would have the authority to strike its budget and forward it to the two municipalities.

Any existing Fire Service personnel in the MD likely would no longer be employed by the respective municipality. Rather their disposition would be at the commission's call.

There are currently four other regional service commissions in Alberta that provide fire protection services: (i) Beaver Emergency Services Commission: (ii) Central Peace Fire & Rescue Commission; (iii) Foothills Regional Emergency Services Commission; and (iv) Pincher Creek Emergency Services Commission. Each respective commission owns all emergency services buildings, equipment, and apparatus. The quality of service each of these commissions provides continues to be viewed as acceptable and sufficient to meet the needs of residents, ratepayers, and the travelling public.

The costs associated with the operation of a regional services commission would require the creation of an administration along with the necessary resources to deliver the services.

Having identified and examined what options for governance might be candidates for potential consideration, our attention will now shift to further analysis and evaluation of other factors that need to be considered in determining what model might best serve the interests of the MD and beyond.

5.2 Governance Analysis & Observation

One of the first observations made in our analysis has to do with the existence of inter-municipal agreements. While each agreement covers a different aspect of cooperation and collaboration between the municipalities, consolidation of the terms of each agreement into a single inter-municipal agreement has many merits, the least of which would be to reduce the number of agreements to a single document.

Using a 0 – 10 scale continuum, Figure 5 shows how the various models rank relative to collaboration and cooperation. "0" is no collaboration, and "10" is the high collaboration that would see the municipalities become one service.

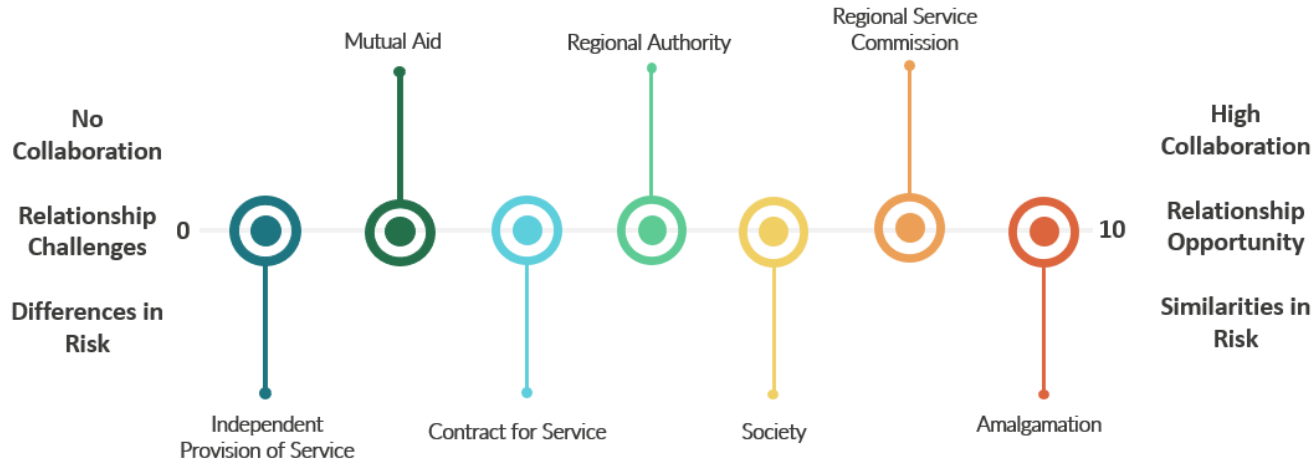


Figure 5 - Municipal Collaboration & Cooperation Continuum

The **Independent Provision of Service Model** sees each municipality doing its own thing and having no regard for how or what the other municipality is doing in providing services. There is no regional collaboration or cooperation. Hence, it's ranking of zero on our continuum.

As we move into the Inter-Municipal Agreement Models, we see collaboration and cooperation enter the fold. Driving along the continuum towards the lower end of the scale is the **Mutual Aid Agreement Model**, which reflects municipalities helping one another out when called upon to address a disaster when the inability of one municipality to mobilize a response such as a multi-alarm incident requires additional resources.

A **Contract for Service Model** is reflective of a higher degree of collaboration & cooperation as one municipality is now providing services to another under a contractual arrangement.

The **Regional Authority Model** goes one step further by creating an administrative entity (albeit not a legal entity) charged with delivering services. Often this can be done by one of the municipalities and involves a secondment, or the Authority can create its own organizational structure. This allows the municipalities to rely upon this entity to deliver the appropriate Level of Service.

Once we reach the **Society Model**, a legal entity has been created that brings another level of cooperative and collaborative efforts to fruition.

A **Regional Service Commission Model** advances the cooperation and collaboration to a higher level again as services are now provided by an autonomous body that has requisitioning powers.

The next and final level of collaboration and cooperation on our continuum (with a ranking of ten on our scale) would be the consolidation of all services into a single municipal entity vis-à-vis an **Amalgamation**. Given that the purpose of this Fire Services Review is to provide an assessment of the Regional Fire Services in the MD of Taber and its wider region, our examination will focus on those models that support collaboration and cooperation within the MD and its respective municipalities and does not include the town of Taber.

To further evaluate which model potentially best suits the MD necessitates a review of some additional considerations. We have identified four factors: (i) operational impacts; (ii) financial considerations; (iii) relationships (trust); and (iv) political will. The decision to determine the best model rests with the MD Council and what Council believes is in its best interests. However, understanding how these four factors stack up provides additional intelligence upon which MD Council might formulate its position.

Operational Considerations

The ability and capacity of each municipality to deliver services varies. Often referred to as operational impacts, these are the things that must be considered when deciding whether to embark on the delivery of a particular service and whether there might be a better way of delivering that service. The kinds of things that require consideration include:

- Is the required human capital available or readily available? Do you have enough personnel to provide the necessary service?
- Is there a sufficient pool of people from which to draw firefighters?
- What kind of an operational & capital budget is required to deliver the desired level of fire protection service?
- Can the municipality afford the service or implement cost-saving measures that help reduce the financial liabilities to the municipality?
- What is an appropriate Level of Service that can be fiscally supported? What is covered in the Fire Protection Bylaw?
- Where does the revenue to provide the service come from?
- What user fees are contemplated/required?
- What kind of buildings and apparatus is required?
- Is this a service that could be contracted out to a third party or neighbouring municipality?
- What risks are associated with the provision of a fire protection service? How can those risks be mitigated?
- What procedures and standard operating procedures need to be incorporated to ensure a safe and healthy work environment? Who will develop these?

These and other questions need to be discussed and answered to ensure that as much due diligence as possible has been completed.

Financial Considerations

Regional Authority

- Requires the creation of an organizational structure along with an administrative component. Likely to result in added costs.
- Requires governance oversight vis-à-vis a board or council. This will result in added costs.
- Cost projections are estimated to increase costs (undetermined at this time). Costs would include but are not limited to: Administrator, Administrative Support, Board/Council Oversight, Audit Fees, Office Costs, etc.
- Costs incurred by each municipality related to fire protection services would be transferred to the Regional Authority. This may or may not result in cost savings to the individual municipalities as the costs are simply moved from one location to another.
- Equalized assessments would be required to calculate contribution amounts.
- Currently, this model is not recommended for the MD.

Mutual Aid Agreement

- The MD and its municipalities have mutually agreed to share in the purchase and use of certain apparatus equally. This has resulted in cost savings to the municipalities.
- Anecdotally and in practice, it appears that the MD and the Town of Taber would benefit from engaging in discussions to work on their existing Agreement while continuing to operate with autonomy.
- A Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town or a neighbouring municipality is based on a cost-recovery model with the expectation of maintaining cost-neutral.
- This is the current model and is supported for the immediate future.

Contract for Service

- The MD could potentially ask another Fire Service to provide an agreed-on Level of Service whereby that Fire Service delivers some fire response services for the MD. Other Fire Services could also agree to have MD responses support their operations.
- This may or may not result in cost savings for the MD. Further detail and analysis are required to make that determination.
- This model may also be supported for immediate and future consideration.

Society

- Requires the creation of a legal entity and organizational structure which can deliver the necessary services.
- This will result in added costs and is not recommended.

Regional Services Commission

- Requires the creation of a legal entity organizational structure that includes an administrative arm and an operational arm. This will result in costs higher than a Regional Authority. Estimated to be in the range of $250K - $350K.
- Individual municipalities usually turn over all capital assets to the Commission, which assumes all liabilities for replacement and acquisition. Likely to result in the creation of capital reserves and therefore have added costs.
- The cost-sharing formula is the same here as is reflected in a Regional Authority model.
- This will result in added costs and can be cumbersome; therefore, it is not recommended.

Three of the models (Regional Authority, Society & Regional Service Commission) all require creating a new organizational structure along with governance oversight vis-à-vis a board or council. These would be new expenditures and would result in higher costs for service delivery. The Mutual Aid Agreement and Contract for Service utilize existing municipal organizational oversight. They potentially could result in some cost savings depending upon the details and conditions of the agreement or contract.

Relationships

As we establish the appropriate model, it is important to note that the Municipal Government Act has recently undergone some significant adjustments. One of those adjustments included the creation of a new preamble at the beginning of the Act. Two "Whereas" clauses speak to the concept of relationships and how important this is to governance in general.

The first "Whereas" says: "Whereas the Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of working together with Alberta's municipalities in a spirit of partnership to cooperatively and collaboratively advance the interests of Albertans generally." The second "Whereas" says: "Whereas the Government of Alberta recognizes that Alberta's municipalities have varying interests and capacity levels that require flexible approaches to support local, inter-municipal and regional needs."" These two statements emphasize just how much relationships are valued and how municipalities must rely upon one another to meet their individual and collective needs. To be successful and have a sustainable governance structure means giving and taking, which requires good working relationships and trust with your municipal neighbours.

It appears that within the MD the municipalities have developed effective operational relationships. It is recommended at this time that the MD and the Town of Taber remain as autonomous entities who operate as required.

Political Will

This is a consideration that must be answered by policymakers and considering all the factors with representation from regional Councils making a concerted effort to decide the future governance model and operational direction.

Decisions can then be made as to which model is most suited for the MD and in the communities' best interests that require the safety and security afforded by the Fire Service.

Governance Conclusions

- Based on the two Regional Authority agreements, there is a desire for the MD to formalize relationships in the area.
- The MD has several partners and endures with the governance currently managed within its boundaries. Given that the current governance model is functional, then the governance could be augmented within the MD boundaries in the future.

5.3 Regionalization: Current vs. Future State

One of the questions many Fire Services will constantly ask themselves is, "will regionalization be the right thing to do?" The question is valid, as there are many benefits, including cost efficiency, consistent operating system, and others. However, moving to regionalization is fraught with countless obstacles that can subterfuge even the best of efforts.

Requirements for risk management in the MD are different compared to the Town of Taber.

However, given the expanse of the MD, the location of the Town and the other municipalities, it is the opinion of TSI that regionalization is a goal worth working towards over the next decade. This statement is not provided lightly as a plan would have to be developed with the right conditions and the right people, all going in the right direction. Given the current state, this direction will apply when the political will for foundational relationships is sought between the MD and the Town.

If there ever is a desire to regionalize Fire Services in the area, the timing would depend on the capability and the willingness to do this in the future. This project requires all services to be ready and at a specific capability level. Figure 6 below shows a capability model that demonstrates some of the requirements for each service to consider before a project plan is developed to regionalize Fire Services.

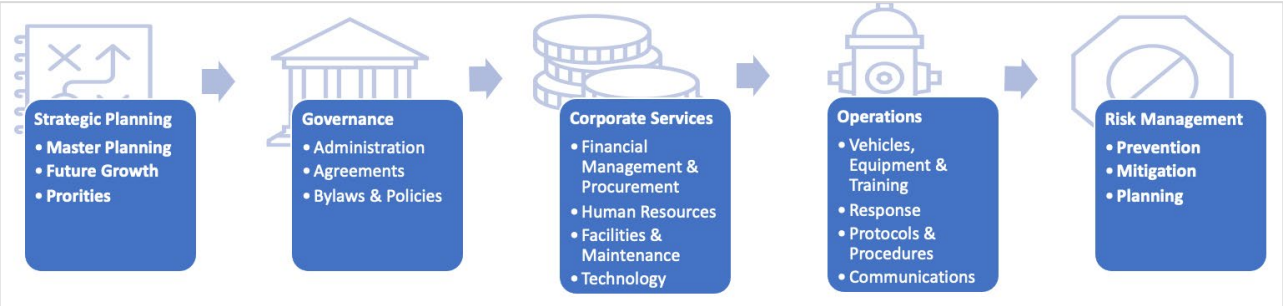


Figure 6 - Capability Model

Capabilities

1. **Strategic Alignment** refers to the continual alignment of organizational priorities and processes, enabling the achievement of goals:
    - Master Planning – the capability of having aligned future directions across both departments.
    - Future Growth and development – both municipalities are expanding and contracting at similar rates.
    - Priorities – strategic directions similarity.

2. **Governance** establishes relevant and transparent accountability and decision-making processes to align direction and guide actions:
    - Administration – municipalities have appropriate roles and responsibilities to support all operations and agreements, providing symmetry for administration and operations.
    - Bylaws – aligning of complete Fire Service bylaws.
    - Policies – aligning of appropriate administrative and operational policies.

3. **Corporate Services** are the support services outside the functions of the Fire Service:
    - Financial Management – aligning implementation of processes and reporting for finances.
    - Human Resources – aligning functions of recruitment, remuneration, training, etc.
    - Procurement – recognized transparent processes of purchasing materials and capital equipment.
    - Maintenance – refers to the service of preventative and emergency maintenance for equipment, vehicles, and facilities.
    - Technology – infrastructure that supports communications and information and data management.

- Facilities – availability and location of facilities for optimal response performance.

4. **Operational capabilities** are those which display an alignment of how departments are established to function together:
    - Equipment – how well is common firefighting equipment aligned (ex. Hose size and couplings, SCBA, etc.).
    - Training – alignment of training initiatives.
    - Response Protocols and Procedures – refers to the alignment of how departments manage fire incidents through written and understood protocols and procedures.
    - Communications – to what level is there a common operating and communicating system in place during incidents.
    - Vehicles – references the alignment of vehicles and their functions across departments.

5. **Risk Management** is the alignment and capability of departments to mitigate, prepare and plan for risks and incidents.
    - Mitigation and Prevention –the level and types of risk and hazards identified (isolation or regionally).
    - Planning – how is the planning for mitigation and prevention prepared.

Collaboration/Alignment with Capability Scale

A collaboration/capability alignment model, as shown in Figure 7, can be used to simplify and clarify where a region is currently at with collaboration and how it pertains to capabilities. If the political and administrative will is to regionalize a Fire Service, this model can be used to understand how much effort will be needed to provide an environment and promote the success of regionalization.

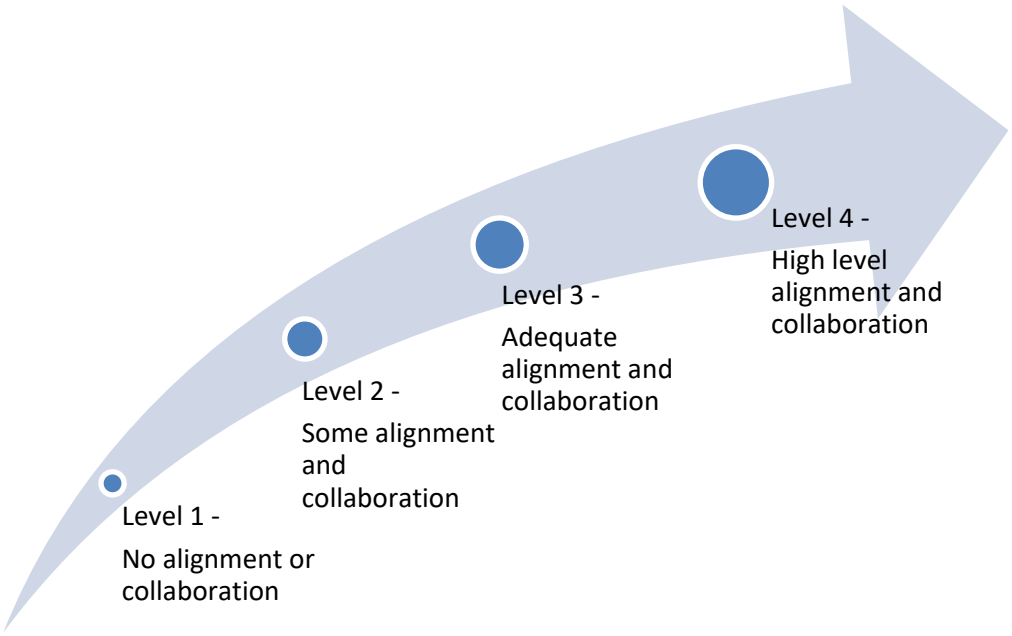


Figure 7 - Collaboration Capability Scale

To use the model, representatives from all municipalities should review the capabilities and rate the level, from 1-4 of collaboration/alignment with each capability. For example, if two neighbouring municipalities operate under separate bylaws which have been developed in isolation of each other, it can be safe to say the collaboration is at level 1. Another example could be with training, if the two municipalities operate under the same training plan and firefighters constantly train together, the training capability under Human Resources could be measured at a level 4.

This basic model, which can be modified, is only provided to help provide context on the level of collaboration/alignment. Once the initial exercise of rating the current state is completed the municipalities should sit down and establish the desired state and review what it might take to increase the level of collaboration/alignment to achieve that level. The risk at this junction is that municipalities may desire higher than required levels of collaboration, which may jeopardize planning efforts because the scope or cost is too great (example: going from no training completed together, a level 1, to weekly training between both municipalities, a level 4). Reasonable considerations should be made at this step to ensure a clear understanding of where each municipality is at and where they can rationally be with alignment.

Once the current and desired states are established, planning could commence on each capability to develop initiatives and projects for collaboration/alignment.

