PEI FIRE SERVICES

December 2013

Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis

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Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis

Prepared for the PEI Firefighters Association

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

Prepared by MRSB Consulting Services

December 2013

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PEI Fire Services Advisory Committee was formed in 2010 to guide the future of the fire service in the province, examine issues brought forward and develop workable solutions for the future sustainability of the Prince Edward Island Fire Service. The PEI Firefighters Association, in support of PEI Fire Services Advisory Committee goals and objectives, commissioned an Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis Study of PEI Fire Services to provide benchmark information and to help inform future directions, decisions, and initiatives.

The study was conducted by MRSB Consulting Services and retired Charlottetown Fire Chief, Mr. Bill Hogan. Information was gathered through literature review and an online survey of fire departments, companies, and municipalities, and from key stakeholder interviews and regional meetings. The following nine areas were included for analysis:

1. Fire Marshal's Office
2. PEI Firefighters Association
3. PEI Fire School
4. Provincial Hazardous Materials Response Team
5. Municipalities
6. Fire Departments and Fire Companies
7. Fire Service Funding
8. Support Systems and Organizations
9. External Influencers

The environmental scan of each area involved study of their mandate, governance operations/functions and resources. The results of this scan form the bulk of this report. The PEI Fire Service has many strengths and PEI residents receive good service from dedicated and committed volunteers. However, there are also societal and demographic changes and trends as well as unique to PEI characteristics that are having an impact on the delivery of Fire Services in the province. These factors have led to gaps that if not acknowledged and addressed could result in risk events and greater challenges for firefighters and PEI residents in the future.

This report identifies and discusses a number of these gaps and challenges as they relate to each of the nine main areas noted above. The gaps are summarized as follows:

Fire Marshal's Office

- The FMO is constrained by a lack of human and financial resources to fully act on all aspects of its mandate.

PEI Firefighters Association PEI Fire School

- The Association and School have key volunteers who are nearing retirement age.
- It is becoming more difficult for the PEI Firefighters Association and the Fire School to spearhead new projects and initiatives and ensure the continuity of existing operations without a paid Executive Director or comparable resource.
- The School is underutilized by some departments and companies and there are no province wide training standards or incentives for volunteer firefighters and their related departments and companies to aspire to.
- The School does not have third party accreditation.

The Hazardous Materials Response Team

- The current funding model for the team is insufficient to maintain operations and conduct necessary upgrades to apparatus and equipment.
- A functioning and capable Hazardous Materials Response Team is required to address public safety risks and obligations to Atlantic Canada partners.

Municipalities

- There is a lack of capacity within small municipalities to provide oversight and guidance to their fire departments, to manage potential conflict of interest situations, and to ensure written agreements or contracts with clear definitions of roles and service levels are in place. It is important to note that lack of written agreements and contracts is not limited to small municipaltities and the risks associated are widespread.
- Current legislation does not require PEI Municipalities to have an emergency measures plan.

Fire Departments and Fire Companies

- The third, fourth and fifth largest communities on PEI, Stratford with a population of 8,574, Cornwall with a population of 5,162, and Montague with a population of 1,895 do not have their own fire departments. Are safeguards in place to protect residents from an unexpected interruption of services?
- There are places in the province where residents do not pay a fire tax but do receive fire coverage.
- Residents in the same community can be serviced by different fire departments or companies, receive a different level of service and/or pay a different rate.
- Current Mutual Aid agreements are high level and do not provide details on the terms and conditions of providing the aid (e.g. type of equipment, number of personnel, time of response, etc.).
- All fire departments and companies find it difficult to get enough responders for daytime incidents.
- Many companies and departments do not have a detailed written contract for the services they provide or written administrative and operating procedures.
- There is not a good understanding of the distribution of services across the province and whether there is duplication of service capacity within certain geographic areas.
- There are no province wide standards or guidelines for service and training levels to serve as a benchmark for departments/companies to aspire to or measure themselves against.
- Not all fire departments and companies want to assume the Medical First Responder role. It can make it harder to recruit and retain firefighters. Providing Medical First Responder services are supported through fire taxes and not the health budget.

Funding and Other Supports

- Negotiations between the fire district committee and potential service providers (the fire departments/companies) have historically been focused on meeting the concerns of ratepayers to keep rates low and not on the actual expenditures required to support the type or quality of service ratepayers are receiving (e.g Medical First Responder costs, training costs, capital costs).
- The fire district rate structure process and the limited tax base of many municipalitites has resulted in great variation across the province as to the resources and capability of individual fire departments and companies.
- Some PEI residents do not pay a fire tax but do receive fire coverage.

Supporting Systems and Organizations

- Current civic adddress signs (one sided, parallel to the road) are difficult for emergency reponders to see and read without slowing or stopping their vehicle.
- The current communications system firefighters use to communicate with dispatch and vice versa is unreliable. There is no capability to track response times.
- Not all firefighters have access to text messaging, so it is not a universal communication option.
- The Critical Incident Stress Management Committee, like much of the fire service, relies on volunteers for continued operations. This could result in an interruption of service and does result in a limited number of services being available (e.g. families of firefighters affected by a critical incident are not eligible for service)

External Influencers

- The PEI Fire Prevention Act is outdated. It does not adequately address current expectations of the Fire Marshal's Office or the full scope of response activities provided by the fire service.
- PEI has limited legislation related to ensuring the fire service and firefighters and their families receive compensation and/or benefits for a wide range of possible health and safety issues.
- Fire departments and companies want provincial guidleines with respect to administrative and operating procedures.

The gaps identified cannot be addressed overnight. We are a small province, with a largely volunteer fire service and with only 30 percent of our landmass covered by a municipally incorporated city, town or community. In addition there is a considerable degree of variation in how fire service providers are governed and funded. To add to this complexity, the service is now such that the time commitment is pushing the boundaries of the definition of a volunteer service. **Volunteer firefighting** is quickly becoming **volunteer emergency services** in PEI.

PEI is not alone in experiencing societal trends, provincial variances and role complexity. Other provinces and jurisdictions from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador have made changes to ensure the sustainability of their fire service and the protection of their residents. It is hoped this study will be the first step in a collaborative process to develop a comprehensive plan and recommendations for PEI's Fire Service - a plan that consider the needs of firefighters and residents as well as the need for accountability, fiscal responsibility and effective and efficient utilization of resources.

Prince Edward Island’s Fire Service faces significant challenges in providing prompt and effective fire and emergency services in the future. Financial constraints and limited human resources are placing pressure on the Fire Marshal's Office. These same issues are also impacting some Municipal Fire Departments and Private Fire Companies . Only by aggressively confronting these challenges will the Island’s Fire Service be able to meet the new expectations and challenges of the 21st century.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In December of 2010 the provincial Minster of Justice and Public Safety established a Fire Services Advisory Committee (FSAC) to guide the future of the fire service in the province, examine issues brought forward and develop workable solutions for the future sustainability of the Prince Edward Island Fire Service. The FSAC has 15 members from urban and rural fire departments and is co-chaired by a representative of the PEI Firefighters Association (PEIFFA) and the Provincial Fire Marshals Office (FMO). The PEIFFA, in support of FSAC goals and objectives, commissioned an Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis Study of PEI Fire Services to provide benchmark information and to help inform future directions, decisions, and initiatives.