Based on this model, TSI's assessment of the MD and the town of Taber is at a Level 1 and will remain that way into the future. However, the MD, town, village, and hamlets contained within appear to operate at a Level 3, therefore this collaboration could be enhanced through improved agreements to achieve a Level 4.

5.4 Administration

The organizational structure of the MD Fire Services is typical with a Fire Chief reporting to the CAO and Deputies providing support. Administratively this is functional for the MD with a couple of items where TSI noted that this reporting structure may not be adhered to; first is that the agreements in place with both Vauxhall and Barnwell identify the Authority having the responsibility in identifying the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief, second is that it appears policy makers do tend to intervene on affairs of the Fire Chief at times. These are two significant items which could cause conflict from budget to operations. It is understandable that policy makers want to focus on how a service is delivered but this direction should be established through the CAO and no one else. This allows for the CAO to manage through the Fire Chief based on their efforts in planning and implementing. The CAO's position in any municipality for Fire Services is to take Council's direction for risk management and provide the Fire Chief with direction. In an out-of-date document "Establishing and Operating a Fire Department" the province of Alberta even stated for the Fire Chief role "Leave policy-making to the elected officials but understand your role in its development." The same can be said for policy makers.

The second level of administration is how the Fire Chief works down through the ranks. TSI noted there are some naming conventions that could assist the region. The Fire Chief has the accountability to ensure the department uses its resources effectively and efficiently, all other ranks are responsible to provide the Fire Chief with information on what, how, where, and why resources are being used to ensure the department is meeting its mandates. In the MD, TSI noticed that the Station Chief rank causes a bit of confusion of establishing a flat organization with no perceived chain of command.

5.5 Governance & Administration Recommendations

The following recommendations and schedule are in support of a strong and sustainable governance model:

1. For the purposes of working on their existing Agreement, initiate discussions with the Town of Taber with the intent of clarifying roles and responsibilities and with a focus on operating with autonomy. This will address both municipalities' risk profiles, administrative similarities, and differences, and continues to meet or exceed the Level of Service in both municipalities. This will also allow autonomy to both Fire Services and simplify communications and administration.

2. The MD develop either a template agreement for all the municipalities in the area, or a Master Agreement for all to sign.

3. Policy makers from all regional municipalities meet for facilitated direction setting. A strategic course is developed to improve collaboration within the region based on the capability model, this could begin as a simple cost for service or mutual aid service and develop into a regional model.

4. The MD consider changing the rank nomenclature. This will provide a clear chain of command for consistent reporting and authority structure. The Fire Chief can establish an organization structure via OG (e.g., Regional Chiefs, Station Chiefs, Captains). Clear communication to the rank and file will be critical to manage change.

5. For the immediate future, that the MD review and finalize clear mutual aid agreements. Include all applicable municipalities for response and other activities.

6.0 Level of Service

6.0 Level of Service

It is the responsibility of Council to provide the direction for the development of a fire department and ensure that the budgets match the Level of Service. The primary document for this guidance is the Fire Services Bylaw 1956 that outlines the basic expectations, and the Level of Service Policy which is contained in OG 3 - Level of Service Bylaw. The requirements and services identified in these two documents must be supported by an adequate budget to meet the expectations of the standards and Occupational Health and Safety requirements. Higher levels of service require different equipment, training, best practices, etc. The higher the Level of Service is, the greater the budget required to meet the standards and best practices.

Service levels determine the staffing level, the equipment required and the training level. No report can determine the citizen's level of risk acceptance, but the realities of budget must be weighed against the risk.

6.1 LOS Overview

The MD of Taber's current Operational Guideline (OG) #3 Level of Service Bylaw addresses all Stations and areas as the same risk for each area, as shown in Table 9:

Table 10 - Emergency Services Levels and Standards

EMERGENCY SERVICE PROVIDED	LEVEL OR STANDARD
Fire Fighting Services:	
In House Training	NFPA 1001 Level 1, 2 & 472 Awareness & Ops
Pre-Emergency Planning	
Fire Fighting - Structural	NFPA 1001- Level 2
Fire Fighting – Interior Attack** (1)	NFPA 1001 – Level 2 with Exceptions**(1)
Fire Fighting - Wildland/Urban Interface	NFPA 1001 – Level 2, NFPA 1051
Incident Command Services	ICS 100, 200
Rescue Services	
Motor Vehicle Collisions, Vehicle Extrication	NFPA 1006
Trench Rescue	Awareness Only ** (2)
Hazardous Materials Response	NFPA 1072 Operation
Confined Space Rescue	Awareness Only ** (2)
Rope Rescue (Low Angle Rescue Only)	Awareness Only ** (2)
Power Lines Down/Electrical Hazards	Awareness Only ** (2)
Building Collapse	Awareness Only ** (2)
Ice Rescue	Operations
Swift/Fast Water Rescue	Awareness Only ** (2)
Medical First Response	Assist on scene EMS crew only **(3)
Other Services:	
Public Services	(Fire Pit Complaints, Alarms, Unknown Odours)
Mutual & Automatic Aid Responses	(As per existing Agreements & Protocols)
Public Safety Education	Fire prevention week, fire hall tours, smoke detector program
Inspections/Investigations	BFSCO – Follow guidelines of NFPA 921 & 1433

** *(1)* Interior attack is only permitted for firefighters that are NFPA 1001 Level 2 trained. Level 1 may also enter under the direct supervision of a Level 2 1001 firefighter. If, however, there are no NFA 1001 Level 2 firefighters on scene or the event is deemed unsafe by the IC or there are not enough resources on scene to handle the event, the structural interior attack reverts to defensive action only.

** *(2)* Awareness Definition: The Department is there to ensure scene safety while waiting for assistance from a defined mutual aid partner trained in the type of rescue/recovery needed.

** *(3)* Medical First Response Definition: The department will assist an EMS crew when the EMS crew is already on scene with a patient. Including lift assistance and a properly licensed driver in a critical situation. The department will not first respond when EMS is not available.

The following were revised, reviewed, and approved by the RFA Committee on Oct 29, 2014:

- July 7, 2014 - Wildland S-100G added to Level of Service standard.
- July 30, 2014 - added inspections/investigations as suggested by QMP auditor.
- March 6, 2015 - **awareness definition added (2).
- August 17, 2015 - ** added Medical First Response and description to Level of Service Bylaw.
- September 16, 2015 - Policy was reviewed and changes made approved by RFA Committee.
- December 1, 2016 - Policy was reviewed, no changes made.
- February 7, 2017 - Guideline revised, updated purpose, scope & policy tabs due to all the new training that had taken place in 2016/2017. All operational guidelines include all departments, Enchant, Grassy Lake, Hays MD of Taber Regional and Vauxhall Regional Fire Departments.
- May 2019 - revised wordings to new upcoming NFPA standards for vehicle extrication 1006 and Hazmat 1072.

The service level review is based on industry best practices, the safety of first responders, NFPA standards including NFPA 1720, medical first response, current and future capability, and capacity. An all-hazards integrated approach to preparedness for the provision of fire and emergency service will help the MD to define its current and future service levels. The service level must be achievable and sustainable. The Level of Service can be designed as an absolute minimum requirement Level of Service that the Fire Department should meet or exceed. It should not be considered as a limiting tool but rather a starting point in efforts to exceed expectations and enhance service to the community provided by the MD of Taber Fire Service.

"THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SHALL EVALUATE ITS LEVEL OF SERVICE DEPLOYMENT DELIVERY AND RESPONSE TIME OBJECTIVES ON AN ANNUAL BASIS." – NFPA 1720

To properly establish a Level of Service it is essential to understand the risks and hazards within the municipality as discussed earlier in this report.

After initial statistical evaluations of the Fire Service, it appears that the MD is trained and equipped to deal with the most predominant risks which are grass fires, structural fire suppression, and motor vehicle collisions. This includes the life safety of occupants and firefighters, confinement and extinguishment of the fires and conservation of property.

There is however a noted service provision gap that was identified through interviews and experience in the response areas. The first responders are starting to understand the request for service in medical

response and actual service expectations on arrival has an unintended impact on themselves, the patients and community. Currently there is a 2015 amendment to the existing OG #3 Level of Service Bylaw that states: *August 17/15 ** Added Medical First Response and description to Level of Service Bylaw. Policy was reviewed and changes made approved by RFA Committee Sept 16, 2015.*

The OG additionally states that they will provide Medical First Response assistance with on-scene crews. The reality is the departments are increasingly being called to medical calls when there is a shortage of EMS personnel or a delay in EMS attendance. While dispatch only dispatches the MD Fire Departments for an EMS assist, EMS is calling for assistance if they are delayed in response and will be a while to attend the patient. This leads to confusion on the part of the first responders who understand they will be on scene to help EMS only to discover they are attending the scene without EMS and are responsible for patient care until EMS arrives.

TSI recommends that the MD formally join the Alberta Medical First Response Program through Alberta Health Services (AHS) which has a responsibility to ensure patient care is delivered safely and is committed to ensuring responders are trained, prepared, and supported to deliver that care. The Alberta MFR Program includes:

- Provincial standards for MFR service delivery
- Support for the people and agencies providing MFR
- Ensuring safe patient care with medical oversight and patient care guidelines

Enrollment in the program would ensure that each Fire Station in coordination with the Regional Chief could manage its own level of care and type of response they are prepared to provide while allowing them to be trained, supported and confident in a safe response. TSI found that the request for medical response was diversified in the municipality and overall, the responders themselves did not want an increase in calls for what they considered a non-essential service (broken finger vs. cardiac events). There was a strong desire to respond to serious calls for help if EMS was delayed or needed assistance. The MFR program allows them to choose their response levels, so they attend only serious events as was identified by the responders. Council can support the request for service in the MD while allowing the responders to comfortably choose a response that suits the needs and safety of the residents and responders alike.

A defined Level of Service is a document approved by Council in the form of a Bylaw or standard operating procedure based on the service expectation of the local government. The Level of Service document should be based on current and future analysis of readiness including resource availability and reliability, and the distribution of these resources. Several components should be considered as part of a Level of Service document including but not limited to:

- The incident/event types that the MD is prepared and capable to respond to, and whether it is a core service or a specialty service.
- The level of response (defensive, offensive, or full operations) for the specific event type.
- The minimum staffing required for response.
- The minimum training or skill required to perform the service.
- Specifying necessary apparatus required for each type of response.
- Expectation of accountability regarding response time and capability (response within 20 minutes, 85 percent of the time).
- The standard (awareness, operations, or technical) that each specialty service will be expected to perform to, such as common passenger vehicle, high angle, or water/ice rescue.

- Which comprehensive services the MD provides such as fire prevention & public education, fire inspection and/or fire investigation.

Table 11 is one example of what can be included as part of a Level of Service document. Refer to Appendix C Level of Service for a fully built out sample LOS.

Table 11 - Level of Service Metrics

Service or System	Service Type	Description	Required Skills	Comments
Fire Suppression - Structural Exterior Operations Staff required- minimum 3	Core Service	Ability to respond and attempt a defensive exterior fire attack of a common structure	Based on NFPA 1001. Water Supply; Hydrant use; Extinguish Class 'A' fires; Salvage; Overhaul; Hose line use; Scene preservation; SCBA use	**Compulsory** Optimal staff of 4 for more

Current reports indicate that the MD has responded to and reported on the following event types over the past two years (see *Figure 8 2020-2021 Summary and Year-End Reports* in Operations, page 57):

- Grass/brush rubbish fires
- Motor Vehicle Collisions
- Structure Fires
- Alarm/no fire
- False alarms
- Hazmat
- Miscellaneous calls (likely medical responses)

As part of the development of the Level of Service document, each of the above services should be scrutinized to determine whether they should be part of the defined Level of Service. They should also be aligned with Bylaw 1956.

TSI has identified several gaps in training associated with noted services within the existing LOS document. M.D. of Taber Council should ensure that the services indicated in the current, approved Level of Service document, do not invoke increased liability through overreach in assumed capability and capacity. A Level of Service document should be targeted to core services. The addition of specialty and other services should only be added to the LOS document after a clearly demonstrated need, and careful consideration of the costs associated with required equipment, training and skill maintenance of each specialty or additional service. TSI strongly suggests a review of the example service level document in Appendix C.

TSI recommends that Council review the Level of Service in consultation with fire services administration to consider amendments to the Level of Service to include:

- Minimum staffing requirement (non-negotiable) for each incident type
- Identify essential core services
- Identify any specialty, optional or additional services
- Consider potential liability issues of existing services within the document

6.2 LOS Recommendations

1. The MD engage the Fire Service to complete a thorough risk and hazard assessment. This will align the service level with the region's risk assessment.

2. The MD Administration consider the use of the following evaluation tool and resources to assist with the development of a Level of Service document and supporting training matrix:
   - Alberta Fire Chiefs Association's Fire Service Community Planning and Emergency Response: Community Risk Assessment Core Competency Framework and Toolkit: https://abfirechiefs.ca

3. Amend the Operational Guideline to reflect the risk assessment, and recommendations.

4. Remove OG #3 and add it as an appendix to the Bylaw.

5. Rewrite Bylaw 1956 to include the appendix Level of Service.

6. Enroll in the MFR program as part of the Level of Service. Automatic aid can be utilized to mitigate capacity concerns while the MFR certification meets service expectations.

7.0 Operations

7.0 Operations

This section will focus on all aspects affecting operational activities within the MDTRFS that culminates in the service provided to all stakeholders. It will analyse the correlation and links between operations, training, the current Level of Service, and the overall perceived effectiveness of service delivery. Recommendations garnered from the review and analysis will be based on NFPA standards, targeted toward the use of best practices, overall operational safety, and continuous improvement over time. The main topics of review will include:

- General operations including response protocols & models
- Internal communications
- Incident Management
- Staffing: Staffing levels, recruitment, and retention
- Training and its effectiveness in supporting operations
- Logistics: Management of fleet maintenance, apparatus, equipment, and PPE
- Fire prevention and public education
- Infrastructure: Fire halls and radio communication systems

7. 1 Response

The current state of response begins with the page out from dispatch. This is followed by the reaction of available staff who make their way to the fire station, decide who will respond, prepare themselves, mount the apparatus, begin the en-route navigation, arrive at the incident, and begin the process of mitigation, assistance, and service with the expectation of reaching the best possible outcome. MDTRFS administration and staff should be commended for the response and service they continue to provide for stakeholders.

Although current response appears adequate, it is not structured for effectiveness or efficiency. There may be procedures that can enhance deployment capabilities and the efficiency of incident response.

There are no statistics or metrics available to determine a baseline for evaluation of response. Time is generally at the forefront in analysis of response, but ultimately, in a rural area or demand zone, time may be an over-valued statistic in this regard. Of greater importance is a response model or system to organize the response which, if effective, can streamline and accelerate response while guaranteeing adequate staffing, improved safety of responders, the public and superior service overall.

Generally, response models or protocols, based on NFPA 1720, are designed by Fire Service administration for each of the services identified in its Level of Service document. Key factors of a response model include:

- Incident type
- Minimum staffing requirement
- Apparatus requirement
- Response time objectives; chute time, travel time, time to initial attack or service provision after arrival
- Automatic and Mutual Aid
- Coordination through dispatch services

Response standards are identified in NFPA 4.3.2. Our recommendations are based on response into rural and remote demand zones as described in NFPA Table 4.3.2, Staffing and Response Time.

Table 12 - NFPA 4.3.2. Staffing and Response Time for Volunteer Departments

Δ Table 4.3.2 Staffing and Response Time

Demand Zone[a]	Demographics	Minimum Staff to Respond[b]	Response Time (minutes)[c]	Meets Objective (%)
Urban area	>1000 people/mi² (2.6 km²)	15	9	90
Suburban area	500–1000 people/mi² (2.6 km²)	10	10	80
Rural area	<500 people/mi² (2.6 km²)	6	14	80
Remote area	Travel distance ≥ 8 mi (12.87 km)	4	Directly dependent on travel distance	90
Special risks	Determined by AHJ	Determined by AHJ based on risk	Determined by AHJ	90

[a]A jurisdiction can have more than one demand zone.
[b]Minimum staffing includes members responding from the AHJ's department and automatic aid
[c]Response time begins upon completion of the dispatch notification and ends at the time interval shown in the table.

According to the MDTRFS Level of Service Bylaw, incident types requiring designed response models or protocols include:

- Fire Fighting – Structural
- Fire Fighting - Wildland/Urban Interface
- Motor Vehicle Collisions, Vehicle Extrication
- Trench Rescue
- Hazardous Materials Response
- Confined Space Rescue (e.g., Animal Rescue, Grain Bin)
- Rope Rescue (Low Angle Rescue Only)
- Power Lines Down/Electrical Hazards
- Building Collapse
- Ice Rescue
- Swift/Fast Water Rescue
- Medical First Response
- Mutual & Automatic Aid Responses

Many of these services listed in the Bylaw are extended, non-core services that require significant training, specialized equipment, and possible recertification. These services include hazardous materials response, vehicle extrication, ice, and swift water rescue. There is concern that the region does not have the capacity or capability to offer these extended services, which can create a liability for the municipalities.

Essential to response and service delivery are adequate numbers of properly trained staff. This allows for safe, efficient, and effective operations in dangerous and hazardous conditions. Current staffing in Station 4 (Taber), Station 5 (Vauxhall) and Station 2 (Grassy Lake) appears adequate and stable to provide consistent and effective response capability. Station 1 (Hays), Station 3 (Enchant) and Station 7(Barnwell) have limited staff and therefore limited response capability. This perceived limited capability in response can be addressed using automatic aid which is currently in place between Stations 4 and 7 only.

Each response will require specific apparatus. It is up to MDTRFS to determine the type and the number of apparatus needed for each incident type, and from which station they will respond.

Response time objectives should be considered as part of the overall response model to determine the overall effectiveness of all aspects of response. Setting realistic and sustainable goals with respect to total dispatch times, chute times and initial attack or service allows Fire Service administration to measure performance and identify trends. Analysis of this information enables Fire Service administration to identify gaps and trends, as well as celebrate milestones and successes in overall response and operational performance.

Adequately incorporated into a response model/protocol, Automatic Aid allows for the potential of improved service by providing adequate staffing and apparatus on scene which ensures that an effective response force is available upon or shortly after arrival. It also provides an integrated approach to preparedness based on capability and capacity of MDTFRS. Currently, automatic, or mutual aid is requested either en-route or on arrival, which potentially delays response and arrival of vital staff and equipment essential for effective initial attack or rescue of those in imminent danger.

Fire Service administration must also ensure that automatic and mutual aid concepts are understood by all staff and dispatch services. To incorporate automatic aid (NFPA 1720 – A3.3.2.1) dispatch protocols will need to be amended and updated to be “Automatic”. This will ensure that the correct resources are dispatched simultaneously for the incident type. Automatic aid has the potential to increase total call volumes, but as a rule automatic aid is superior in addressing identified risks, specifically in rural and remote response zones where staffing is a challenge.

Part of a successful response protocol is effective internal communications. Fire Service administration must communicate to all staff their vision and expectations for the model. Staff must clearly understand the reasoning for the changes and the immediate and future expectations of administration. Ultimately, it all leads to ensuring that MDTRFS continues to deliver exceptional fire and emergency services to the public using modern proactive methods, continuous evaluation, and improvement.

Readiness is another component critical to the response. How much time we provide to maintain a state of readiness is fundamentally essential to maintain regular response and service. Training nights vary from station to station. Some train weekly, bi-weekly, and some only once per month. This inconsistency may create inadequacies in proficiency, vehicle and equipment checks and is a deviation from best practices.

All these aspects of response are critical elements of any community risk reduction plan.

Response Recommendations

1. The MD of Taber or the MDTRFS initiates and conduct a community risk assessment to identify and understand all risks and hazards in the region.

2. MDTRFS administration develops response models/protocols for the regional service to establish a standard of cover as part of a community risk reduction plan. This response model/protocol should include 'Automatic Aid' as a critical component. For example, Dispatch has clear direction to dispatch two engines, three tenders and a Chief to a structure fire, regardless of location of the apparatus. It is based on "next, closest and available" to the incident scene. This is defined in an operational procedure.

3. MDTRFS establishes regular (quarterly, semi-annual, or annual) business meetings with all Officers and staff to ensure internal communications within the MDTRFS are consistent and effective. This allows senior staff to understand and relate the fire department's business, budget, and operational aspects.

4. MDTRFS reviews its records management to include key performance indicators that, in the future, will provide capabilities for evaluation of performance and the effectiveness and efficiency of services provided. The records management system should also include the ability to maintain human resource and training records and some form of inventory management that provides for tracking of apparatus, PPE, tools, and equipment.

5. To maintain an acceptable state of readiness, weekly training nights should be consistent at all fire stations and in coordination with the Regional Chief's expectations.

7.2 Infrastructure

Fire Halls

The MDTRFS strategically deploys its apparatus from six fire stations located in four separate municipalities:

- Station No. 1 in the Hamlet of Hays
- Station No. 2 in the Hamlet of Grassy Lake
- Station No. 3 in the Hamlet of Enchant
- Station No. 4 in the MD of Taber
- Station No. 5 in the Town of Vauxhall
- Station No. 7 in the Village of Barnwell

Since the regional service was formed in 2016, the MD of Taber has made significant investments in fire station infrastructure including new construction and major renovations to fire stations. The trend continues with a planned renovation to Station No. 1 in Hays. This investment in Fire Service infrastructure has been well received and is greatly appreciated by the Administration and staff throughout the MDTRFS. During the engagement process however, it was brought to our attention that a new Fire Station No. 4 – Taber, was to be built, but has not come to fruition.

All stations are internet capable, with workstations available for reporting, training, and electronic communication purposes. Station technology also includes radio systems. The MD of Taber is responsible for the maintenance of all fire stations within the MD (Stations 1, 2, 3, and 4). The Town of Vauxhall and Village of Barnwell maintain their stations.

A complete breakdown of each Fire Station is available in Appendix B.

Other Infrastructure

Because of the lack of water supply, the MDTRFS depends on sources of water which includes bulk water dispensing stations, irrigation systems and natural bodies of water such as rivers, lakes, ponds, and dugouts.

The MD of Taber operates four bulk water dispensing stations; Grassy Lake, Hays, Enchant and Vauxhall.

In the spring and summer months (mid-April to mid-October) MDTRFS has access to three irrigation Districts; the Taber Irrigation District, Bow River Irrigation District and St. Mary's Irrigation District. All three irrigation districts allow MDTRFS access to water risers/hydrants at noted locations within the districts.

The Town of Vauxhall also offers an ideal fire department training facility. It is located at a former pump station and adjacent reservoir, is fenced, has accommodation for a classroom and is removed from any nearby residential development. It provides ample space for outside evolutions and a building for training in structure fires.

Dispatch & Communications

Emergency dispatch is provided under contract with the Taber Police Service. This is a state of the art enhanced 911 dispatch service supporting the Taber Police Service and MD of Taber Fire Rescue Service. Dispatch staff are familiar with Fire Service benchmarks. Dispatch administration is looking into the 'Blue Card Command' training, specific for dispatchers in support of on scene fire command operations.

The radio system used by the MDTRFS is owned and maintained by the MD. Approval has been reached to join the provincial AFRRCS radio communications system; the migration should take place this year (2022). All front-line apparatus are equipped with mobile radios (Motorola). All stations are equipped with VHF portable radios (Kenwood) for on scene emergency and operational communications. Each station is now equipped with two AFFRCS capable portable radios as well.

Conclusion

From an operational point of view, all fire stations are adequate for the current service model and should remain so for many more years. The Enchant and Grassy Lake Stations have very limited space that could restrict the type and size of new or future apparatus, but in general terms, within the Fire Service, adequate space is always an issue.

Where the stations lack operationally, is in the areas of OHS and the health and wellness of staff. Although strides have been made in this regard, such as the addition of washrooms with showers and laundry facilities, there are many more station improvements that can enhance the safety, health, and wellbeing of fire department staff.

Strategically, we cannot change the locations of the fire stations and so it remains a function of Fire Service administration to devise the best plan of action that will optimize response and service to all districts.

Overall, the MDTRFS has done a remarkably good job with its Fire Service Infrastructure. Looking forward, long-range strategic planning may allow for capital funding of new projects or the building of a new state of the art fire station.

Infrastructure Recommendations

1. Future renovations and construction focus on using modern Fire Service practices to maximize operational efficiency. Review and include proven occupational health and safety initiatives as an equally important factor during planning and construction. For example, a fire hall renovation will need to comply with OHS requirements specific to fire hall construction standards.

2. Install backup generators to all, or key fire stations, within the MD. This ensures operational readiness and the ability to maintain adequate service during times when major incidents or disasters may affect communications and the availability of utilities.

3. Should the MDTRFS continue to lease Fire Station 4 and the administration champion a renovation with the existing landlord that would allow for a classroom/academy on the second-floor common space.

7.3 Apparatus & Equipment

Apparatus

The MDTRFS clearly understands the needs of apparatus specific to their mission. The apparatus compliments the regional mission with utter consistency, focused on structure and wildland fire suppression, as well as response to motor vehicle collisions.

With challenging water supply issues throughout the MD, much of the focus is based on using Engines with higher capacity tanks as well as Tenders equipped with integral fire pumps. Districts that include suburban areas including Taber, Vauxhall, Grassy Lake, and Barnwell employ Engines with higher water tank capacities in a type of hybrid approach, which addresses the needs of structural and wildland firefighting.

Rural areas focus on dual axle Tenders with high water carrying capacity and integrated fire pumps. Some are 4x4 units as well.

Image 1 - MDTRFS – Barnwell Engine

Image 2 - MDTRFS – Enchant Engine

Image 3 - MDTRFS – Grassy Lake Tender

Rescue units are based on heavy duty pickup truck chassis and cab (Ford and Ram 5500 series), with aluminum body for equipment organization and stowage. All are crew cab, dual wheel, and four-wheel drive. These Units carry an incredible array of firefighting and rescue tools and equipment.

Image 4 - MDTRFS - Taber Rescue Unit

Wildland units are also based on the pickup truck chassis and cab design (Chevrolet and Ram 3500 series) with aluminum flat deck. All are equipped with either a purpose designed skid unit or similar in-house design. Each have foam capability, plastic water tank (Av.1200 litres), gas powered Honda water pumps and booster reels all centered between bilaterally mounted tool/equipment compartments. Most are crew cab (capacity of 4 or more), dual wheel and four-wheel drive. All are equipped for towing.

The fleet also includes service vehicles for the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief. Both are half ton trucks with limited towing capacity. A Ford F-350 located in Hays could be considered a rapid attack vehicle/service vehicle geared toward support and medical response. There are two enclosed tandem

Image 5 - MDTRFS - Hays Wildland Unit

axle trailers included as part of the apparatus inventory. The Incident Command Post Trailer is located at Station 4 - Taber, and the Emergency Livestock Response Trailer is located at Station 5 - Vauxhall.

All fleet maintenance is carried out by the MD of Taber Public Works Department and the fleet appears to be very well maintained. Responses from the survey did not indicate any significant issues regarding fleet servicing issues. Annual fire pump testing is contracted to an outside agency. A capital plan for the replacement of apparatus was not reviewed. Information garnered for this Fire Master Plan suggested that the Fleet of Engines/Tenders are moderately aged, in other words, most of the Engines/Tenders are in the second half of a suggested 25-year service cycle. Not enough information was available to evaluate the remainder of the fleet, but there is an apparatus capital replacement strategy in place. There are no hard and fast rules for replacement of apparatus, NFPA 1911, 5.1.1 simply states that safety should be the primary concern in the retirement of emergency vehicles.

All front-line apparatus are fitted with Panasonic tablets, used for generating digital mapping, routing, and tracking response information. Suggestions from the members survey indicate that the digital mapping and other capabilities of the tablets are intermittent. Digital platforms in the fire apparatus can at times be temperamental simply because of the environment in which they are placed. The MD of Taber IT department works closely with the Fire Service to ensure this technology is very effective and reliable. Lack of training on the use of tablets or staff not being comfortable using technology may be contributors to problems with their use. All units are equipped with mobile radios (Motorola).

In conclusion, the apparatus of the MDTRFS are certainly well maintained. The current apparatus are well suited for the designed missions and meet the needs of the Fire Service in support of the LOS. Most apparatus have the capacity to carry an effective response force to ensure adequate service on arrival to a fire or emergency scene. Consistency in design, especially with wildland units and rescues allows for familiarity in the operations and use of the apparatus by all staff in the region. The Fire Chief indicated the possibility of forming an apparatus committee to design and procure future apparatus that fulfills current and future requirements and provides consistency throughout the region. Apparatus standards for the Fire Service are based on NFPA documents and best practices. Industry standards for fire apparatus include NFPA 1901 for Engines and Rescues, and NFPA 1906 for Wildland apparatus. All Fire Services use innovative and creative ways to try and maintain fiscal responsibility when it comes to apparatus needs, but every attempt should be taken to maintain industry standards and certification, particularly when safety is involved.

Equipment & Technology

A cursory evaluation of tools, equipment, and mobile technology used by the MDTRFS revealed that generally, all equipment is of industry standard, well maintained and cared for. Survey results indicated some minor issues with equipment, but nothing that raised any significant concerns. The minor issues with the equipment are likely based on infrequent use or infrequent equipment checks. TSI's view is that monthly apparatus and equipment checks are too infrequent, don't support readiness, and are not considered as best practice, resulting in these types of issues.

All major equipment including ladders, hose and PPE meets industry standards (NFPA 1971 & 1984). Turnout gear ensembles are sourced through suppliers including "Globe', 'InnoTex' and 'Bullard'. Specific wildland PPE is also part of inventory including two-piece ensembles, hard hats, and safety footwear. SCBA harnesses and air bottles are of the newest variety supplied by MSA (FireHawk series). Thermal Imaging Cameras (Flir & MSA) and gas detection instruments (MSA Altair 4X) are also part of

the inventory. The rescue tools are of the latest eDRAULIC and hydraulic type and are placed in all stations except for Station 1 - Hays. Equipment is mounted and stowed appropriately. Equipment checks normally completed on paper have recently been changed to the digital format allowing for issues to be identified and resolved more efficiently.

Portable radios (Kenwood) are used with the existing regional VHF system. These are supplemented with two digital Motorola portables per station for use with the AFFRCS radio system. With the migration to AFFRCS scheduled for this year, all new portables will be supplied by Motorola.

It is assumed that records pertinent to the inspection, maintenance and service life span of equipment and PPE is being maintained.

Apparatus & Equipment Recommendations

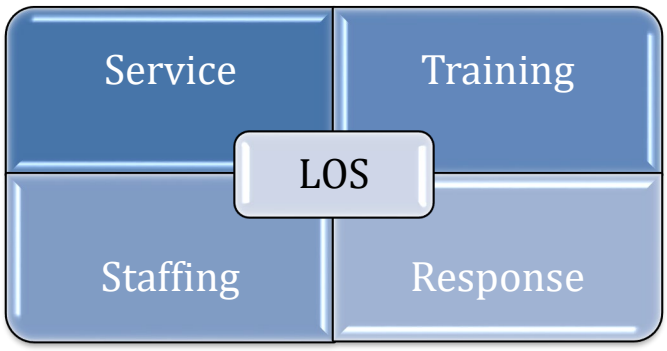
1. MDTRFS conduct a complete and accurate inventory. Include all tools, equipment and PPE and update inventories as part of asset management initiatives.

2. The implementation of an equipment inventory system to accurately track all tools, equipment, PPE, and apparatus. This should be integrated in an overall records management system and is integral to the management and logistics of this high cost and in some cases, perishable items.

3. That Fire Service administration analyzes the functionality of the Panasonic tablets. Take steps to ensure they function as designed and that training in their use is provided to all Officers.

7.4 Training

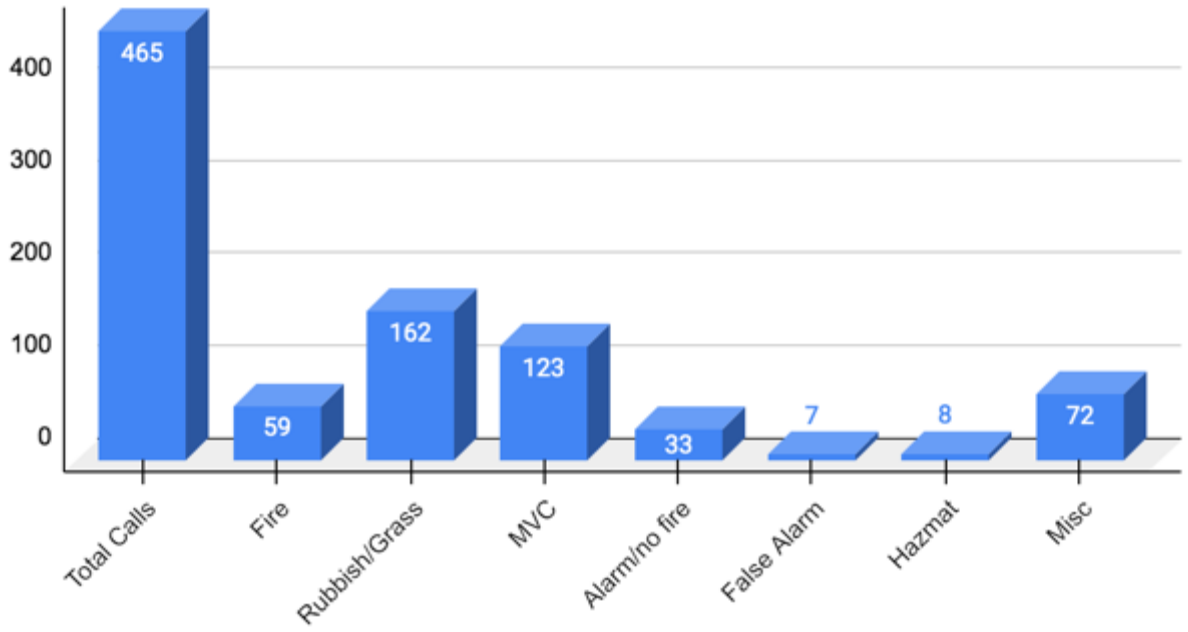
Training is a cornerstone of effective Fire Service delivery. Second only to human resources, training provides the means to achieve desired results and outcomes. Training is a constant in the Fire Service and provides the necessary skills used to achieve proficiency and effectively provide fire suppression services and the mitigation of a multitude of emergencies. In reality, it is one of the principal challenges in the Fire Service, specifically for volunteer fire departments.



Modern Fire Services invest extraordinary amounts of time and financial resources into training. The MDTRFS has demonstrated a continued effort to maximize staff training and should be commended for these ongoing efforts. The MDTRFS training is headed by the Deputy Chief. Much of the training is conducted at Station 4-Taber. However, there lacks a formal training plan or system to ensure that training is prioritized, equally available in all districts and aligned with the LOS.

Figure 8 below shows the call volume by type as reported by MDTRFS:

Figure 8 - 2020 & 2021 Call Volume by Type



Note: Miscellaneous category includes Industrial accidents, power line down, public service (first aid, assist police/agency, rescue, home accident. Hazmat includes explosion and CO alarm.