MRSB Consulting Services and subject matter expert, Mr. Bill Hogan, Retired Charlottetown Fire Chief, were selected through a competitive bidding process to conduct the study. The study was guided by a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the PEIFFA, the FMO, the Federation of PEI Municipalities (FPEIM), the provincial Office of Public Safety and Fire Departments and Fire Companies. A list of Steering Committee members is appended. The overall goal of the study was to gain a broad and factual perspective on the operational readiness, administration, governance, risk management, training and due diligence of fire services throughout the province.

The study involved four main research activities.

- A **literature review** of reports from other jurisdictions, and of statistics and data on PEI Fire Services. A list of the external reports reviewed is appended.
- An **online survey** open to all fire departments and companies and PEI municipalities. The survey was completed by 32 of 36 fire departments/companies and 61 of 74 municipalities for an overall response rate of 84%.
- Key **stakeholder interviews** with representatives of the FMO, Dept of Environment, Labour & Justice, PEIFFA and the PEI Fire School, FPEIM, HAZMAT Response Team, Dept of Finance, Energy & Municipal Affairs, Insurance Industry, Critical Incident Stress Management Committee, Fire District Committees, Island EMS and Medacom Atlantic. A list of the key stakeholders interviewed is appended.
- **Regional meetings** in Prince, Kings, and Queens Counties to present and validate survey results with fire service members. The meetings were attended by over 60 firefighters representing 24 fire departments/companies.

Information from all sources was used to prepare this report. A copy of the online survey questions and detailed summaries of the online survey responses are appended. The study was conducted in the period from August to December of 2013.

For the purposes of this study the following were considered to be a part of the PEI Fire Service:

- The Fire Marshal's Office (FMO)
- The PEI Firefighters Association (PEIFFA)
- The PEI Fire School
- The HAZMAT Team
- Municipalities
- Municipal Fire Departments
- Rural Fire Companies
- Fire Districts
- Supporting Organizations and Services such as 911, Dispatching, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Critical Incident Stress Management Committee
- External Influencers such as Provincial Legislation, the Insurance Industry and Industry Standards and Codes such as those developed by the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA)

How each of the above operate and contribute to the PEI Fire Service as well as related gaps are presented in sections 3.0 to 11.0 of this report. Section 12.0 summarizes the gaps identified and presents the gaps of most concern to stakeholders. Section 13.0 concludes the report.

3.0 THE OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL FIRE MARSHAL (FMO)

3.1 GOVERNANCE

The Provincial Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) is a branch of the Office of Public Safety which is a section of Community Safety and Police Policy which is a division of the Department of Environment Justice and Labour. This Department is one of the largest Departments in the Provincial Government with nine divisions and 33 sections.

3.2 MANDATE

The FMO administers the *Fire Prevention Act and Regulations, the Long Service Medal Act* and the *National Fire Safety Code and Standards* (NFPA). The mandate of the Office (FMO) is to provide information, education and leadership to fire departments and companies and various institutional, municipal and emergency service representatives to enhance the protection of Island residents from the devastation of fire and related hazards.

3.3 OPERATIONS

Table 1 illustrates the volume of some of the activities the FMO carries out on an annual basis to fulfill its mandate. The demand for FMO services in the last three years has increased in most areas.

TABLE 1 - FMO ACTIVITIES, 2010-2012

FMO Activity	2012	2011	2010
Fire Inspection Occupancies	431	349	334
Special Events Permits	48	43	N/A
Occupant Capacity Permits	119	N/A	98
Fireworks Permits	26	28	23
Burning Permits	52	43	52
Fire Investigations	75	73	88
Plans Review	183	192	186
Motor Vehicle Registration Forms *	1,065	1,041	N/A
Motor Vehicle License Forms*	418	382	N/A
Personal Vehicle Emergency Lights	101	78	N/A

** The Province of PEI grants a motor vehicle registration and license to active members of the Island Fire Service. The FMO is responsible for issuing these and handles inquiries and requests about this program on a daily basis.*

The FMO prepare and distributes a daily (Monday to Friday) activity report to the Island Fire Service. It includes incident statistics submitted from the agencies that dispatch the Island Fire Service, the on call fire investigator for the Office, forest fire index, road closures, electrical power interruptions, upcoming training courses and other fire service events.

Other activities that the FMO is responsible for include:

- Coordination of advertising for the 32 annual Fire District meetings, provision of advice and recommendations on issues arising from the meetings, and liaison with the Department of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs to ensure committee members receive timely tax information
- Sign off on new fire company applications
- Collection of the annual report and financial statements from the rural fire companies for the Minister and maintenance of a listing of company officers
- Participation in numerous provincial, regional and national Advisory Boards and Working Groups
- Public education
- Responding to various inquiries from individual fire departments and companies

The FMO is being tasked with new and emerging duties outside its current legislated mandate. For example, a service that has evolved and become partial responsibility of the FMO in recent years is the area of Hazardous Materials Response. Additionally, as the fire service becomes more complex in regards to the service it provides (Medical First Responder, specialized rescue, training requirements, etc.) volunteer stakeholders are increasingly looking for advice and guidance. As the only paid resource within the service, the FMO is often the first point of contact for information and direction.

3.4 RESOURCES

3.4.1 STAFFING

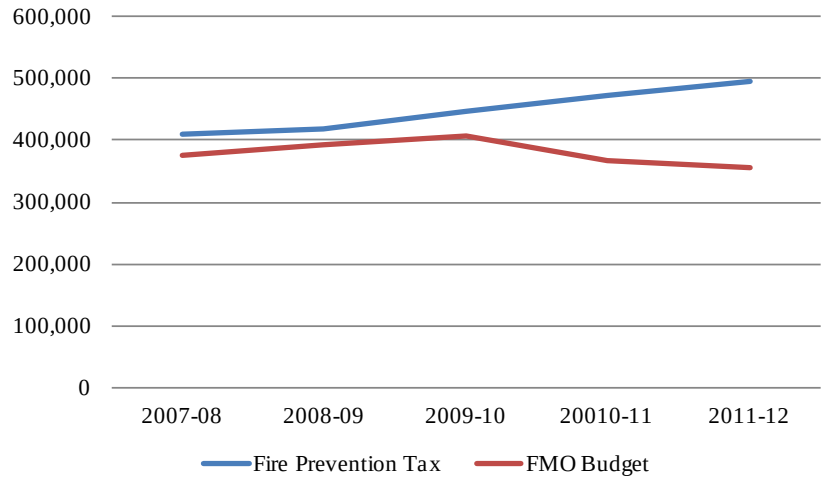
The FMO has three full-time staff - the Fire Marshal, the Deputy Fire Marshal and a Building Safety Inspector. The Office has no administrative support personnel. The three staff are responsible for carrying out fire inspections, fire investigations, reviewing plans of new building developments as they relate to fire codes and standards, carrying out public education programs, and maintaining regular interaction and communication with the Island Fire Service.

3.4.2 BUDGET

As legislated in the Fire Prevention Act, a tax is imposed on insurers transacting fire insurance in the Province of one percent of their gross premiums on contracts of fire insurance, including premiums or part premiums covering fire risks on automobiles, with the explicit purpose of

funding the operations of the FMO. Figure 1 shows the fire tax revenue collected and the budget allocation to the FMO for the fiscal years 2007/08 to 2011/12.

FIGURE 1 - FIRE TAX REVENUE COLLECTED AND FMO BUDGET, 2007/08-2011/12



The budget for the FMO has increased less than $40,000 in nine years. The majority of the budget consists of salaries for the three positions, travel and training, and grants. The grants section includes grants to the PEI Firefighters Association and covers Worker's Compensation payments. The 2012/13 budget estimate is seen in Table 2.

TABLE 2 - BUDGET ESTMATE, 2012/13

Fire Marshal's Office Budget Estimate 2012-2013	
Administration	$ 6,200.00
Materials, Supplies and Services	$ -
Salaries	$ 195,900.00
Travel and Training	$ 25,900.00
Grants	$ 111,400.00
Total	$ 339,400.00

3.5 GAPS - FMO

The FMO is constrained by a lack of human and financial resources to fully act on all aspects of its mandate. Pressures are put on the FMO by the fire service to become involved in activities outside the office's mandate. This indicates there are needs within the fire service that are not being met under the current program of supports.

In particular, additional resources are required to deliver a comprehensive program of fire prevention and education activities and to meet the need for advice and direction being requested by fire departments and companies.

4.0 THE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION (PEIFFA)

4.1 GOVERNANCE

The PEI Firefighters Association (PEIFFA) is a not-for-profit incorporated body under the laws of Prince Edward Island. The Association is governed by a volunteer Board of 10 Directors and the Officers of the Association include President, Vice-President, Past President and Secretary/Treasurer. The Provincial Fire Marshal serves as an ex-officio member of the Board. Board meetings are well attended and held monthly at the PEI Fire School. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held on a rotating basis at locations across the province.

4.2 MANDATE

The PEIFFA is a charitable, educational and philanthropic organization dedicated to promoting the advancement of the fire services through training across Prince Edward Island. Additional objectives of the association are to promote sport activities/fellowship among the brigade, to promote the concerns of the membership and to provide specialized emergency response abilities as approved by the Board of Directors.

4.3 OPERATIONS

The principal operational activity of the PEIFFA is the ownership and management of the PEI Fire School.

4.4 RESOURCES

The Association has full access to the PEI Fire School for meetings, events and other initiatives. It has no paid employees. It receives an annual operating grant ($25,000) and an annual training grant ($8,500) from the Province through the Fire Marshal Offices' budget. The Association receives government funding support for other projects and initiatives on a case by case basis.

4.5 GAPS - PEIFFA

The success and achievements of the PEIFFA are the result of the hard work, commitment and dedication of its volunteer Board of Directors and PEI Fire School volunteers. However, this also means the Association and School are at risk as key volunteers near retirement age with no succession plan in place. Combined with the changing role and complexity of the fire service, it

is increasingly difficult for the PEIFFA and the Fire School to spearhead new projects and initiatives and ensure the continuity of existing operations without a paid Executive Director or comparable resource.

5.0 THE PEI FIRE SCHOOL

5.1 GOVERNANCE

The PEIFFA provides oversight and direction for the PEI Fire School.

5.2 MANDATE

The PEI Fire School is the principal training agency for volunteer firefighters.

5.3 PROGRAMMING AND OPERATIONS

Programs offered at the school include Firefighter Level 1 and 2, Fire Service Management, Technical Rescue Operations, Basic Fire Investigation and Ice Rescue. The fire school provides specialized training for other industries in areas such as confined space and rope rescue. Each student receives approximately 200 hours of training through a combination of classroom and infield instruction. Firefighter Level 1 and 2 and Fire Service Management training have the highest attendance rates. The School has the capacity to increase its training offerings if departments/companies commit to sending more students and/or additional volunteer instructors are recruited. Areas under consideration include leadership and officer training as well as courses on new and emerging emergency situations such as urban search and rescue or structural collapse rescue. On average, the school provides instruction to between 400-425 firefighters annually.

The Fire School has played a key role in improving the capacity of PEI's volunteer firefighters. The School operates in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for governance, operations and training. In the absence of province-wide standards and regulations for fire departments and companies, the PEI Fire School has been the vehicle for ensuring the competency and capability of the PEI Fire Service.

5.4 RESOURCES

5.4.1 INFRASTRUCTURE

The School was established in 1969 and moved to its current location in the Community of Miltonvale Park on the outskirts of Charlottetown in 1989. A new facility was constructed on the site in 2012. It has administration and classroom space and a three-bay truck area. It also serves as the base for the Provincial HAZMAT Team.

5.4.2 HUMAN RESOURCES

Day to day operations are managed by a core team of four to five full-time volunteers. The School has a roster of over 80 volunteer instructors who deliver training as needed. The quality and successes of the School are largely the result of the experienced and dedicated volunteers who fill the role of paid staff. The School's core volunteers are closely connected with the provincial, regional and national firefighting communities and stay abreast of new trends and developments. This is reflected in their adoption of training methods to meet demand, such as exploring the incorporation of online components to existing programs.

Volunteer instructors receive an honorarium per course. The full-time volunteers divide an annual honorarium of $10,000.

5.4.3 FUNDING

The PEIFFA uses the annual operating and training grants it receives from the Province (total of $33,500) to support the operation of the Fire School. Training fees for the volunteer fire service are established based on a cost recovery basis. Revenue can be generated by providing specialized training to external organizations and through the rental of facilities and equipment but promotion of these opportunities is difficult without dedicated personnel. There is limited capacity within the existing budget structure to undertake major capital projects such as the replacement of the training simulator that has been in use for a number of years and will require retrofitting/replacement in the near future.

5.5 GAPS - PEI FIRE SCHOOL

The Fire School, like the PEIFFA, is constrained by a lack of paid resources to coordinate and manage day to day operations. There is a willingness on the part of the PEIFFA and the Fire School to offer additional training programs and take a greater role in fire prevention or in leading service wide initiatives if there were additional resources to assist.