According to the above statistics, 70% of MDTRFS calls fall into 3 event types; fire, rubbish/grass and MVC. This information certainly helps kickstart the creation of a plan for training and skill maintenance based on identified needs. A training needs assessment could identify specific training requirements that can be formalized into an annual training plan and calendar that clearly outlines training objectives, expectations, and timelines. There are specific factors that drive training needs. They include:

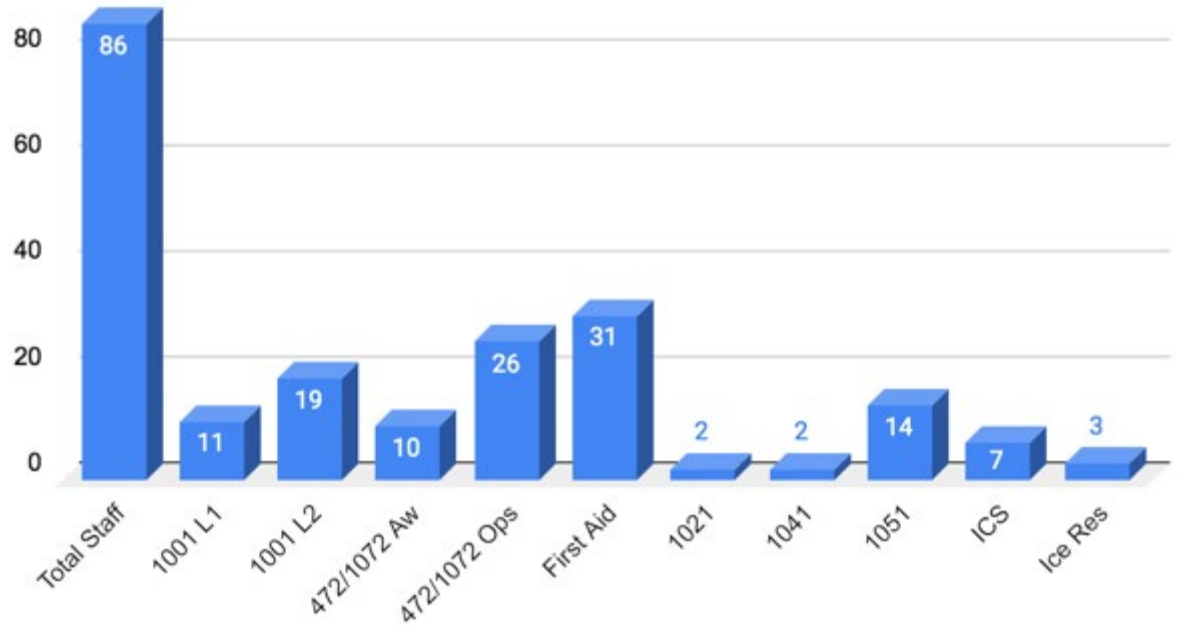
- The Level of Service provided
- Safety of staff and the public
- OHS standards and guidelines
- Liability concerns
- The need for proficiency
- The need for skill maintenance

To be clear, the department must not operate beyond its training capabilities. Resources such as the 'AFCA Core Competency Framework and Risk Assessment Tool' can be very helpful in creating a training curriculum. Another resource that should be exploited for the teaching of practical skills is the use of the training centre in Vauxhall. NFPA 1500 can also assist in the understanding of basic requirements for and the development of a fire department training program. Mental health is a growing area of importance in the first responder community. Indeed, some reasonable steps have been achieved in connecting with the Alberta Critical Incident Provincial Network (www.abcism.ca) and this should be incorporated into a training program.

Volunteer fire departments face challenges in the delivery of required training. First and foremost, leadership must support the need for training. Time must be rationed to incorporate training and still maintain time for other duties that preserve readiness such as truck and equipment checks, meetings and station upkeep to name but a few. Training needs to be accessible. The MD of Taber covers a large geographic area, travel to a common training venue may create an obstacle for some. It may also generate staffing shortages that affect response therefore careful planning is required to avoid gaps in service. Training will certainly need to be flexible and accommodating for all to participate. Proper management of these issues is paramount to the success of a training program.

For a training program to be successful department members should, in conjunction with the Deputy Chief, spearhead the training. To help the department cope with required training needs, a training committee could be one method of providing training in a collaborative way. Like they say, "Teamwork makes the dream work." As noted above, the department should use all available resources, both human and physical to deliver training. Above all, firefighters must be engaged and keen on taking the training and it must be meaningful and meet their needs.

Figure 9 - Training Levels



TSI's analysis of training records clearly indicates that they do their best to focus on the basics, but there is room for improvement. Training within the MDTRFS is not structured. Justifiably so, the focus seems to be on NFPA 1001 Level 1 & 2 which provide new and existing staff with the basic knowledge and skill to be effective on the fire ground and during emergency situations. This emphasis seems to be driven by the OG-4 (Minimum Training Requirements). Simply providing this basic training and maintaining these skills involves many hours of commitment by firefighters and their instructors. Staff training information provided the following information:

- 30 percent of staff have completed basic fire suppression training or higher (NFPA 1001 L1)
- 16 percent of staff have completed formal wildland fire training (NFPA 1051)
- No specific leadership or Officer training seems to have taken place

- Other than vehicle extrication training taken as part of NFPA 1001, no advanced training in this task is indicated creating a possible gap in proficiency and service

The common theme from the membership survey indicated overwhelmingly that more training, of all types, was wanted or desired. Presently OG-4 reads as follows; "The training will be held on regular training nights and some Saturdays throughout the year." The only caveat here is that the number of training nights are not consistent in all districts. Some districts train weekly, some bi-monthly and some only once per month.

TSI also believes that more practical training is taking place than is indicated in the documents provided but it is not effectively recorded. NFPA standards are referred to as Professional Firefighter Qualifications and are the industry standard by which all training should be conducted and evaluated. In all cases where training takes place, proper documentation of training must be specific for the purposes of covering liability, budgeting, managing human resources and reporting to the CAO and Council.

It should be noted that Fire Services are not bound to NFPA standards, and a local training program can deliver appropriate training that is created in-house. Based on modern methods, best practices and NFPA standards, in-house programs can be valuable when providing leadership training, Officer training, introductory recruit training and many pertinent firefighting skills. The trade-off here is that the training may not be accredited. As mentioned earlier, training is one cornerstone of providing effective, reliable fire and emergency services for a region or community. Training must be a top priority for administration and staff to ensure the desired Level of Service is achieved and maintained.

Training Recommendations

1. A review be conducted of how training is recorded.

2. The use of a record management system to record all theoretical and practical training. Detailed records for each member should include the date of training, training topics, hours of training completed, and certifications achieved. Information should provide easily accessible data, information, and reports for analysis by Fire Department Administrators.

3. The creation of a formal regional training program driven by qualified members, or a training committee, overseen by the Deputy Fire Chief or member as designated by the Fire Chief.

4. Fire Department administrators review training needs annually. Provide clear guidelines and expectations focused on training priorities.

5. Development and inclusion of Officer training and mentorship. Include training in leadership, safety, accountability, operations, practical incident and fire command and records management as part of any regional training program.

6. Build training capacity internally to support a formal regional training program. Consider the option to increase the number of instructors by providing funding, access to required training and mentorship to interested members.

7. Theoretical and practical training initiatives be guided using formal lesson plans. Plans will support consistency in training, lesson objectives, time requirement, clear methods of instruction, safety guidelines (for practical training exercises) and a basis for evaluation.

8. The Fire Service budget for and reimburse tuition costs to individual members who succeed in taking outside courses from accredited schools. Fire Service administration should ensure that courses are internally approved and address current or future needs.

9. MDTRFS consider using the 'AFCA Core Competency Framework' and NFPA 1500 as key resources. They will assist in creating an effective training curriculum and program.

7.5 Response Staffing, Recruitment & Retention

Staffing

Containing and extinguishing fires is a dangerous and labour-intensive process. Adequate staffing is one method used to enhance the safety of both citizens and fire department staff and is a critical component in service provision. Staffing levels and service levels go together. Adequate staffing yields adequate service, capability, and increased safety, while inadequate staffing reduces service effectiveness and reduces fire department capability and compromises safety.

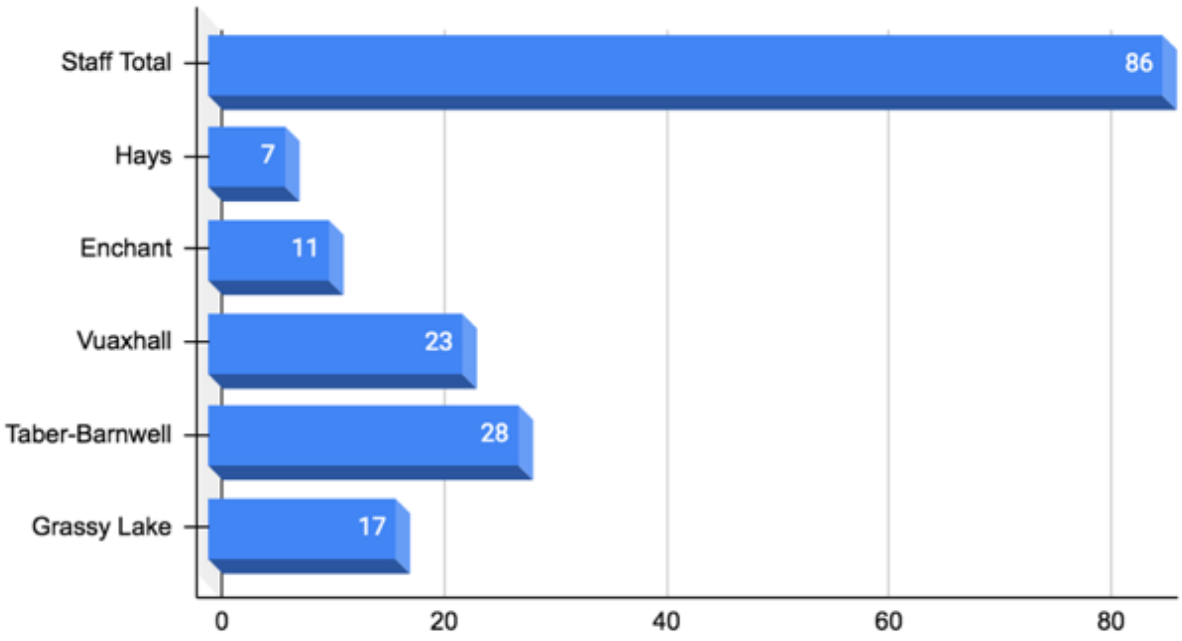
"THE FIRE SERVICE IN NORTH AMERICA HAS FOR MOST OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY ACCEPTED THE PREMISE AND THE EXPECTATION THAT FIREFIGHTERS WILL PERFORM AGGRESSIVE INTERIOR FIRE ATTACKS WHEN CONFRONTED WITH A WORKING STRUCTURAL FIRE. THIS HAS BEEN AND STILL IS THE INDUSTRY'S STANDARD OF PERFORMANCE."[1]

Human resources in the volunteer Fire Services have experienced ongoing challenges for several decades. Consolidation of such things as corporate farming and the movement of populations out of rural areas to large urban centres, an aging population, and a social shift to pay for services rather than use cooperative volunteer services has significantly affected all aspects of our social existence. Although significant advances in technology and improved equipment are available, fire fighters still need to carry out the fire suppression and rescue tasks. MDTRFS is not immune to these challenges. Generally speaking, more staff is better. A snapshot of current MDTRFS staffing is seen in Figure 10.

[1] *SAFE FIRE FIGHTER STAFFING – CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS – Second Edition*

[2] *From NFPA Fire Protection Handbook*

Figure 10 - Staffing per Station



It is estimated that Firefighters in the MDTRFS have an average of 5.6 years of experience. Although the MDTRFS has only been in existence for six years, it should be noted that stations in Enchant, Hays and Grassy Lake have a long history of providing Fire Services in the region. For instance, the Hays Fire Department was established in 1954 and has several members with decades of experience. These valuable human resources cannot be easily replaced.

It is important to be reminded that our single most valued resource is the Fire Service staff. The MDTRFS's staffing seems to have been consistent over the last several years. Staffing in the larger centres of Taber Station 4, Vauxhall and Grassy Lake may be considered as marginal to adequate. Enchant, Hays and Barnwell continue to operate with minimal but dedicated staff. Staffing at these stations should be considered at critically low levels. Staffing challenges within MDTRFS are consistent with those throughout the Fire Service industry across North America and include:

- Dealing with an aging population (existing Volunteer Firefighters retiring)
- Population declines of the targeted demographic in rural areas
- Residents no longer have enough free time to volunteer
- Lack of public awareness that volunteer Firefighters are needed
- An increase in demand for service
- A significant commitment by volunteers to maintain proficiency
- Increasingly stringent standards for recruitment

What are the desired staffing goals or expectations in the rural North American Fire Service? Here are two excerpts from highly respected Fire Service publications that may help in answering the question:

Austin and Dallas's studies conducted ten years apart produced the same results. These studies concluded that inadequate staffing results in:

- A higher risk for victims due to delays which are indirectly related to the likelihood of survival
- A loss of critical functions
- An increased loss of overall effectiveness because of combined delays and loss of critical functions
- Higher physiological stress on fire fighters as they attempt to compensate for smaller crew size
- Higher risk to fire fighter safety as aggressive procedures are conducted without the necessary support

> "The conclusion is that doubling the manpower from three to six men more than doubles the team's effectiveness. There is a synergetic effect at work…" [1]

The studies also included that increasing staff on an apparatus from 3 to 4 resulted in the following substantial benefits:

- A smaller number of multiple alarms
- Lower fire damage dollar loss and higher loss/save ratio
- Fewer injuries/deaths for civilians and fire fighters
- Fewer Worker's Compensation for fire fighters
- Retainment of tax base properties
- Lower civil liability for the municipality and the Fire Department

> "Rural operations (scattered dwellings, small businesses, and farm buildings): at least 1 pumper with a large water tank (500 gal[1.9m3], one mobile water supply apparatus (1000 gal [3.78m3] or larger), and such other specialized apparatus as may be necessary to perform effective initial firefighting operations; at least 12 firefighters and 1 Chief Officer." [1]

Management of staff is another critical factor in the Fire Service. Fire and emergency services operate 24/7, making management of staff a pivotal factor in the long-term provision of service and the health and wellness of the team itself. We ask our volunteers to respond day and night understanding that they must report to work the following day. The MDTRFS experiences shortage of staff for daytime response (during business hours). This is a widespread problem throughout the industry. Fire Service administration should always consider the work-life balance as well as family considerations when dealing with staff.

Management of human resources within the Fire Service is generally done as part of the organizational structure. If human resources are adequate, staff are usually split into cohorts or groups. Each group has its leader or supervisor and includes any number of staff with complementary skill sets. These groups operate independently under the same operational guidelines as part of the whole. Using cohorts allows administrators to spread the workload throughout the organization, for example; the Utopia Fire Service has a total staff of 22, which includes a Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief and 20 staff of men and women. The Utopia Fire Service administration has decided that they will divide their team into four platoons. Each platoon will have two Officers, a Captain and Lieutenant and three firefighters, typical for most Fire Services in North America.

Advantages of managing staff in cohorts includes but is not limited to:

- Allows Fire Service administrators to focus on administration
- Empowers Officers to lead and gain valuable experience
- Promotes mentoring at all levels of the organization

- Spreads the workload among many
- Allows for confirmed coverage and staffing during difficult periods such as holiday weekends
- Streamlines the training processes
- Allows for proper communication through a chain of command
- Provides incentives and motivation for staff to improve their knowledge and skill to eventually achieve promotion to a higher rank
- Promotes teamwork, familiarity, trust, and strong relationships

Attaining appropriate staffing levels should be the top priority for any Fire Service. This can be done using designed or planned recruitment and retention strategies.

Recruitment & Retention

Recruitment methods currently in place for the MDTRFS includes word of mouth, as well as using the MD of Taber website for recruitment information and application forms. Recruitment is no doubt bolstered by the MDTRFS's Facebook page. Other forms of recruitment could be the product of fire prevention activities and public relations. Events like the recently held "Christmas Candy Cane Food Drive'' promote public awareness of the Fire Service in a positive image. Fire Station open houses and fire prevention week activities produce valuable recruitment opportunities. A partnership with local high schools to promote vocational programs such as a fire cadet program where students can become cadets and work toward an NFPA 1001 qualification, for credit, could be another opportunity. Regardless of recruitment methods and initiatives it is paramount that staffing levels be constantly evaluated and that active recruitment be a constant endeavor.

Retention of staff is also a key concern for volunteer Fire Services. Training staff is very time consuming and expensive, therefore it is paramount to ensure that we retain this investment in highly trained and experienced human resources. Leadership is a crucial factor in retention of staff, as is a workplace environment that is inclusive, supportive, challenging and collaborative. Staff who are engaged will be more productive and professional in their work and will find it very rewarding.

Recognition of staff and their service is another step in retaining staff. Knowing that their service and efforts are valued pays enormous dividends in retention and productivity. The simple mention of a job well done after a recurring event is a pure acknowledgement of their worth. Examples of this are seen on the MDTRFS Facebook page, which promotes a positive work environment and professionalism. Another activity could involve an annual formal event to thank the staff and recognize personal and professional achievements over the past year. Positive work environments also lead to positive interpersonal relationships that promote teamwork, and the Fire Service is all about teamwork. Refer to Appendix D for recruitment and retention initiatives and ideas.

Through the interviews, TSI learned that Council was very supportive of their volunteer firefighters and appreciative of the employers that enable them to respond during regular work hours. TSI found that Council wants to ensure the volunteers, companies and organizations who allowed them to leave work were thanked adequately.

> *"The biggest concern would be if the volunteer contingent would decide if they were overworked or done. Retention and making it easy for them or better compensation would be key to moving forward."*
>
> **MD Councillor, October 2021**

"The biggest concern is the volunteers and the employers allowing them to take time off when they get the call. Council has tried to express their appreciation to the volunteers and their employers who help provide service. Keeping enough volunteers and those that can respond during the day is critical."

MD Councillor, October 2021

Volunteer Renumeration/Compensation

The Fire Chief had mentioned that he thought there was a state of inequality when it came to compensation or remuneration of Volunteers. He clearly explained that each volunteer member received an honorarium, regardless of their level of commitment. To be clear, we all understand that all members of the MDTRFS are deeply committed to service and the community. However, some volunteers can provide additional time toward FD initiatives, such as providing and planning training, maintaining the fire hall, and checking apparatus. The Chief feels that if he is to ask a member to take on additional work or tasks, it only seems fair that they are compensated for their addition efforts.

There are several ways to manage Volunteer compensation or remuneration. They include:

1. Maintaining the current system of an annual honorarium
2. Changing the system to provide for a paid-on-call system
3. Using a Hybrid system that includes a combination of honorariums and pain-on-call

Each of the above systems requires that clear expectations are determined by FD Administration and that those expectations are met by the Volunteer.