The School is underutilized by some departments and companies. Many fire departments and companies require their firefighters to obtain a basic level of training but it is not universal. There are no province wide training standards or incentives for volunteer firefighters and their related departments and companies to aspire to.

As the roles and responsibilities of firefighters become more complex, so does the need for training to keep pace. Investments in new training and to support more individuals to seek training may be required.

The School does not have third party accreditation. This impacts its ability to attract students interested in having training certifications that are recognized by other jurisdictions and to develop new revenue streams to help support operations.

6.0 THE PROVINCIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (HAZMAT) RESPONSE TEAM

6.1 GOVERNANCE

The PEIFFA is mandated to provide specialized emergency response abilities as approved by the Board of Directors. As such, it provides overall governance for the PEI Hazardous Materials Response Team through a HAZMAT committee which is chaired by the Past President of the Association. The HAZMAT Team and PEI Firefighters Association are a recognized response agency by the Provincial Fire Marshal Office the same as any Fire Service within the Province. Team deployments are approved by the Fire Marshal or Deputy Fire Marshal and then dispatched by Medacom Atlantic.

6.2 MANDATE

The PEI Hazardous Materials Response Team was formed as part of the national response to the terrorism events of September 11, 2001 to enhance public safety in the event of a disastrous event involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and/or explosive materials. It has a province wide mandate.

6.3 OPERATION

The team deploys from the PEI Fire School where its apparatus and equipment are stored. The team has a dedicated Chief. While not operational on a daily basis, the team maintains a regular schedule of training and maintenance. The team uses the Incident Command System when conducting operations. Each deployment has one incident commander, safety officer, planning and logistics officer, finance officer, and operations officer along with a team leader working within a span of control. All deployments are also issued a scribe to document the team`s activities along with any pertinent information from the incident.

6.4 RESOURCES

The team consists of 20 dedicated volunteers who are trained to Awareness, Operations, or Technician level in accordance with NFPA 472. The team currently operates with a trailer that is equipped with Class A & B suits, decontamination equipment, plugging and patching material,

self contained breathing apparatus, and monitoring gas equipment. The team also has the loan of a Heavy Rescue truck for an indefinite term from the Metro Emergency Response group. This truck carries additional equipment such as a breathing air cascade system, generator, lights, communications equipment, and the unit acts as the team's command post.

The team has the capacity to expand to other types of specialty responses if needed.

6.5 GAPS

The Hazardous Materials Response Team receives a $5,000 grant from the Province through the Emergency Measures Organization and in-kind contributions from the PEI Firefighters Association, Metro Emergency Response, and the members themselves to fund capital and operational expenditures. This is insufficient for the team to maintain operations and conduct necessary upgrades to apparatus and equipment.

Although this specialty response has a low call volume, if such an event does occur it has the potential of posing a very significant threat to public safety and of causing widespread negative impacts in the provincial economy (for example, if the Confederation Bridge had to remain closed for an extended period of time). The risk is not theoretical. Ammonia nitrate which is not accepted in two of the Maritimes major ports is shipped into PEI and then transported out of the Province on Island highways. As the Province's economy diversifies, the possibility of more or new hazardous materials entering the province is also very real.

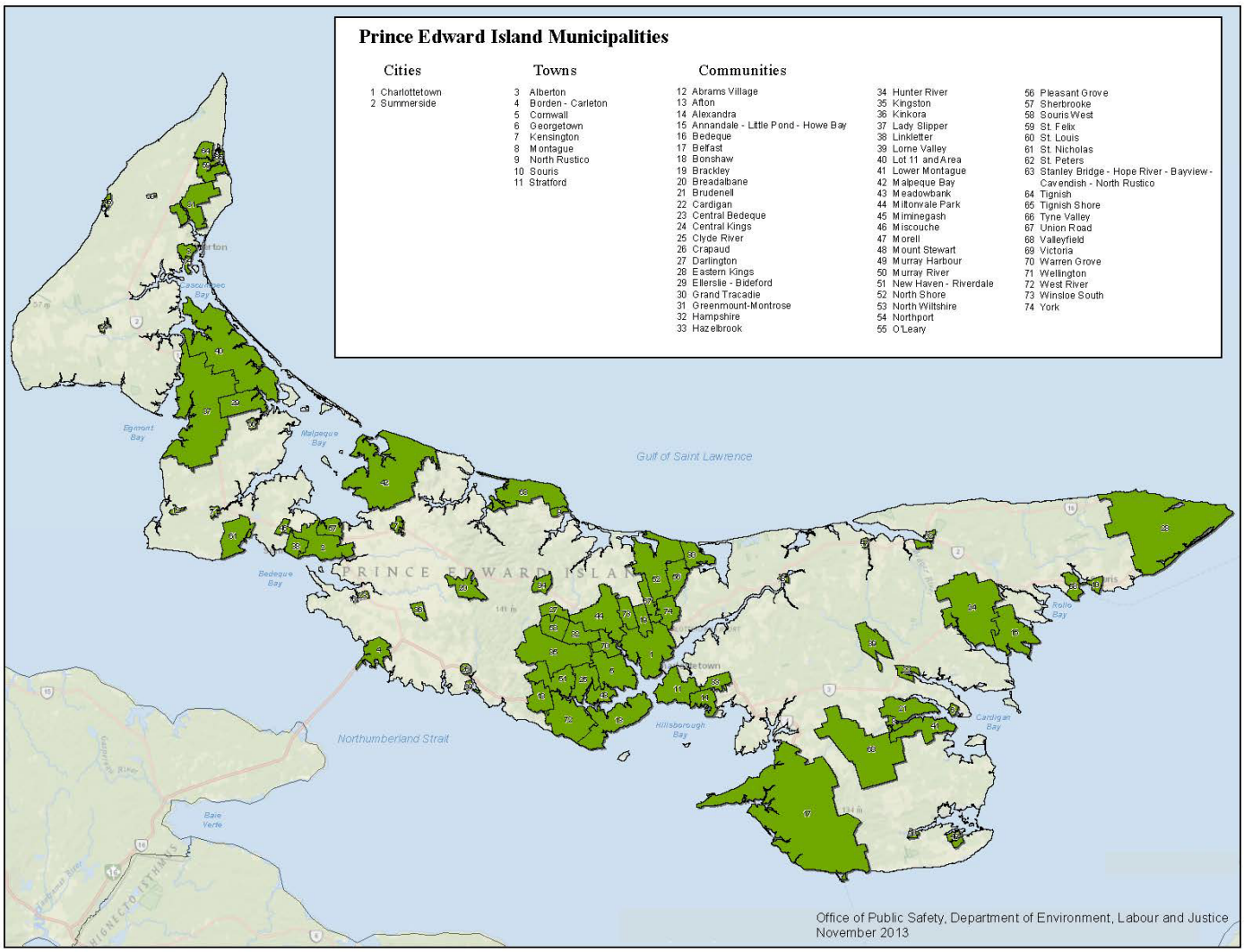
As new high risk to public safety/low occurrence events are identified, the capabilities of the HAZMAT Team could be expanded to meet additional needs without unduly burdening local fire departments and companies. This will not be possible if a sustainability model for the current HAZMAT Team is not adopted.

The Provincial Fire Marshal`s Office is working with other jurisdictions in Atlantic Canada through the Atlantic Hazardous Materials Interoperability Working Group to develop an inter-provincial agreement for Hazardous Materials response. The agreement is being developed in part to facilitate the sharing of resources and to reduce duplication of specialty tactics and equipment. The initiative however, will also expect each province to maintain a certain level of response capacity so they can fulfill their agreement obligations.

7.0 MUNICIPALITIES

Fire services across Canada have long been entrenched as a core responsibility of municipalities. Approximately 30 percent of PEI is covered by a municipally incorporated city (2), town (9) or community (63)[1]. Approximately 68 percent of PEI's population lives in a municipally incorporated area. Figure 2 shows PEI's municipally incorporated areas (dark green shading).

FIGURE 2 - PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES



[1] In 1983 the *Municipalities Act* created two non-city classifications: towns and communities. The 'community' classification generally speaking, subsumed the former classifications of villages and Community Improvement Committees (CICs).

7.1 GOVERNANCE

Municipal fire departments are accountable to the municipality and the municipality is legally responsible for their operation. In PEI many municipalities are small with limited resources to manage their affairs. Other reports have noted there are no precise numbers on the minimum population and property assessments necessary to sustain a viable municipal area. A report prepared by Commissioner Finn in New Brunswick and cited in *New Foundations*, the 2009 report of the Prince Edward Island Commission on Land and Local Governance suggested a reasonable level for rural municipalities that do not provide a full range of services could be a minimum of 2,000 residents and a minimum tax base of $100 million. The *New Foundations* report found 71 PEI municipalities with a population base of less than 2,000 residents (there are 70 currently) and 68 with a tax base of less than $100 million. [2]

7.2 MANDATE

The services that municipalities provide to their residents or ensure that residents receive are a function of their size, administrative structure, tax base, the needs of residents and legal requirements. One of the principal mandates for many small municipalities is ensuring that residents have access to fire services. Seventy-four municipalities in PEI pay for fire protection services out of their municipal budget. The tax base of many municipalities is not sufficient to support a robust administrative structure. This in turn impacts a municipality's capacity for providing oversight and guidance to its departments. It also impacts a municipality's ability to develop, enact and enforce legislation relevant to fire protection such as Fire Service, Fire Prevention and/or Building Code By-Laws.

Most of PEI's smaller municipalities do not have a fire service or fire prevention by-law. About half have policies or by-laws related to minimum standards for residential and commercial occupancies such as building codes and height restrictions. Some municipalities are currently in the process of updating these by-laws or planning to in the near future.

7.3 OPERATIONS

Municipalities respect and value their fire service and firefighters. This was a clear message from all stakeholders consulted during this study. This fact, combined with the limited capacity of some municipalities, has resulted in some municipalities not taking an active role in overseeing the operations of their fire departments and in practice their fire departments operate largely as independent bodies. In many cases this situation has worked well and continues to work well with communities receiving an excellent service with little to no administrative burden. In other cases this has resulted in a lack of trust and transparency between municipalities and their fire

[2] New Foundations, Report of the Commission on Land and Local Governance, December 2009, Page 78

departments and has made it difficult to introduce best practices in regards to governance and accountability.

7.4 RESOURCES

7.4.1 FEDERATION OF PEI MUNICIPALITIES (FPEIM)

The Federation of PEI Municipalities was established in 1957. It currently includes 41 of PEI's 74 municipalities as members. Included in its mandate is the education of its members and other stakeholders about municipal interests, the promotion and development of best practices in municipal governance, and advocacy for its members. Municipalities are increasingly being held accountable for their activities by their residents and provincial and federal governments. Municipalities want to ensure residents are receiving good value for tax dollars spent.

The Federation has developed a template agreement for fire services for its members. Whether a municipality has its own fire department or is contracting service from another municipal fire department or private fire company, the requirement to have a full and documented understanding of the obligations and level of service to be provided is a key best practice of municipal governance.

The Federation is currently developing a workplan for a joint procurement initiative for its members. There could be an opportunity for the Fire Service to partner with the FPEIM on such an initative or to develop a similar initiative for their own members.

As the voice for planned and sustainable municipal development, the FPEIM can play a role in ensuring municipalities have or develop the capacity to effectively manage/secure appropriate fire/emergency services, including their role in valuing the fire service, providing adequate funding and planning for future needs.

7.4.2 MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND PROVINCIAL PLANNING

The Municipal Affairs branch serves as the primary liaison between the Province, municipalities, municipal interest groups such as the FPEIM and the public. It oversees and provides assistance to municipalities in areas such as formation, elections, amalgamation, finance, boundary changes, and the adoption of official plans and land use and subdivision bylaws.

Education relating to municipal matters is an important role for Municipal Affairs. The branch deals with a wide range of information requests, ranging from residents asking about the possibility of forming a municipality, councillors of existing municipalities asking about municipal procedures, or government employees searching for information.

Like the FPEIM, Municipal Affairs is invested in relationships between municipalities and their fire department and/or their contracted fire service provider being conducted in a transparent and accountable manner. One of the key ways to promote this type of relationship is to have written

policies, procedures and contracts/ agreements that clarify roles, responsibilities, and obligations. The Branch is working on developing a policy document for municipally owned fire departments to help improve capacity in this regard.

7.5 GAPS - MUNICIPALITITES

The third, fourth and fifth largest communities on PEI, Stratford with a population of 8,574, Cornwall with a population of 5,162, and Montague with a population of 1,895 do not have their own fire departments. They contract fire coverage services from independent fire companies that provide services to multiple communities. The communities receive a good service and are completely satisfied. However, if an adverse event such as the dissolution of a fire company or the loss of fire department/company assets occurred, the communities could be placed in a risk situation in regards to fire protection.

The lack of capacity within small municipalities has created a number of existing and potential gaps, including:

- The provision of appropriate oversight and guidance to their fire departments. In practice, approximately one third of municipal fire departments operate as independent bodies. This has led to some fire departments not fully appreciating the legal position of the municipality and the need for the municipality to hold the department accountable.
- Appearance of being in a conflict of interest position when members of the municipal government are also members of the Fire Department and proper procedures are not followed to eliminate the potential for bias.
- Lack of written agreements or contracts for contracted services and lack of standard procedures related to governance and operations within municipal departments. **It is important to note that lack of written agreements and contracts is not limited to small municipalities and the risks associated with this lack are widespread.** A lack of written and detailed contracts that allow rates to be evaluated against the services provided can also make it difficult for fire departments/companies to receive adequate funding and to plan for the improvements and upgrades necessary to maintain service levels.
- Unclear roles and responsibilities that make it more challenging to maintain open and transparent communications between municipalities and their fire service provider.