Maintaining the Status Quo

Current honorariums are awarded annually to each volunteer for their service based on their rank. but it is unclear what the FD Administration expectation is from that Volunteer. OG #1 (excerpt below) describes onboarding of recruits, compensation for training, and current honorariums.

1. An individual interested in becoming a member may join if the individual:

    a. has completed, or commits to completing, a 16-hour orientation/training program prescribed by the Fire Chief of the respective Fire Department, or has already completed a separate training program or has sufficient experience, which in the opinion of the Fire Chief is equivalent to the prescribed training program; and,

    b. Applications are taken from the application pool and the new person is recommended by the Fire Chief. A new recruit will serve a one-year probationary period. At any time that member may be dismissed for any reason regarding attitude, conduct & safety.

    c. Is in reasonable physical condition to perform the duties requested of the Member. The Fire Chief may, at his/her sole discretion, request that the member or prospective member provide written documentation from a physician that there is no medical reason for them not to perform the duties requested.

    d. All members must obtain certification in the following NFPA courses. New members have two years to complete these courses. Once the required courses have been

completed the other 1001 courses will become available for the member to complete. Mileage will be paid to those who need to travel, carpooling is recommended, and all costs must be approved by your local Chief before the course. Mileage will be based upon current Regional Fire Authority/MD of Taber mileage rates.

- S-100G Grassland Wildfire Operations
- ICS 100 *Free online course
- SFA C/AED – Provided in house by the MD of Taber
- NFPA 1001 level 1, 472 Awareness and Ops
- NFPA 1001 level 2

As of January 1, 2017, new members will be put through the full OFC NFPA 1001 levels 1, 2 & 472 program, done through in house training. Completion of course reward for 1001 level 1, 472 awareness and operations completion = $1,000 and completion of course reward for 1001 level 2 = $500. Total compensation of course reward = $1,500

A volunteer firefighter in good standing with the fire department as certified by the Station Fire Chief will receive the following monthly incentives. Junior members will not receive an honorarium. Honorariums are paid annually at the end of November – early December. This policy is said to be agreed upon as per signature, any deviation from this policy may result in removal from the volunteer department.

Volunteer Position	Number of Budgeted Positions	Monthly Incentive Pay (Paid Annually)	Months Per Year	Annual Cost
Firefighter	117	$125.00	12 ($1500)	$175,500
Deputy Fire Chief	05	$166.67	12 ($2000)	$10,000
Fire Chief	03	$208.34	12($2500)	$7,500

In-house Instructor incentive

- An instructor is a member of the MD of Taber Regional Fire Service that has obtained their NFPA 1041 Instructor Level I or II certification. The instructors will be approved by the Regional and/or the Deputy Regional Chief before the training session begins.
- Approved courses that qualify for the instructor incentive are our in house NFPA 1001 level 1, 2 and Hazmat Ops and Awareness courses only.
- A rate of $25/hour will be paid to the approved instructor(s) which will be added onto their honorarium pay at the end of the year.

- A cap of $4500 will be paid out for the entire level 1 and a cap of $1300 for the entire level II. These funds will be split amongst the instructors that teach the level.

- The hours will be kept track of at each training night on a course sign out sheet that requires signature, the information is then entered into the firepro system by the Regional or Deputy Regional Chief.

This is likely the least expensive option for compensation/remuneration.

Paid-on-call System

This system simply involves paying members per hour for their efforts in maintaining readiness (weekly fire practice), as well as paying them hourly when responding to emergency calls. Compensation for training could be met in several ways, including the current method noted in OG#1, covering tuition fees, or hourly pay. A pay scale reflecting current industry standards can be found in Appendix D. This option would likely be the most expensive option.

Hybrid System of Compensation

This system could include a combination of honorariums and hourly wages. It would be the most complex to administer. Members would receive an honorarium for their weekly efforts at regular weekly fire practice nights, and then paid hourly for completing extra duties and during emergency response. Generally, this system, as in a paid-on-call system, would likely involve a minimum amount of pay (two hours pay) for those responding to the fire station for emergency response but not actually being part of the response team.

Without clearly defined honorariums and wages it is difficult to know the budgetary impact of this type of system, but the assumption is that it would likely be similar or marginally less in cost compared with a paid-on-call system.

Staffing Recommendations

1. The Fire Service Administration identify minimum and maximum staffing requirements for each station. Knowing minimums triggers the recruitment process while maximum numbers are generally part of business plan and budget limitations.

2. The Fire Department Administration develop an effective and robust recruitment program or campaign, with focus on when and how recruitment will be conducted. The recruitment process should, as much as possible, align with training initiatives.

7.6 Fire Prevention Initiatives

Preventing fires from occurring is a strategy that is often overlooked or relegated to the background. Perhaps, it is because there is much more intrigue in the bravery and the spectacle of flames, smoke and flashing lights of suppression activities. Nonetheless, Fire Prevention has significantly succeeded in forming existing fire codes and safety practices that have quietly saved uncounted lives.

Fire Prevention is a sector of the Fire Service that requires a diverse knowledge of building construction, fire safety systems, codes, and practices, as well as an understanding of fire suppression.

The MDTRFS is an accredited agency through the Alberta Safety Codes Council (SCC). This allows them the authority to conduct Fire Prevention initiatives and programs in accordance with a Quality Management Plan (QMP). This authority allows the MDTRFS to:

- Conduct inspection and enforcement of all parts of the Alberta Fire Code except those requirements about the installation, alteration, and removal of storage tank systems for flammable and combustible liquids
- Conduct Fire Investigations and report cause, origin and circumstances regarding fires causing injury or loss
- Conduct Public Education
- Prepare Fire Pre-plans

The MDTRFS has two highly trained Safety Codes Officers (SCO), who's training also includes NFPA 921 & 1033, to oversee Fire Prevention. With limited staffing resources, MDTRFS manages the mandatory functions required of the Quality Management Plan (QMP) and addresses its inspection program based on request or complaint. There is limited capacity for public education, but there are special occasions that allow for public relations opportunities. Existing operating guidelines (29, 30 & 31) cover procedures for conducting Fire Pre-plans, Fire Inspections and Fire Investigation.

Fire Prevention Recommendations

1. The establishment and implementation of a long-term strategic plan to build expertise and capacity in Fire Prevention. The plan should be achievable, sustainable and include a timeline with objectives. It should be based on engaging and mentoring volunteers, while providing them educational opportunities and resources. The QMP is supported whole-heartedly by the Fire Prevention Program therefore more resources need to be added to build capacity over the long term (5-10 years), meeting the needs of a growing community.

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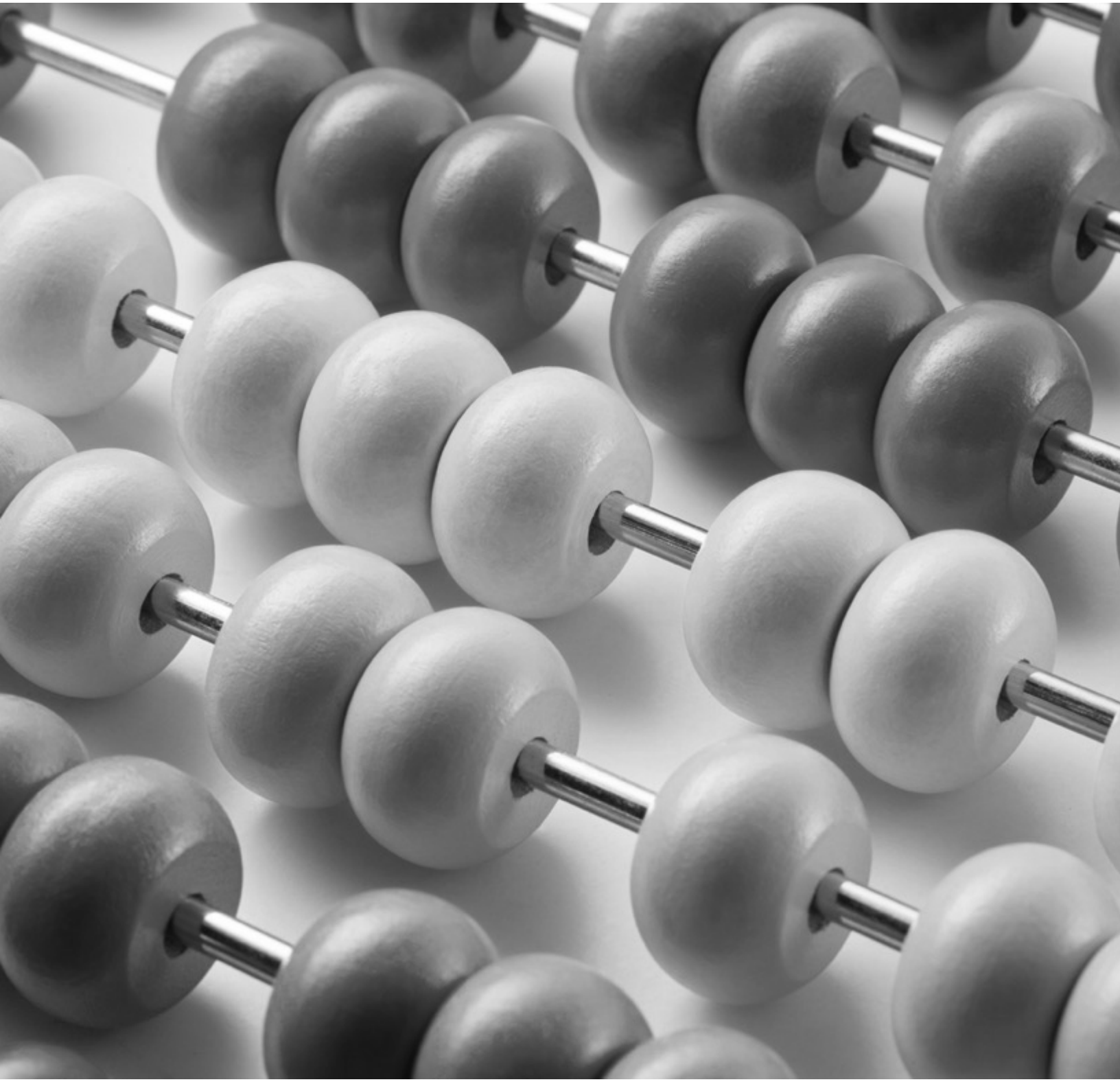
8.0 Financial Review



8.0 Financial Review

A review of the MD's finances was completed; this process included interviewing the Director of Corporate Services on several occasions. The interviews were comprehensive and in-depth, and a line-by-line discussion was undertaken of the operating and capital budgets and previous year's final actual financial position.

8.1 Methodology

The Director was very helpful in providing all the financial documents required to complete the review, including past and current budget, financial policies, financial bylaws, regional fire agreements and past financial reports.

The interview information and financial documentation formed a perfect base from which to analyze the MD's Fire Services. Our review included a review of recent financial documents, including:

- The 2020 and 2021 Fire Operating and Capital budgets
- The 2020-year-end actuals
- The MD of Taber's Three year Operating and Capital Plan 2022-2025
- The MD's 2020 Consolidated Financial Statement
- The Vauxhall Regional Fire Agreement
- The Barnwell Regional Fire Agreement
- The MD's reserve policy
- The MD's fees and charges bylaw
- The MD's honorarium policy
- The MD's reserves

Below are summarized operational budget financial data. Please refer to the following appendices for additional detailed financial data:

Appendix E for the MD of Taber 2021 detailed account summary
Appendix F for the MD of Taber 2021 detailed account by cost center

8.2 Observations

The following are detailed observations regarding the MD's revenue and expenditure budgets. The intent is to identify what the MD is budgeting and to provide comments on the content of the budget amount. The 2021 budget was used in this analysis and the comments will be based on it as well.

The MD owns and operates four fire stations. Three of the fire halls are in the MD's hamlets of Enchant, Hays and Grassy Lake. The fourth fire hall is located inside the Town of Taber.

The MD has regional fire agreements with the Town of Vauxhall and the Village of Barnwell, both municipalities own the fire halls. Both fire agreements are led by a committee that reviews budgets prior to receiving Council approval.

The Vauxhall agreement is a 10-year agreement ending in July 2023. This agreement formulates a regional fire authority which manages and oversees all fire operations. The regional authority hires a Regional Fire Chief to manage the day-to-day operations.

The Vauxhall agreement includes a funding formula. The funding formula is based on call response over the past 5 years. The high and low call response years are removed, and the middle three years are averaged to determine the percentage split for operating funding. The agreement calls this the 'Olympic Average' formula. The agreement calls for all capital costs to be split equally, but a clause in the agreement allows one municipality to fund a greater portion as needed. The MD has been financing a greater portion of capital costs.

The Barnwell agreement also contains a modified operational funding formula. The MD funds all equipment, vehicle repairs and insurance. The Village funds all building repairs, utilities and dispatch costs related to the Village. All other operational costs are split 50/50.

All the fire budgets are prepared and managed by the MD of Taber.

General Comments on Budget

The MD budgets are put together using a Microsoft Excel workbook. The workbook includes all departmental operating budgets. This allows the budget to be developed using as much detail as possible. The operating budget is split into seven cost centers. There is a general administrative cost center and then each fire hall/service has their own costs center (MD fire hall, Vauxhall, Barnwell, Grassy Lake, Hays and Enchant) Budgeting and reporting this way allows the MD to manage operational budgets individually for each fire hall.

The Director leads the budget process. He has been with the MD for 26 years and his experience, knowledge and history are evident in the preparation and management of the budgets. They are put together well and are easy to read and understand.

The revenue and expense operating budget are calculated using historical data, and expenses are calculated with known details. Several years of historical budgets and data are included in reports to show a historical perspective.

Using historical financial information is critical in preparing a budget; knowing where you came from is needed to see where you are going. The MD's fire budget is sound, and there should be confidence in the budget amounts that are presented.

The MD budgets for $274,490 in revenue and has total expenses of $1,220,367. The fire department requires $945,877 (net) in tax revenue to fund its operations.

The table below is a summary of the 2021 budget and the amounts in summary categories. The table also shows the percentage of each general category as a percentage of the total budget.

MD of Taber Fire Services - 2021 Summary Budget			
Revenue	*22.5%*		$274,490
Salary & Benefits	*39.9%*	$487,524	
Business and Training	*12.2%*	$149,200	
Contracts and Services	*19.3%*	$235,247	
Supplies and Materials	*16.0%*	$194,700	
Repairs and Maintenance	*9.0%*	$109,700	
Utilities	*3.6%*	$43,996	
Total Expenses		$1,220,367	$1,220,367
Net			$945,877

The table below shows breaks out the budget by cost center, showing the revenue and expense budgets for each fire hall.

MD of Taber Fire Services - 2021 Cost Center Summary

Description	Fire Protection (General)	Regional Fire Authority (Vauxhall)	MD Fire Department	Grassy Lake Fire Dept.	Enchant Fire Dept.	Hay Fire Dept.	Barnwell Fire Dept	Total
Revenue	$0	$128,580	$100,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$30,910	$274,490
Salary & Benefits	$0	$187,779	$189,089	$38,533	$30,272	$25,647	$16,204	$487,524
Business and Training	$0	$38,000	$38,000	$20,500	$19,100	$19,100	$14,500	$149,200
Contracts and Services	$164,547	$8,000	$62,000	$0	$0	$0	$700	$235,247
Supplies and Materials	$0	$43,200	$83,900	$16,200	$19,000	$19,200	$13,200	$194,700
Repairs and Maintenance	$0	$15,500	$32,500	$13,400	$29,900	$13,400	$5,000	$109,700
Utilities	$0	$16,700	$12,296	$4,500	$4,500	$6,000	$0	$43,996
Total Expenses	**$164,547**	**$309,179**	**$417,785**	**$93,133**	**$102,772**	**$83,347**	**$49,604**	**$1,220,367**
Net	**$164,547**	**$180,599**	**$317,785**	**$88,133**	**$97,772**	**$78,347**	**$18,694**	**$945,877**

Revenue

The MD budgets **$274,490** in revenue for the fire department. This revenue amount funds 22.5% of all operating expenses. This revenue comes from several sources.

- The Vauxhall Regional Fire Agreement revenue of $128,580 which includes the following revenue budgets:
  - $40,000 from regional fire response fees
  - An operational budget contribution of $64,580 as part of the funding agreement
  - $24,000 from a contracted ambulance project/EMS coordinator, but this ended up not being needed and was removed in the 2022 budget.
- The MD fire hall budgets for $100,000 from fire response fees
- The three municipal hamlet fire halls (Grassy Lake, Enchant and Hays) all budget $5,000 each for fire response fees ($15,000 total)
- The Village of Barnwell fire agreement revenue of $30,910 which includes the following revenue budgets:
  - $5,000 in fire response fees
  - An operational budget contribution of $25,910 as part of the funding agreement

Expenses

The MD budgets **$1,220,367** in operational expenses for the six department, within six (6) summarized budgeted line items.

Salary, Wages and Benefits

The MD budgets $487,524 in salary and benefits. This amounts to 39.9% of all expenses.

The details of the salary and benefits budget includes:

- MD budgets for two full time staff - a Regional Fire Chief/DEM and Regional Deputy Fire Chief/D-DEM ($219,958)
- The MD provides honorariums to all volunteer fire fighters through an honorarium policy. The total annual budget for firefighter honorariums is $201,250. The honorariums are calculated as follows:
  - $2,000 annually to the volunteer District Fire Chiefs
  - $1,500 annually to the volunteer Assistant District Deputy Chiefs
  - $150 in honorarium to any firefighter that completes an NFPA training course
  - $100 per year of service is presented annually, $500 for 5 years of service maxing out at $3,000 per year for 30 years of service
- The two full-time staff are provided employee benefits. These benefits have an annual budget of $66,316. These benefit costs are broken down into these categories:
  - LAPP pension - $31,128
  - CPP contributions - $6,170
  - EI contributions - $2,490
  - Health and dental benefits - $13,152
  - LTD and life insurance benefits - $2,893
  - Workers' compensation fees - $10,483

Business and Training Expenses

The business and training expenses have an annual budget of $149,200 which accounts for 12.2% of all expenses.