Current legislation does not require PEI Municipalities to have an emergency measures plan.

8.0 FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND FIRE COMPANIES

Prince Edward Island is approximately 5,660 square kilometers in size with an estimated population of 145,000. [3] It is also Canada's most densely populated province with about 26 people per square kilometer. Twenty-four municipal fire departments and twelve private fire companies work to protect the lives and property of the residents of Prince Edward Island through the provision of fire, rescue and emergency services. They rely on the dedication and commitment of over 1,000 volunteer firefighters[4].

8.1 MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

The PEI municipalities with their own fire department are shown below along with their municipal population as of 2011.

Alberton	1,135	Lennox Island[5]	392	O'Leary	812
Borden-Carleton	750	Miminegash	173	Souris	1,173
Cardigan	332	Miscouche	869	St. Peters	253
Charlottetown	34,562	Morell	313	Summerside	14,751
Crapaud	345	Mount Stewart	225	Tignish	779
Georgetown	675	Murray Harbour	320	Tyne Valley	222
Kensington	1,496	Murray River	334	Victoria	104
Kinkora	339	North Rustico	583	Wellington	409

8.2 PRIVATE FIRE COMPANIES

Approximately 70 percent of PEI is comprised of unincorporated areas that have no form of local governance in place. PEI's unincorporated areas include many named small communities with historical boundaries. PEI legislation allows any one or more communities (defined in this usage as an area other than a municipality) or municipalities to apply for the incorporation of a fire company. A fire company is an independent body or individuals organized and equipped to extinguish fires. Ten of PEI's fire companies are governed by the members themselves. The other two companies (East River and Stratford) are governed by an independent Board of

[3] As of July 1, 2013 per Statistics Canada
[4] As of February, 2013 per Fire Marshal's Office information. The Charlottetown Fire Department is the only department that has a small complement of career firefighters in addition to its volunteers.
[5] The Lennox Island Fire Department is owned by the Lennox Island First Nation and is considered a federal fire department.

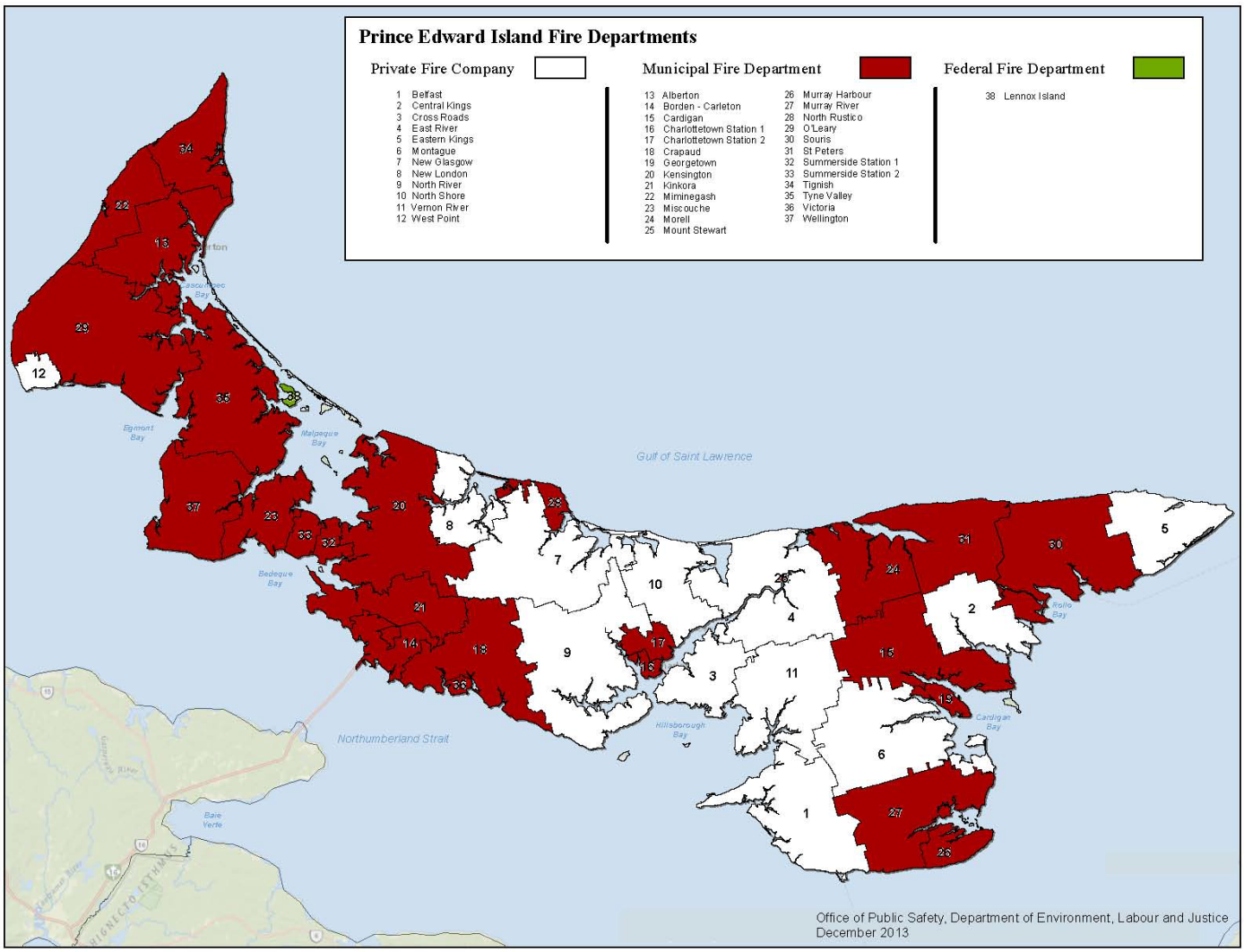
Directors. However, seven of the eleven Directors of the Board of the Strafford Fire Company are appointed by the Town of Stratford.

Ten of the fire companies provide service to a combination of incorporated and unincorporated areas. Two of the companies, Belfast and Eastern Kings, provide service to a single municipal entity only. PEI's private fire companies include:

Belfast	East River	New Glasgow	North Shore
Central Kings	Eastern Kings	New London	Vernon River
Crossroads	Montague	North River	West Point

Figure 3 shows areas covered by a fire department and those covered by a fire company.

FIGURE 3 - AREAS COVERED BY FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND FIRE COMPANIES*



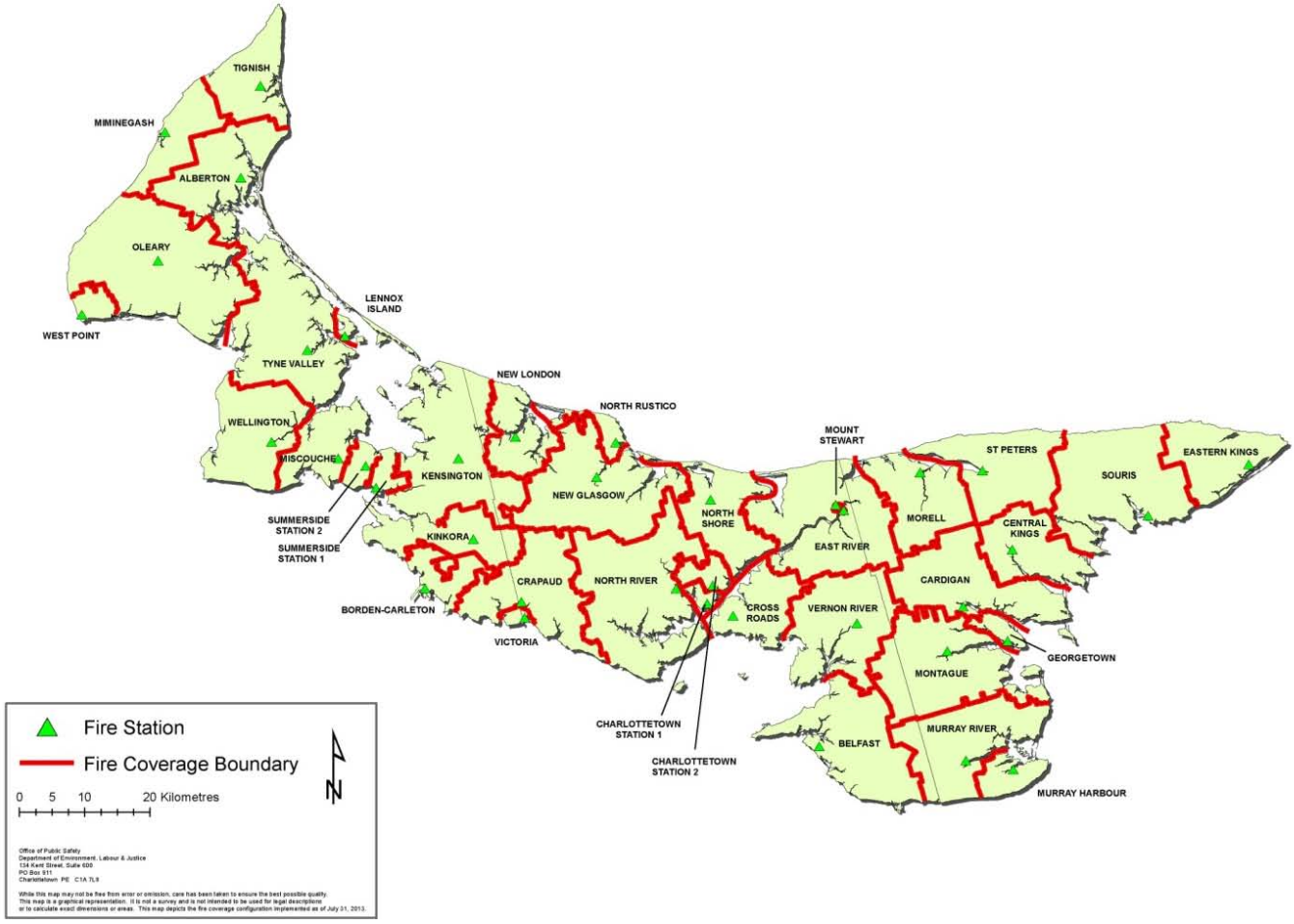
*The figure shows 38 fire departments/companies because the Charlottetown and Summerside Fire Departments each have two stations.

8.3 SERVICE PROVISION

8.3.1 CONTRACTED SERVICES

Municipalities that don't have their own fire department and unincorporated areas of the Province receive fire protection by **contracting** a municipal fire department and/or a private fire company. Over 70 percent do not have a detailed contract. Of those that do have a contract, terms are typically limited to specifying the amount that will be paid without any breakdown of the services to be provided and associated costs. Each fire department or company has a defined coverage area as shown in Figure 4. Some fire departments and companies manage multiple agreements, with each agreement having a different rate for service provision.

FIGURE 4 - MAP OF FIRE COVERAGE AREAS ON PEI

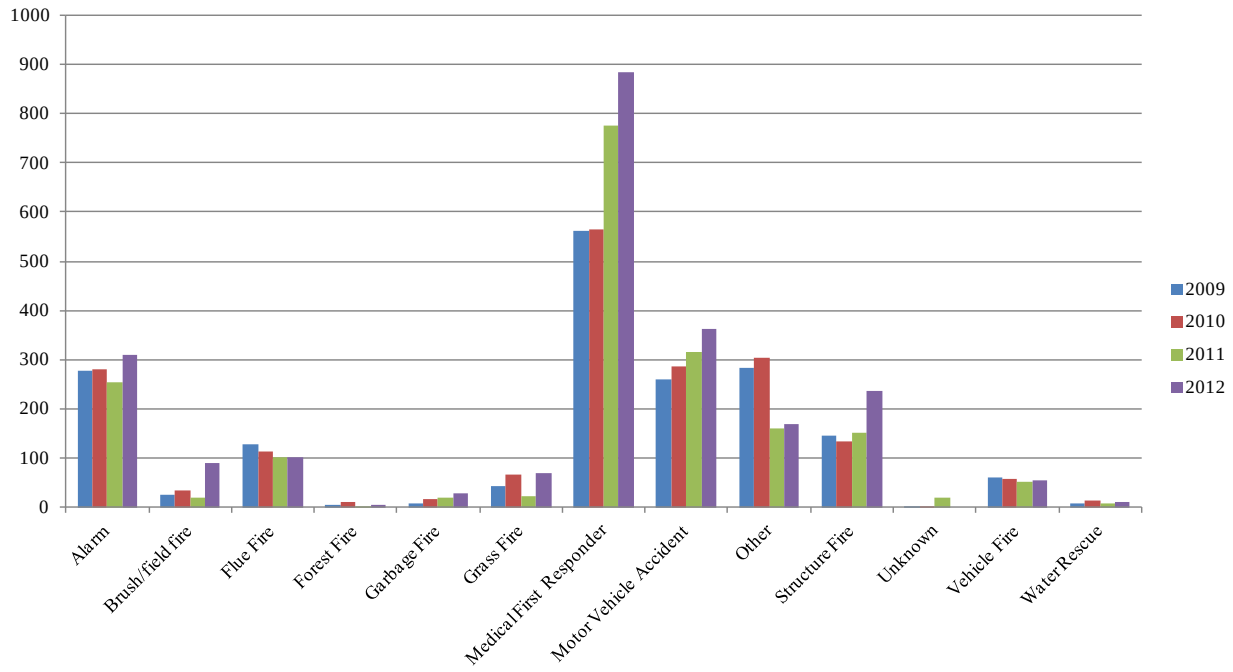


Source: PEI Department of Environment, Labour and Justice, December 2013

8.3.2 SERVICE LEVELS

Fire departments and companies across the province differ in the types and amount of equipment they have, the number of volunteer firefighters on their rosters and the types of training their volunteers have received. In addition, most fire departments and companies no longer respond only to fires. They respond to a wide variety of emergency situations including rescue and medical first response. The level of service a specific department or company provides above basic fire suppression has often developed organically based on what types of emergency situations occur most frequently in a community. For example, ice and water rescue in fishing communities, or rope rescue near cliffs. Figure 5 shows the incidence of calls to PEI's Fire Service by type for the years 2009 to 2012. It does not include calls received by Charlottetown and Summerside Fire Departments.