The budget details are broken down as follows:

- $60,000 for staff training and professional development. Fire Chiefs are provided budget funds for annual professional development, and volunteer firefighters are provided training courses. The budgets are detailed in the cost center detail report. Volunteer fire fighters are not paid to attend training courses. Only the course fees are paid.
- $35,200 for telephone communication. This budget funds all cell phones for the Chiefs and vehicles, the radio charges for the vehicles and the land lines located in the buildings.
- $54,000 for insurance charges. This budget funds all vehicle, building and personal insurance for the volunteer firefighters.

Contracted Services

The contracted services budget is $235,247 which accounts for 19.3% of total expenses.

The budget details are broken down as follows:

- $2,500 for Disaster Services - this is for incident command training and emergency operation center supplies.
- $100,000 for Regional Fire Study. (One-time expense)
- $70,700 for building rental from DMC Oilfield - this is the building location that the MD rents for their fire hall outside the Town of Taber. This fee also includes costs for water for response.
- $62,047 for 911 dispatch fees with the Town of Taber RCMP.

Supplies and Materials

The supplies and material budget is $194,700 and accounts for 16.0% of the total expenses.

The budget details are broken down as follows:

- The fuel budget is $21,100. The fuel budget breakdown is:
  - $7,500 for the Vauxhall Regional Fire Authority
  - $9,000 for the MD of Taber fire hall
  - $1,200 each for the Grassy Lake, Hays and Barnwell firehalls
  - $1,000 for the Enchant fire hall
- The general fire supplies and material budget is $150,000. These funds are used to purchase turnout gear, rescue equipment, hoses and day-to-day operational supplies. The budgets for each hall are:
  - Vauxhall regional fire hall - $25,000
  - MD fire hall - $65,000
  - Grassy Lake fire hall - $14,000
  - Enchant fire hall - $17,000
  - Hays fire hall - $17,000
  - Barnwell fire hall - $12,000
- The MD funds has a miscellaneous supply budget allowance of $8,800. This budget is distributed over all the fire halls to fund unforeseen supply costs.
- The MD budgets $14,800 for radios and computers. The Vauxhall regional fire hall and the MD fire hall each have a budget of $7,400.

Repairs and Maintenance

The repair and maintenance budget is $109,700 and accounts for 9.0% of total expenses.

The MD budgets $85,500 for internal and contracted repair for vehicles and equipment. Day to day maintenance is completed in-house and larger repairs are contracted and sent out for repair out. The budget is spread across all six fire halls.

- Vauxhall regional fire hall - $8,000
- MD fire hall - $25,000
- Grassy Lake fire hall - $10,000
- Enchant fire hall - $27,500
- Hays fire hall - $10,000
- Barnwell fire hall - $5,000

The MD budgets $24,200 for building repairs. This budget is spread across only five fire halls as the Barnwell agreement has that Village completing all building repairs within their own budget. The budget for each hall is:

- Vauxhall regional fire hall - $7,500
- MD fire hall - $7,500
- Grassy Lake fire hall - $3,400
- Enchant fire hall - $2,400
- Hays fire hall - $3,400
- Barnwell fire hall - $0

Utilities

The MD budgets $43,966 for all utilities (power, gas, water, and sewer). This budget is spread across only five fire halls as the Barnwell agreement has that Village funding all utilities within their budget. The budget for each hall is:

- Vauxhall regional fire hall - $16,700
- MD fire hall - $12,296
- Grassy Lake fire hall - $4,500
- Enchant fire hall - $4,500
- Hays fire hall - $6,000
- Barnwell fire hall - $0

8.3 Capital Reserves and Projects

The MD budgets for annual contributions to their reserves. At year end 2021 the projected total reserves for the MD will be $21.2M. This amount is divided between operating reserves of $6.7M and capital reserves of $14.5M.

The MD had budgeted contributions to the fire reserve in 2020 ($150K) and 2021 ($250K). The projected capital fire reserve balance at the end of 2021 is $600K. The reserve was budgeted to fund $575K in capital expenses in 2021. The capital budget purchases were a wild land unit in Vauxhall ($35K), a response truck in the MD fire hall ($40K), and Barnwell's primary engine unit. ($500K)

The MD has a larger uncommitted reserve for General Equipment of $5.7M which could also be used for fire equipment or apparatus is required.

The MD has a policy optimum reserve balances and works towards maintaining sufficient reserves funds to meet future capital needs.

The MD maintains a 5-year capital plan for all assets within the corporation. This includes a replacement plan for all fire equipment and apparatus in all fire halls. The goal of the capital plan is to fund replacement assets from reserve or with grants.

The MD has very little debt. Their 2020 audited financial statement and AB Municipal profile state that the MD has a debt limit of $32.7M. To date the MD has only $1.7M in debt. The MD has significant capacity to fund any major fire capital in the future.

8.4 Financial Conclusions

The review of the financial information for the MD of Taber generated the following conclusions and considerations.

1. The budget for the MD is well put together and is supported by data and historical information. There are no visible issues or concerns within the planning, preparation or management of the MD Fire financials. Operational and capital budgeting, financial reporting and reserve management are all working well.

2. The MD Fire Services generates a good amount of revenue for the services that they provide. The revenue covers 22.5% of all expenses.

3. The agreements with Vauxhall and Barnwell are working very well. The details in the agreements are easy to understand and to put into action.

4. The MD operates a 5-year capital plan for fire capital. The capital plan is over the next five years anticipates capital replacements of $2.5M. Two engine replacements ($600K), AFRRCS Radio replacements ($340K) and a Enchant fire hall expansion ($750K) are several large capital projects coming forward in the next few years. Funding these projects may require increased reserve contributions, securing provincial or federal grants or funding them via debenture.

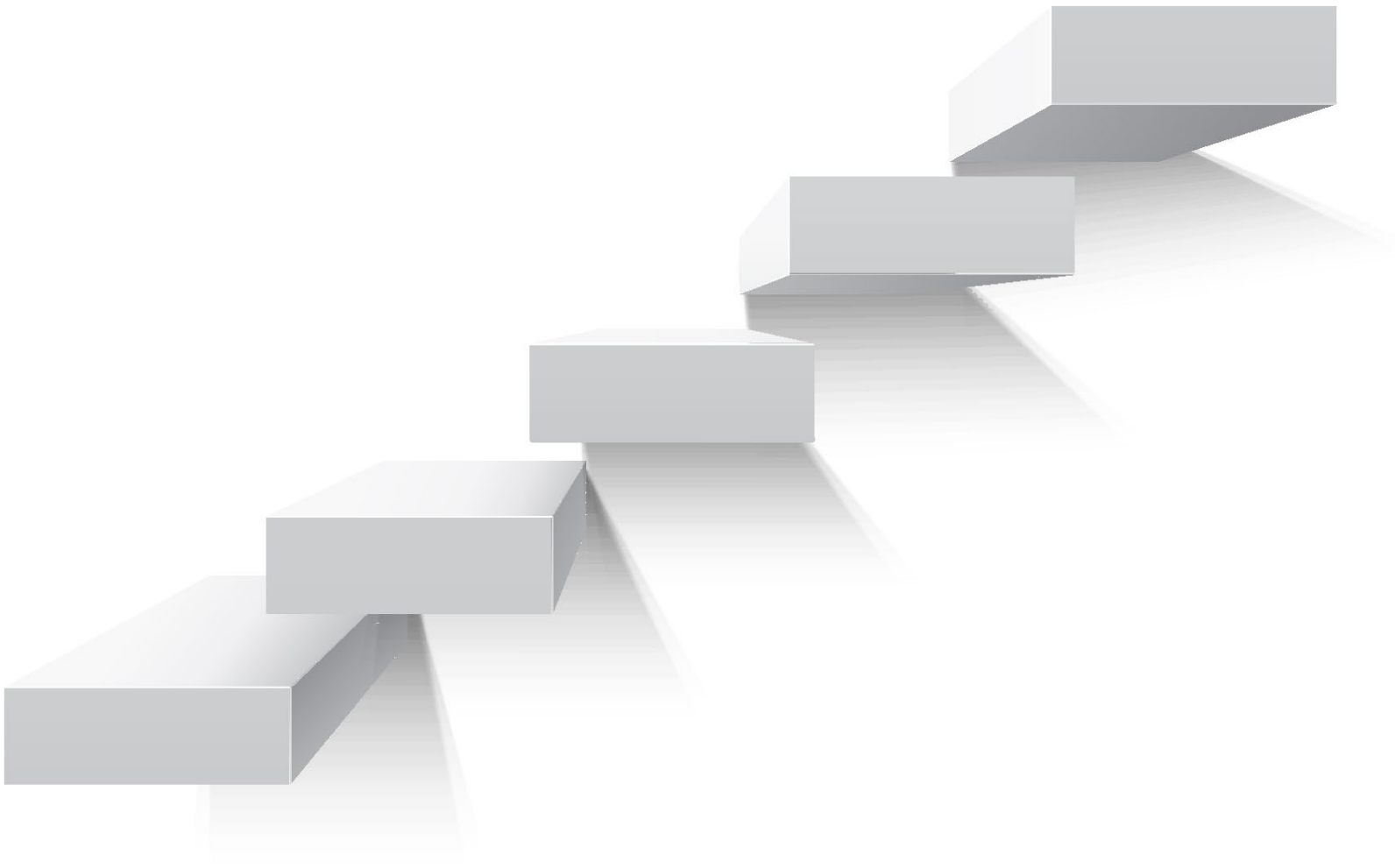
5. The MD is well positioned should the need arise to take on debt for regional Fire Services. The MD has over $30M in debt capacity to fund any future fire requirements.

8.5 Financial Recommendations

1. The Town of Vauxhall and Village of Barnwell both benefit from the MD's capital funding contributions for apparatus and equipment. These agreements should continue to ensure adequate funding. One agreement would suffice in lieu of two separate agreements.

2. Funding for future capital projects may require increased reserve contributions, securing provincial or federal grants or funding them via debenture.

9.0 Background & Methodology



9.0 Project Background & Methodology

In September 2021, the MD of Taber requested a Fire Services review and an updated Fire Master Plan. Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) was selected to complete the identified scope of work. The following report outlines TSI's methodology, key findings, recommendations, and a proposed implementation plan for establishing enhanced Fire Service delivery over the next ten years. The analysis and recommendations presented consider existing department structures, training and service levels, previous studies completed by the municipality, concerns raised in the past and current best practices in the delivery of Fire Services.

The review was to include many elements of Fire Services including governance and administration, Level of Service, staffing, response time, apparatus needs, fire halls/infrastructure, training and competency, Mutual Aid Agreements, fire prevention and inspection initiatives, and health and safety. The current service model in the region is volunteer firefighters that operate in six districts with fire halls located in the Stations; Hays Fire Station 1, located in the Hamlet of Hays, Grassy Lake Fire Station 2, located in the Hamlet of Grassy Lake, Enchant Fire Station 3, located in the Hamlet of Enchant, Municipal District Fire Department (commonly known as MDFD) Station 4, located in the Town of Taber, Vauxhall Fire Station 5, located in the Town of Vauxhall and Barnwell Fire Station 7, located in the Village of Barnwell.

9.1 Scope of Work

The MD hired TSI to review current standards, operations, and infrastructure of the Fire Services in the region, driving the process to then generate an updated Fire Master Plan for the community. It was requested that the review include an assessment and evaluation of the following:

- Governance and Administrative Review including:
  - Regional Structure and Current Collaboration
  - Bylaws
  - Mutual Aid Agreements
  - Potential staff support
  - Health and Safety
- Level of Service Review including:
  - Fire/Hazard Risk Assessment of service areas
- Operations Review including:
  - Apparatus & Equipment
  - Infrastructure
  - Fire Prevention and education activities
  - Training and Competency
  - Response coverage areas and potential opportunities in coverage areas
- Financial Review including:
  - Capital Assets Replacement Plan
  - Revenue & Expenses
  - Capital Reserves
- Fire Master Plan including:
  - Service delivery options
  - Cost effective recommendations

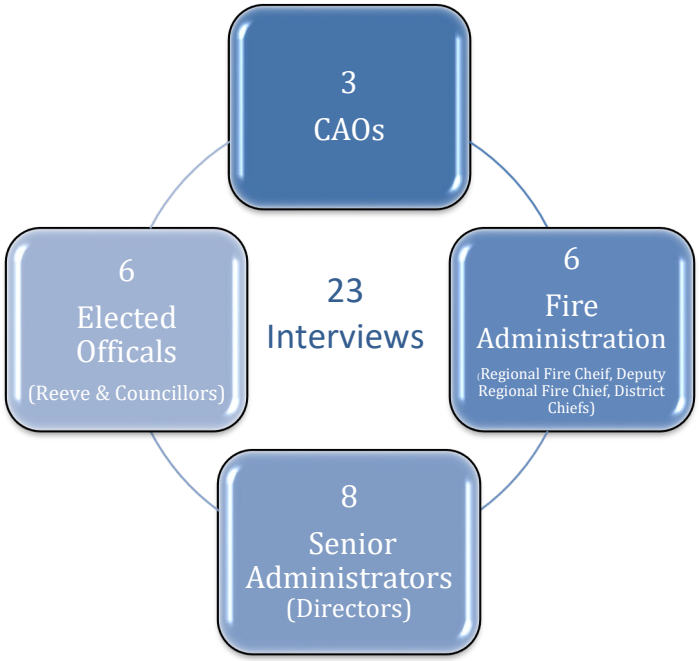
At the time the TSI team was retained for these services, the intention of the MD was to find ways to provide improved services for the public through enhanced Fire Services and good governance, leading to an updated Fire Master Plan.

The overarching goal was to develop a clear overview that would allow the Fire Service, administration, and Council to better understand the current state of the Fire Service and its path into the future. The TSI team worked with the MD to balance the needs, wants, and expectations of all stakeholders and distill this information into a series of recommendations to enhance Fire Services in the region going forward.

9.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Interviews

Twenty-three (23) interviews were completed using a combination of in person and virtual meetings. Interviews included Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), Fire Services in the region, MD of Taber Council, as well as municipal administration from other departments that support the delivery of Fire Services.



Online Survey

TSI created and distributed four different confidential online surveys to the following groups:

1. Firefighters working within the MD of Taber - invitations were sent to eighty-three (83) personnel, fifty-one (51) responses were received.
2. Industry operating within the MD of Taber - invitations were sent to seven (7) businesses, seven (7) responses were received.
3. Council members within the MD of Taber - invitations were sent to twelve (12) individuals, six (6) responses were received.
4. Colonies established in the MD of Taber - invitations were mailed to seven (7) Colonies, zero (0) responses were received.

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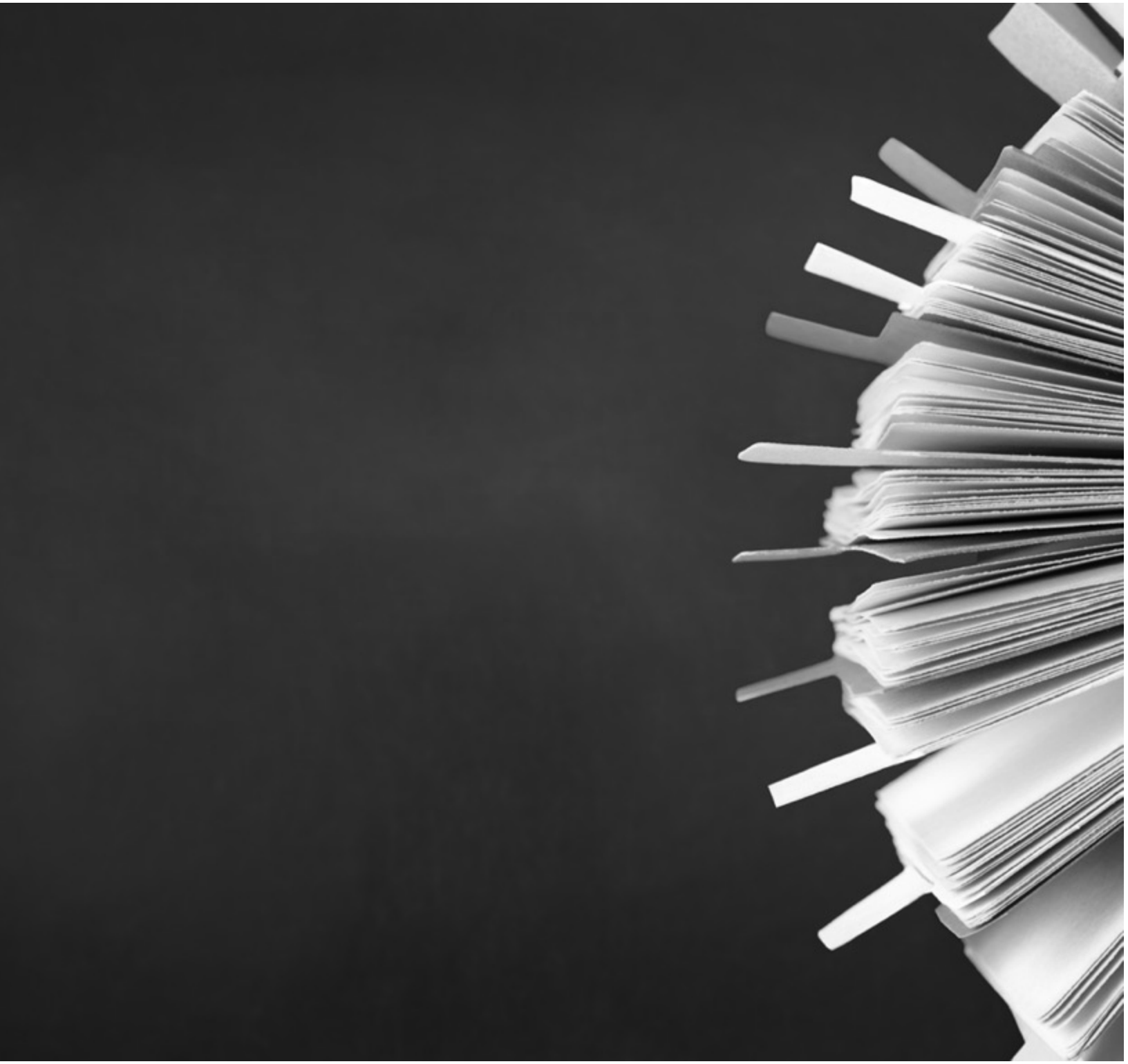
References



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Appendices

Appendix A: Governance Options

Municipalities have a wide range of governance options to choose from in overseeing organizations connected to, but external from, their administrations. These governance options include:

1. *Intermunicipal Agreements:* Intermunicipal agreements are entered into vis-à-vis the passage of a resolution of two or more participating municipalities. These agreements can lead to the formation of an authority, board, or committee that oversees the provision of services on a regional basis. Important to note is that an authority, board, or committee formed by an intermunicipal agreement is subject to the provisions of the MGA as if the authority was the municipality providing the service.

2. *Regional Service Commissions:* Regional service Commissions have their own distinct legal status with natural person powers separate from the member municipalities. Commissions can hire employees, administer their own payrolls, own property, and raise capital. Any financial surplus must be used to reduce costs and may not be distributed back to the member municipalities. Rates charged for services must be established by bylaw and based upon a full-cost recovery rate model. Commissions are eligible for loans from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority.

3. *Municipally Controlled Corporations:* Municipal controlled corporations are for-profit corporations that are controlled by a municipality or group of municipalities to provide a regional municipal service. There are less than twenty municipally controlled corporations in Alberta. EPCOR Utilities Inc. (owned by Edmonton) and Aquatera Utilities Inc. (owned by the City and County of Grande Prairie and Town of Sexsmith) are two examples. They are regulated by the MGA, Business Corporations Act, Control of Corporations Regulation, and the Debt Limit Regulation. They are a separate legal entity that can hire employees, administer payrolls, own property, and raise capital. Municipally controlled corporations cannot borrow from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority.

4. *Cooperatives:* Cooperatives are incorporated under the Cooperatives Act and, in general, are intended for individuals to come together for a common purpose. One cooperative that municipalities may be familiar with are Rural Electrification Associations (REA's). Cooperative principles are specified in the Act and determine how the entity carries on business. Cooperative surpluses may be used to develop its business, improve its services, establish reserves, or pay interest on member loans or dividends on shares, support community welfare, or can be distributed among its members.

5. *Societies:* Societies are legal entities incorporated under the Societies Act. They are created for any benevolent, philanthropic, charitable, provident, scientific, artistic, literary, social, educational, agricultural, sporting, or other useful purpose, but not for the purpose of carrying on a trade or business. Agricultural Societies and Community Associations are typical examples of societies. While societies can incur debt, they cannot borrow from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority.

6. *Part 9 Companies:* Part 9 companies are formed to promote art, science, religion, charity, or other similar endeavours, or solely to promote recreation for their members. A Part 9 company must apply its profits in the promotion of its objects and no dividend should be paid to its members. Part 9 companies are regulated by the Companies Act. A Part 9 company may borrow funds for carrying out its objectives but is not eligible for direct loans from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority. The

Alberta Industrial Heartland Association (an economic development entity consisting of the City of Edmonton, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Lamont County, Strathcona County, and Sturgeon County) is an example of a Part 9.

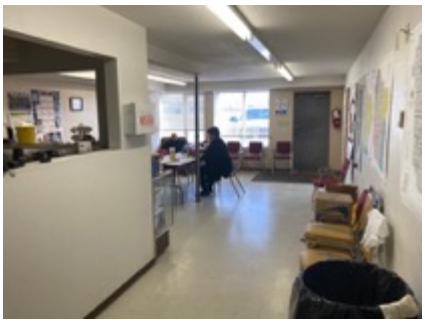
7. *Public Private Partnerships:* Public-private partnerships may be a separate legal entity depending on the partnership agreement. Typically, they include an arrangement between two or more public and private sector entities with a long-term life span. The construction and ongoing operations of the Anthony Henday Ring Road around Edmonton is an example. NorthWestConnect and the Province entered a P3 Agreement for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of Anthony Henday Drive from Hwy 16 to Manning Drive until 2041. They usually involve significant capital investment and ongoing operational costs.

8. *Growth Management Board:* Growth Management Boards are defined in Part 17.1 of the MGA. There are only 2 Growth Management Boards in Alberta – the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board. When in place, Growth Management Boards can be responsible for overseeing emergency services in a region. The Growth Management Board model was not considered for this project due to its complexity and requirement for provincial legislation.

Appendix B: Fire Stations

Station No. 1 Hays

It is estimated that the building itself was built in 1950. The fire station is well situated in the Hamlet of Hays and consists of four bays with adjacent living space. The current office and living space was once a residence. Adequate space is provided for apparatus. The interior finish of the apparatus floor/garage area is metal. Renovation to the living space, expected to include offices, washrooms, and meeting areas is expected to begin soon. The building has been well cared for and is certainly adequate for the intended mission.



Station No. 2 Grassy Lake

The MD of Taber has recently undertaken a major renovation of this fire station. The feeling of pride in their fire station was evident during our Grassy Lake Station visit, as was the pride and enthusiasm in their work, as everyone went about their duties.

This three-bay fire station houses an Engine/Tender, rescue, and wildland unit. Although the station is extremely neat and tidy, extra space is at a premium. There are racks to store spare equipment, dry hose, an SCBA compressor and bottle fill station, open lockers for personal PPE storage and an equipment washing station.

The common space includes a comfortable meeting area with a kitchenette. Space for equipment, PPE, storage, and practical training is very limited and apparatus may need to be moved outside to facilitate training. With the substantial investment made into the building, operationally it should continue to adequately provide the necessary infrastructure requirement for many years.

Station No. 3 Enchant

Located within the Village of Enchant and critical to response in the northwest corner of the MD, is Enchant Fire Station No. 3. The Station was significantly improved after the completion of a recent major renovation that enhanced the functional areas of the station. The addition of a common area includes an open concept office and meeting space along with a new washroom with showers and residential laundry machines. Interior walls of the apparatus floor are finished in metal. The exterior is also metal clad and aesthetically appealing.

Operationally the two-bay fire station houses three apparatus including an Engine/Tender, wildland unit and rapid response unit but remains overcrowded. Open lockers for PPE and equipment storage racks line the perimeter walls of the apparatus floor creating a very crowded operational environment. Regardless of some shortcomings the Enchant Fire Station is well maintained and instrumental in the provision of service in the Enchant Fire District. Fire Administration and staff in Enchant are appreciative of the investment made by the MD into the fire station and they are proud to continue providing dedicated service to the community.

Station No. 4 MD Taber

The Taber MDFD Fire Station, located within the Town of Taber, can be considered the headquarters for the MDTRFS. The leased facility is a large wood frame, metal clad building with five (5 to 6 as one overhead door is 28 ft. wide) apparatus bays, a two-story common/office space, and a graveled yard site large enough to conduct training evolutions.

The apparatus floor is large and houses the Engine, Rescue, Command Trailer, and Wildland unit. Apparatus bay (#1) adjacent to the offices is dedicated as a classroom area. A work bench, compressor and cascade system, hose, and equipment storage racks, as well as open lockers for personal PPE are situated along the rear (north) wall. Other equipment for cleaning and decontamination and general-purpose use is located on the west wall and rear of the west bay.

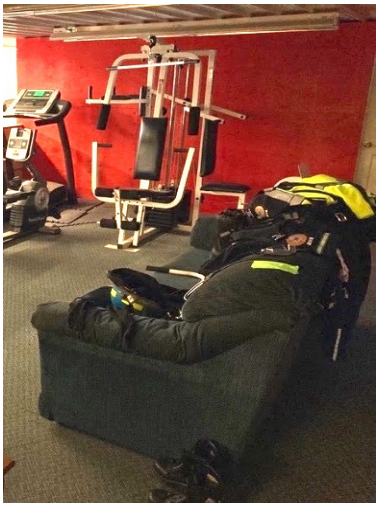
The two-story office/common area on the east end of the building includes the public entrance, foyer, offices of the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief and a kitchenette. The upstairs is generally storage and underutilized. There are two washrooms, one with a single shower. Suitability of the building as a fire station by Administration and staff is mixed. Operationally it would seem as though there is adequate space for apparatus and training. There may be efficiencies derived and options available for improvement of usable space with thoughtful planning and management of same.

Station No. 5 Vauxhall

Built in 2005, the Town of Vauxhall Fire Station is a fine example of a purpose-built fire station. Maintenance of the building is the responsibility of the Town. The station includes five bays to house apparatus and dedicated space for offices and a common space (with kitchen). A backup electrical generator provides increased capability if electrical utilities are unavailable.

The Station is shared/occupied by AHS who operate ambulance service from the site utilizing separate living space and one bay of the apparatus floor. Separate HVAC systems are in place for both the office and common space and the apparatus floor. There is no dedicated exhaust extraction system, but exhaust fans do help with removal of exhaust and air exchange in the apparatus area.

Apparatus housed here include an Engine, Tender, Rescue and two Wildland Units. A tandem enclosed Emergency Livestock Response trailer is parked outside adjacent to an outside storage building. Open metal lockers for staff PPE neatly lines the rear wall. This area also has access to a mezzanine (common space) as well as a workbench and tool crib. Able to meet the needs for years to come the building itself emits pride in service and community.



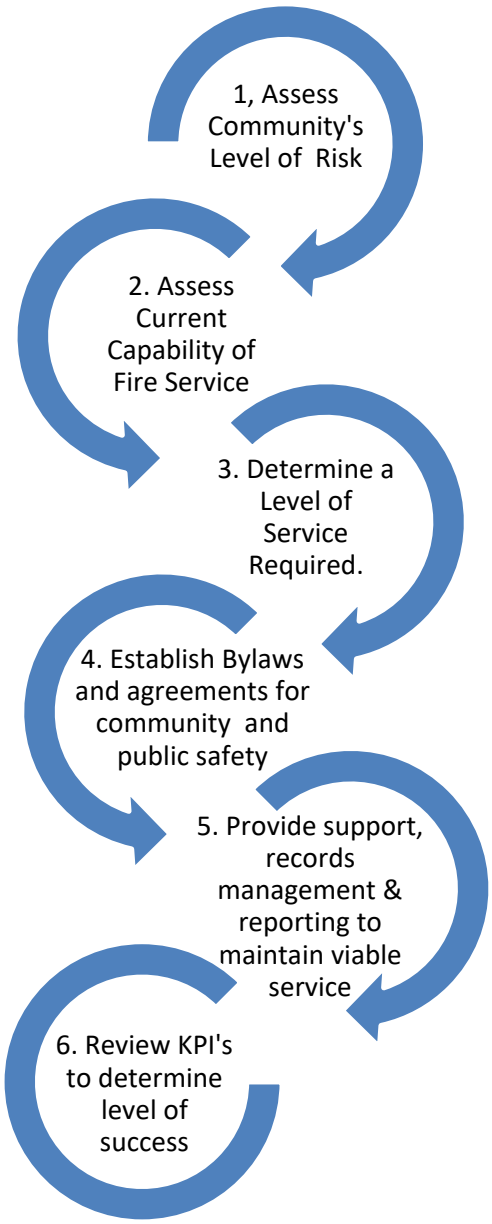
Station No. 7 Barnwell

Constructed by the Village of Barnwell in 2016 this relatively new construction is a fine example of commitment to public safety by the Village of Barnwell and MD of Taber. This three-bay fire station has available space for three major units of apparatus. Currently staged in the station are an Engine and Wildland unit. In winter months (mid-October to mid-April) an MD water truck is staged to assist with the supply of water for firefighting.

The building itself is wood frame construction on a concrete foundation. Inside and outside walls are finished with metal siding. Heating is hydronic with auxiliary NG unit heaters on the apparatus floor. Exhaust fans assist with the air exchange and removal of exhaust gasses from vehicle operation.

There is a shared living space that includes the office workstation, meeting area and washroom with showers and laundry. Also on the main floor is the utility and storage room. Above the shared space is a mezzanine for storage. The west wall is fitted with open lockers for personal storage of PPE. There is also a small workbench and a portable rack for hanging hose and equipment to dry.

Appendix C: Level of Service



PROCESS

The use of this process can provide both Council and Administration a roadmap or template on consultation and discussion regarding the best way to reach a desirable goal for the protection and public safety within the MD.

Steps 1 and 2 of the process is to provide focus on the municipalities risk, capabilities, goals, objectives, and structure.

Steps 3 and 4 can be achieved when the MD has established its current state of the LOS. The MD will now understand what LOS is achievable and can establish the proper bylaws and agreements for community and public safety.

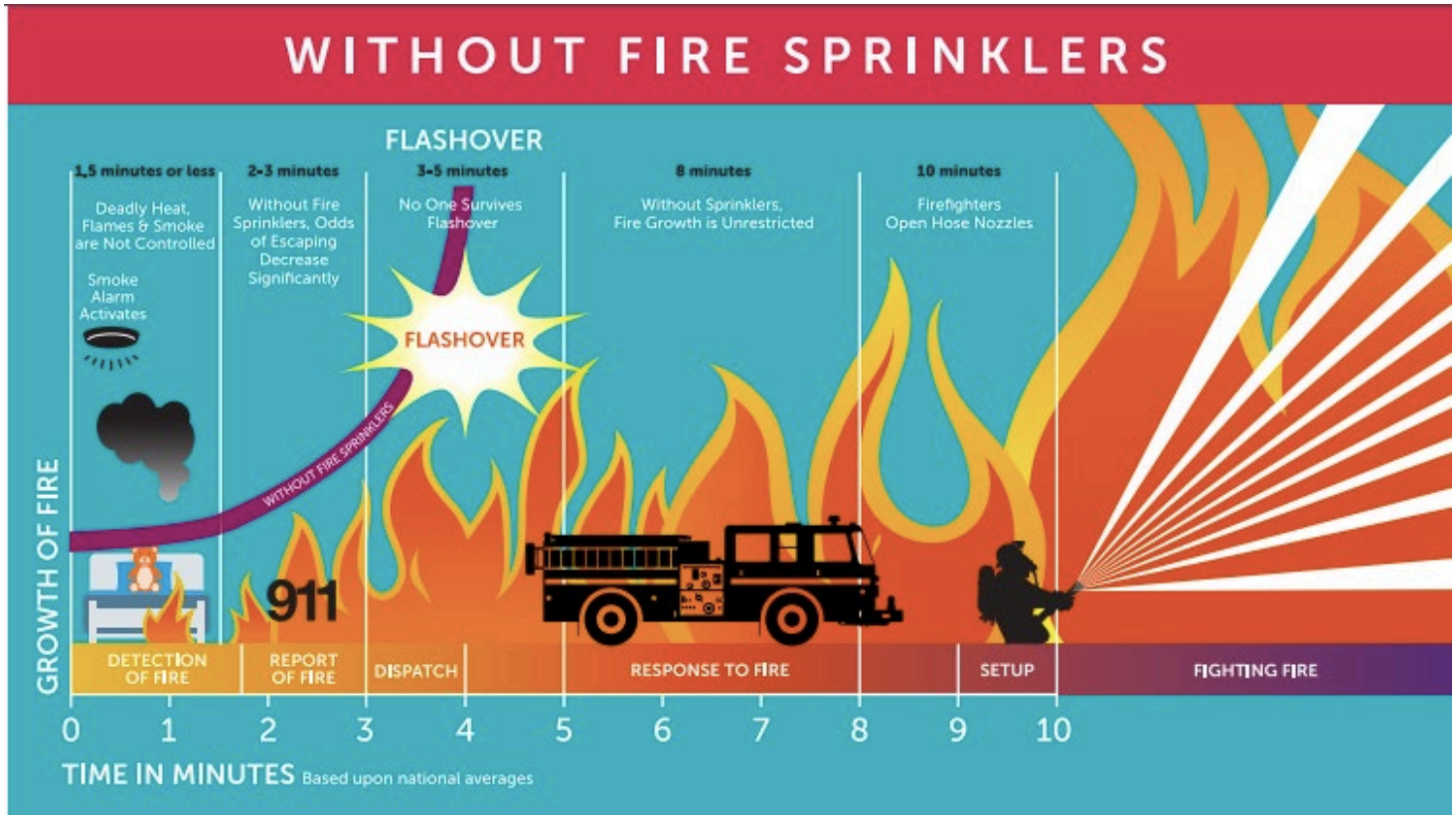
Steps 5 and 6 provides support, guidance, measures, and principles that foster continuous improvement. When a Fire Service achieves continuous improvement. The entire Fire Service will be working in unison to provide the LOS service expected of the community and themselves.

Once these elements are realized cooperation with neighboring municipalities is key to establishing agreements that benefit the entire region and provides adequate staffing to deal with even the most serious of emergency events.

Industry changes including light weight residential construction, new construction materials, community development plans, modern dwelling contents and compartmentalisation have led to extremely high heat release rates during fire events. These factors all affect fire behavior, life safety, and shorten our available time to get fires under control.

The graphic below indicates why an organized, efficient, and measured approach is necessary in the modern Fire Service. Fire Service leadership must respond to this call to action.

Level of Service Matrix



SAMPLE ONLY: Minimum Level of Service Requirement				
Service or System	**Service Type**	**Description**	**Required Skills**	**Comments**
Fire Suppression - Structural Exterior Operations	Core Service	Ability to respond and attempt a defensive exterior fire attack of a common structure	Based on NFPA 1001. Water Supply; Hydrant use; Extinguish Class 'A' fires; Salvage; Overhaul; Hose line use; Scene preservation; SCBA use	**Compulsory** Optimal staff of 4 or more **Staff required: minimum 4**
Medical Co-Response **Staff Required: minimum 2**	Core Service	Public Aid / Medical Response. Generally, fire crews will arrive before AHS/EMS services and can provide immediate lifesaving procedures such as CPR and AED.	Based on Industry best practice. Alberta Health services 'MFR-Medical First Response' program; Advanced First Aid and CPR may suffice.	**Compulsory** No less than 2 staff. No single person response for safety of staff.
Motor Vehicle Collisions **Staff Required: minimum 3**	Core Service	Response to MVCs on municipal roadways	Based on NFPA 1001; Scene Safety; Traffic Control; Hazard Awareness unique to Vehicles; Fire Attack/Suppression;	**Compulsory** Optimal staff of 4 or more
Wildland / Grassland Fires **Staff required: minimum - 3**	Core Service	Response and extinguishment of grass fires within the Village.	Fire attack wildland/grassland; control perimeter; General wildland knowledge NFPA 1051; Combat ground fire	**Compulsory** High frequency event Optimal staff of 4 or more
Alarms & False Alarms **Fire & CO (carbon monoxide)**	Core Service	Consistent response to fire alarms; monitored & unmonitored systems; private systems, commercial & industrial occupancies	As per structure fire - exterior	**Compulsory** Municipal Demand Zone: see response below. Optimal staff of 4 +
Dangerous Goods - HazMat Awareness Electrical Hazards	Core Service	Ability to identify hazardous material releases and spills as well as electrical hazards and protect the public from such hazard using zoning.	NFPA 1074; containment of basic fuel spills, Zoning, public safety initiatives; awareness of Hazardous sites within the municipality.	**Compulsory** Safety of staff and public from these hazards **Staff required: minimum 3**
New Recruit Orientation Dedicated program is suggested	Core Service	Introduction and understanding of OHS health & safety; Dept. goals & objectives; safe work practices; basic hazard assessment; understanding chain of command; general work practice, routines & expectations	Self and situational awareness; ability to use checklists, use electronic training versions and JPR resources; ability for self-study	**Compulsory** Can appear overwhelming to new recruits. This can be overcome with a well-designed recruit intake program & support.
Recruit Initial Training	Core Service	Minimum training required to satisfy OHS and have new staff operate safely on the fire ground or emergency scene	NFPA 1001; familiar with Dept. SOPs & SOGs	**Compulsory** Opportunities exist to partner with neighboring emergency services to optimise training.
Apparatus Operations	Core Service	Competency in operation and routine testing and inspection of fire apparatus.	NFPA 1002; driving, backing, use of mirror, use of spotter, ability to operate apparatus in restricted spaces, pump operation etc.	**Compulsory**

SAMPLE ONLY: Level of Service Requirement (Cont'd)				
Service or System	**Service Type**	**Description**	**Required Skills**	**Comments**
Team Lead	Core Service	Leadership is key in the Fire Service. Properly trained team leads are a necessity to operate efficiently and maintain the highest standard of safety and service to the public.	NFPA 1021 & 1006; Officer Pro Qualification or equivalent; Strong leadership skills, good communications skills; Ability to perform a size up	**Compulsory** Officer training should not be overlooked. Strong leadership is key to organizational stability and effective operations.
Municipal Zone Demands Response Model (expectation)	Core Service	Minimum of 3 trained staff with a response time of 30 minutes, meeting this objective 85% of the time. (example)	Commitment by Staff; clear expectations by FD Administration.	**Compulsory** Should be included as part of an SOG within the department.
Traffic Control Staffing required minimum 2	Core Service	Basics of safety and tactics in response to MVC's with the sole purpose of traffic control	Part of 1001; Scene safety while working on roadway; using proper PPE & equipment; awareness to assist with extrication	**Optional** Emergency operations on roadways is extremely dangerous for 1st Responders Optimal staffing 4
Fire Suppression - Structural interior Operations Staff required: minimum 4	Core Service	Competencies related to common structures with an offensive/interior mode of operations	NFPA 1001; Team lead requirements for interior operations	**Optional** Adequate staffing, training & experience required
Public Education	Core Service	Educating your community in fire prevention, safety, and emergency preparedness.	Ability to use a multitude of resources available for programs within the community.	**Optional** Excellent opportunities for public relations and promotion of fire and community safety
Vehicle Firefighting Staffing required: minimum 3	Core Service	Response and extinguishment of vehicle fires and awareness of unique hazards associated with these fires.	NFPA 1001; Awareness of unique hazards; extinguishment of metal fires; safety of working on a roadway; use of reflective high visibility clothing.	**Optional** Optimal Staff 4
Vehicle Extrication Staffing required: minimum 3	Core Service	Extrication of entrapped, injured, or disabled persons from a damaged vehicle using a variety of hand and hydraulic tools.	Based on NFPA 1001 & OHS Codes. Work as part of a team, proper use of hand & power tools, awareness of unique hazards and vehicle stabilization.	**Optional** May provide this service if properly trained staff and tools are available Optimal staff 4
This Service Level Document was prepared by TSI (Transitional Solutions Inc.) to allow Council to review and consider amendments to the level of Fire & Emergency services provided to the MD of Taber. The Document, its scope and requirements are based on best practices, OHS codes, NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) standards, and the AFCA (Alberta Fire Chiefs Association) Risk Assessment and core competency tools. It is designed as a minimum requirement Level of Service that the Fire Department should attempt to meet or exceed. It should not be considered as a limiting tool but rather a starting point and planning tool, in efforts to exceed expectations and enhance service to the community by MD of Taber Fire and Emergency Services.				
It also needs to be understood that to operate safely a minimum number of staff with different levels of training are required to respond. Therefore, each Service or System has a staff requirement noted. As indicated, most of the events that the Fire Department will respond to except for Medical Co-Response, will require a 3-member team. Each event requires a Command				

position or Team Lead, an Operator, and a member for fire attack, rescue or other task as assigned by Command. Optimal staffing is noted in the comments section. People/Volunteers are our most valuable resource. Without our volunteer members we cannot provide any form of emergency service to the community. Therefore, it is paramount that Council, ultimately responsible for Public Safety, supports the volunteers and invests in their training and the Fire Department as a whole.
Based on the first arriving vehicle, an example of the Level of Service is described as: (example only) ***"Fire and Emergency Response should include a minimum of three, appropriately trained staff, responding with an Engine or other apparatus (as assigned in the response model) arriving on scene within 30 minutes, 85% of the time."*** **The recommendation is designed to be achievable and sustainable.** ***Represents current Level of Service as described in the current Fire Services Bylaw. TSI assumes that vehicle extrication and traffic control is considered as part of the rescue response as described in the bylaw.**

Throughout this report, TSI recommends that Council review the Level of Service and in consultation with Fire Services administration consider amendments to the Level of Service to include:

- Minimum staffing requirement (non-negotiable) for each incident type
- Include response to Alarms incidents (no visible fire or smoke) and False Alarms
- Include response to CO (carbon monoxide) alarm incidents
- Response to dangerous goods incidents (awareness level)

To look closer at developing an appropriate level of service, consider using the AFCA Core Competency Tool. This tool can be found at http://abfirechiefs.ca/

Appendix D: Recruitment & Retention Initiatives

Retention Initiatives

- Create an annual event (e.g., firefighter's recognition ceremony) that not only allows the different stations to come together but also promotes the contribution the Fire Service makes to the region and provides annual service recognition to members who have served their communities. Leaders could use this event to recognize years of service, retirements, significant events, or other noteworthy acts by members. This event could also have the added benefit of acting as a fundraiser for the Regional Fire Service.
- Fire station dinner before practice night, set at regular intervals to create tradition. Perhaps monthly or bi-monthly.
- Establish a system to track hours for firefighters. Firefighters not receiving remuneration have potential tax credit options for volunteer firefighters. Firefighters may be able to claim a tax credit of $450 (15% of $3,000) if you meet the certain requirements:
    - You are a volunteer firefighter.
    - With the year you performed at least 200 hours of eligible service.
- A point system could be developed rewarding members who consistently show up for training and incidents. These points could be used for the members to acquire station wear, personal gear, or other fire department goods.
- Public recognition, peer recognition and recognition using social media.
- Rewards for years of service such as uniforms, equipment, and other items.
- Training engaged junior firefighters, senior firefighters, and officers for positions beyond their current rank where deemed appropriate. These types of training opportunities for these strong members often leads to further engagement and leadership from them.
- Consider recruitment for other positions that support the fire department or public safety including medical response, public educator for fire and safety, records management, equipment management, etc.

Recruitment Initiatives

- Clear and available information be provided on the MD of Taber website about how individuals can become involved in the Fire Service. (i.e., Firefighter recruitment)
- Utilize social media accounts that can act on behalf of all the area Fire Service to highlight their activities and creates excitement about joining the service.
- Holding recruitment drives at events attended by a large portion of the region (e.g., tradeshows, regional events, etc.).
- Providing a small incentive for members to bring a friend to a recruitment night.
- Developing a video that interviews a few firefighters about their experiences as a volunteer firefighter and share it on social media. Add some video of responses in as well.
- Connect with high schools and consider a "Sponsor a Firefighter" program to sponsor a new graduate to get their fire training at a recognized college.
- Start a junior firefighter program for the region. Again, working with the high schools and school boards, attempting to get course credit for students being involved with the Fire Service as a trade opportunity.

Other valuable resources for identifying recruitment and retention strategies include the:

1. Alberta Fire Chiefs Association Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment & Retention Toolkit: https://afca.ca/latest-news/item/238-volunteer-firefighter-recruitment-and-retention-toolkit

2. US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services: https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-310.pdf

Pay Scale Examples

Schedule of Wages 2020						
	Example 1:				Example 2:	
Description	Year	% of 5th year FF	Hourly		Description	Hourly
Chief		151%	$33.76		Chief, Deputy	$31.63
Deputy Chief		142%	$31.75			
Fire Investigator		138%	$30.86			
Fire Marshall		138%	$30.86			
Captain		127%	$28.40		Captain	$29.51
Lieutenant		110%	$24.60		Lieutenant	$27.34
Firefighter	10th	106%	$23.70		Engineer	$25.15
	8th	102%	$22.81			
1st Class	5th	100%	$22.36		1st Class	$22.94
	4th	90%	$20.12		2nd Class	$20.78
	3rd	80%	$17.89		3rd Class	$18.58
	2nd	75%	$16.77		4th Class	$16.40
	Prob/1st	70%	$15.65		Recruit	$15.00
2% COLA						

These examples of emergency response pay are based on two similarly sized Fire Services and their most recent pay scales. In a true volunteer Fire Service, they could be referred to as honorariums or extra duty agreements. The information is as current as can be expected.

There are many other variables not included in the basic chart including:

- Pay or emergency work on statutory holidays (generally 1.5 times) regular wage
- Minimum call out (generally 2 hours), but there are many options
- Role Allowances: Example – Deputy Chief $2000/yr. – Member on floor $500/yr.
- Overtime: example – calls exceeding 8 hrs. in a 24-hour period
- On-Call Pay: example – Holiday weekend on-call standby pay to ensure staffing (generally paid at 2.00 to 2.25/hr)
- Other pay: Seminar and training attendance; duty approved by Fire Chief etc.

Appendix E: Detailed Summary Account

MD of Taber Fire Services 2021 Fire Operating Budget by Account

Code	Description	Total	% of Total Expenses
Revenue			
830	RFA Revenue	$40,000	14.6%
835	RFA Vauxhall contribution	$64,580	23.5%
840	RFA EMS coordinator	$24,000	8.7%
860	Taber Fire Department revenue	$100,000	36.4%
862	Hamlet Fire Department revenue	$15,000	5.5%
864	Barnwell Fire Department revenue	$5,000	1.8%
866	Barnwell contribution	$25,910	9.4%
	Total Revenue	**$274,490**	**100.0%**
Expense			
110	Fire Chief Honorarium	$219,958	18.0%
120	FF Honorarium	$201,250	16.5%
131	LAPP Pension	$31,128	2.6%
132	CPP Contributions	$6,170	0.5%
133	EI Contributions	$2,490	0.2%
138	Health and Dental	$13,152	1.1%
140	LTD and Life Insurance	$2,893	0.2%
198	Works Compensation	$10,483	0.9%
	Total Salary & Benefits	**$487,524**	**39.9%**
211	Staff Training	$60,000	4.9%
217	Telephone	$35,200	2.9%
239	Insurance	$54,000	4.4%
	Total Business & Training Expenses	**$149,200**	**12.2%**
215	Disaster Services	$2,500	0.2%
239	Contracted Services	$100,000	8.2%
268	Custom / Contract Work	$70,700	5.8%
510	911 Dispatch	$62,047	5.1%
	Total Contacts and Services	**$235,247**	**19.3%**
531	Fuel and Oil	$21,100	1.7%
535	General Supplies - Fire	$150,000	12.3%

MD of Taber Fire Services

2021 Fire Operating Budget - By Account

Code	Description	Total	% of Total Expenses
538	Misc. Expenses	$8,800	0.7%
543	Computers & Radios	$14,800	1.2%
	Total Supplies and Materials	**$194,700**	**16.0%**
540	Equipment Repairs	$85,500	7.0%
542	Building Repairs	$24,200	2.0%
	Total Repair & Maintenance	**$109,700**	**9.0%**
550	Utilities	$43,996	3.6%
	Total Utilities	**$43,996**	**3.6%**
	Total Operating Expenses	**$1,220,367**	**100.0%**
	Net	**$945,877**	

Appendix F: Detailed Account by Cost Centre

MD of Taber Fire Services 2021 Fire Operating Budget - By Cost Center

		Cost Centers							
Code	Description	Fire Protection (General)	Regional Fire Authority (Vauxhall)	MD Fire Department	Grassy Lake Fire Dept.	Enchant Fire Dept.	Hays Fire Dept.	Barnwell Fire Dept.	Total
Revenue									
830	RFA Revenue	$0	$40,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$40,000
835	RFA Vauxhall contribution	$0	$64,580	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$64,580
840	RFA EMS coordinator	$0	$24,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$24,000
860	MD Taber Fire Department revenue	$0	$0	$100,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$100,000
862	Hamlet Fire Department revenue	$0	$0	$0	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$0	$15,000
864	Barnwell Fire Department revenue	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$5,000	$5,000
866	Barnwell contribution	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$25,910	$25,910
	Total Revenue	**$0**	**$128,580**	**$100,000**	**$5,000**	**$5,000**	**$5,000**	**$30,910**	**$274,490**
Expense									
110	Fire Chief Honorarium	$0	$108,975	$103,483	$2,500	$2,500	$2,500	$0	$219,958
120	FF Honorarium	$0	$46,000	$55,000	$35,000	$27,000	$22,500	$15,750	$201,250
131	LAPP Pension	$0	$16,666	$14,462	$0	$0	$0	$0	$31,128
132	CPP Contributions	$0	$3,085	$3,085	$0	$0	$0	$0	$6,170
133	EI Contributions	$0	$1,245	$1,245	$0	$0	$0	$0	$2,490
138	Health and Dental	$0	$6,576	$6,576	$0	$0	$0	$0	$13,152
140	LTD and Life Insurance	$0	$1,533	$1,360	$0	$0	$0	$0	$2,893
198	Works Compensation	$0	$3,699	$3,878	$1,033	$772	$647	$454	$10,483
	Total Salary & Benefits	**$0**	**$187,779**	**$189,089**	**$38,533**	**$30,272**	**$25,647**	**$16,204**	**$487,524**
211	Staff Training	$0	$19,000	$20,000	$6,500	$5,000	$5,000	$4,500	$60,000
217	Telephone	$0	$10,000	$9,000	$5,000	$5,100	$5,100	$1,000	$35,200
239	Insurance	$0	$9,000	$9,000	$9,000	$9,000	$9,000	$9,000	$54,000
	Total Business & Training Expenses	**$0**	**$38,000**	**$38,000**	**$20,500**	**$19,100**	**$19,100**	**$14,500**	**$149,200**
215	Disaster Services	$2,500	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$2,500
239	Contracted Services	$100,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$100,000
268	Custom / Contract Work	$0	$8,000	$62,000	$0	$0	$0	$700	$70,700
510	911 Dispatch	$62,047	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$62,047
	Total Contacts and Services	**$164,547**	**$8,000**	**$62,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$700**	**$235,247**
531	Fuel and Oil	$0	$7,500	$9,000	$1,200	$1,000	$1,200	$1,200	$21,100
535	General Supplies - Fire	$0	$25,000	$65,000	$14,000	$17,000	$17,000	$12,000	$150,000

MD of Taber Fire Services
2021 Fire Operating Budget - By Cost Center

		Cost Centers							
Code	**Description**	**Fire Protection (General)**	**Regional Fire Authority (Vauxhall)**	**MD Fire Department**	**Grassy Lake Fire Dept.**	**Enchant Fire Dept.**	**Hays Fire Dept.**	**Barnwell Fire Dept.**	**Total**
538	Misc. Expenses	$0	$3,300	$2,500	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$0	$8,800
543	Computers & Radios	$0	$7,400	$7,400	$0	$0	$0	$0	$14,800
	Total Supplies and Materials	**$0**	**$43,200**	**$83,900**	**$16,200**	**$19,000**	**$19,200**	**$13,200**	**$194,700**
540	Equipment Repairs	$0	$8,000	$25,000	$10,000	$27,500	$10,000	$5,000	$85,500
542	Building Repairs	$0	$7,500	$7,500	$3,400	$2,400	$3,400	$0	$24,200
	Total Repair & Maintenance	**$0**	**$15,500**	**$32,500**	**$13,400**	**$29,900**	**$13,400**	**$5,000**	**$109,700**
550	Utilities	$0	$16,700	$12,296	$4,500	$4,500	$6,000	$0	$43,996
	Total Utilities	**$0**	**$16,700**	**$12,296**	**$4,500**	**$4,500**	**$6,000**	**$0**	**$43,996**
	Total Operating Expenses	**$164,547**	**$309,179**	**$417,785**	**$93,133**	**$102,772**	**$83,347**	**$49,604**	**$1,220,367**
	Net	**$164,547**	**$180,599**	**$317,785**	**$88,133**	**$97,772**	**$78,347**	**$18,694**	**$945,877**

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