FIGURE 5 - INCIDENCE OF CALLS BY TYPE, 2009-2012



Source: PEI Fire Marshals Office

In general, the level of service is determined by the fire department or company themselves. Municipalities may play a role if they are active in providing oversight and governance to their department and/or if they appoint Fire Department Board members.

In 2011 a resource list was completed for each fire department and company in the Province[6] with the exception of Lennox Island First Nation Fire Department. These lists included the following information:

- Types of apparatus
- Number of firefighters
- Member training
- Types of equipment
- Type of telecommunications

For the purposes of comparison and analysis the information in the Resource Lists was used to develop three levels of Emergency Service and three levels of Training. The definitions of these Emergency Service and Training Levels are shown in Table 3 and Table 4, respectively.

TABLE 3 - EMERGENCY SERVICE LEVELS

Service Level 1 - Core Emergency Service Providers	
These Departments/Companies are equipped and trained to provide the following Core Emergency Services independently in their response area. In a rare large-scale emergency case, Mutual Aid may be required to support the delivery of these core emergency services.	
• Full Structural Firefighting capabilities • Flammable Liquid Firefighting capabilities • Brush/Forestry Firefighting capabilities • Vehicle Extrication capabilities • Medical First Responder capabilities	• Technical Rescue capabilities • Ice Rescue/Water Rescue capabilities • Disaster Response capabilities • Basic Hazardous Materials Response capabilities
Eighteen (18) departments and companies in PEI are full service providers.	
Service Level 2 - Select Emergency Service Providers	
These Departments/Companies are equipped and trained to provide some of the following Select Emergency Services independently or all in conjunction with another Fire Department/Fire Company through Mutual or Automatic Aid.	
• Full Structural Firefighting capabilities • Flammable Liquid Firefighting capabilities • Brush/Forestry Firefighting capabilities • Vehicle Extrication capabilities • Medical First Responder capabilities	• Technical Rescue capabilities • Ice Rescue/Water Rescue capabilities • Disaster Response capabilities • Hazardous Materials Awareness capabilities
Sixteen (16) departments and companies in PEI are select service providers.	
Service Level 3 - Basic Emergency Service Providers	
These Departments/Companies are equipped and trained to provide the following Basic Emergency Services independently or the service is provided by Mutual or Automatic Aid from another Fire Department/Fire Company.	
• Initial Attack Structural Firefighting capabilities • Brush/Forestry Firefighting capabilities • EMS Assistance & Standard First Aid capabilities	
Two (2) departments and companies in PEI are basic service providers.	

[6] Fire Departments/Companies were asked to update their resource lists for analysis during this study. However, less than a third of departments and companies submitted an updated list so the analysis was based on the more comprehensive 2011 data.

TABLE 4 - TRAINING LEVELS

Training Level 1
These Fire Departments/Fire Companies are equipped and their members have received training from the PEIFFA fire school or other certified training organization which enables them to provide Core Emergency Services. In addition, the Fire Departments/Companies have developed and provide a regularly scheduled in house training program for their members.
Eleven (11) PEI fire departments/companies were rated as being at a Training Level 1 capacity.
Training Level 2
These Fire Departments/Fire Companies are equipped and their members have received training from the PEIFFA fire school or other certified training organization which enables them to provide Select Emergency Services, or the service is provided by Mutual or Automatic Aid from another Fire Department/Fire Company that has an equal or higher training level. The Fire Departments/Companies have developed and provide a regularly scheduled in house training program for their members.
Twenty-one (21) PEI fire departments/companies were rated as being at a Training Level 2 capacity.
Training Level 3
These Fire Departments/Fire Companies are equipped and their members have received training from the PEIFFA fire school or other certified training organization which enables them to provide Basic Emergency Services, or the service is provided by Mutual or Automatic Aid from another Fire Department/Fire Company that has an equal or higher training level.
Three (3) PEI fire departments/companies were rated as being at a Training level 3 capacity.

Service and Training levels for each Fire Department/Company, per the analysis, are shown in Table 5. The levels were developed so that if a fire department and company was rated as a Level 1 Emergency Service provider it would be expected they would also have a Level 1 Training Level rating.

TABLE 5 - ANALYSIS SUMMARY OF PEI FIRE SERVICE RESOURCES

Analysis of Fire Service Resources *								
	Service Level			Human Resources		Training Level		
Fire Department	1	2	3	Volunteer	Career	1	2	3
Alberton	√			31	0	√		
Belfast			√	19	0			√
Borden-Carleton		√		19	0		√	
Cardigan		√		25	0		√	
Central Kings		√		15	0			√
Charlottetown 1	√			32	12	√		
Charlottetown 2	√			36	0	√		
Crapaud		√		22	0		√	
Crossroads		√		28	0		√	
East River	√			29	0	√		
Eastern Kings		√		25	0		√	
Georgetown	√			27	0		√	
Kensington		√		29	0		√	
Kinkora		√		24	0		√	
Miminegash		√		26	0		√	
Miscouche		√		27	0		√	
Montague	√			28	0	√		
Morell		√		19	0		√	
Mt. Stewart	√			15	0		√	
Murray Harbour		√		21	0		√	
Murray River		√		27	0		√	
New Glasgow	√			33	0	√		
New London		√		31	0		√	
North River	√			35	0	√		
North Rustico	√			19	0		√	
North Shore	√			28	0		√	
O'Leary	√			28	0	√		
Souris	√			30	0		√	
St. Peters	√			18	0	√		
Summerside 1	√			36	0	√		
Summerside 2	√			22	0	√		
Tignish	√			24	0	√		
Tyne Valley	√			30	0	√		
Vernon River		√		18	0		√	
Victoria			√	18	0			√
Wellington	√			22	0		√	
West Point		√		21	0		√	
Fire School		√		4	0	√		
Totals				**941**	**12**			
*** 2011 Information**								

Figure 6 and Figure 7 show the geographic distribution of the Service and Training levels defined above.

FIGURE 6 - GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT/COMPANY SERVICE LEVELS

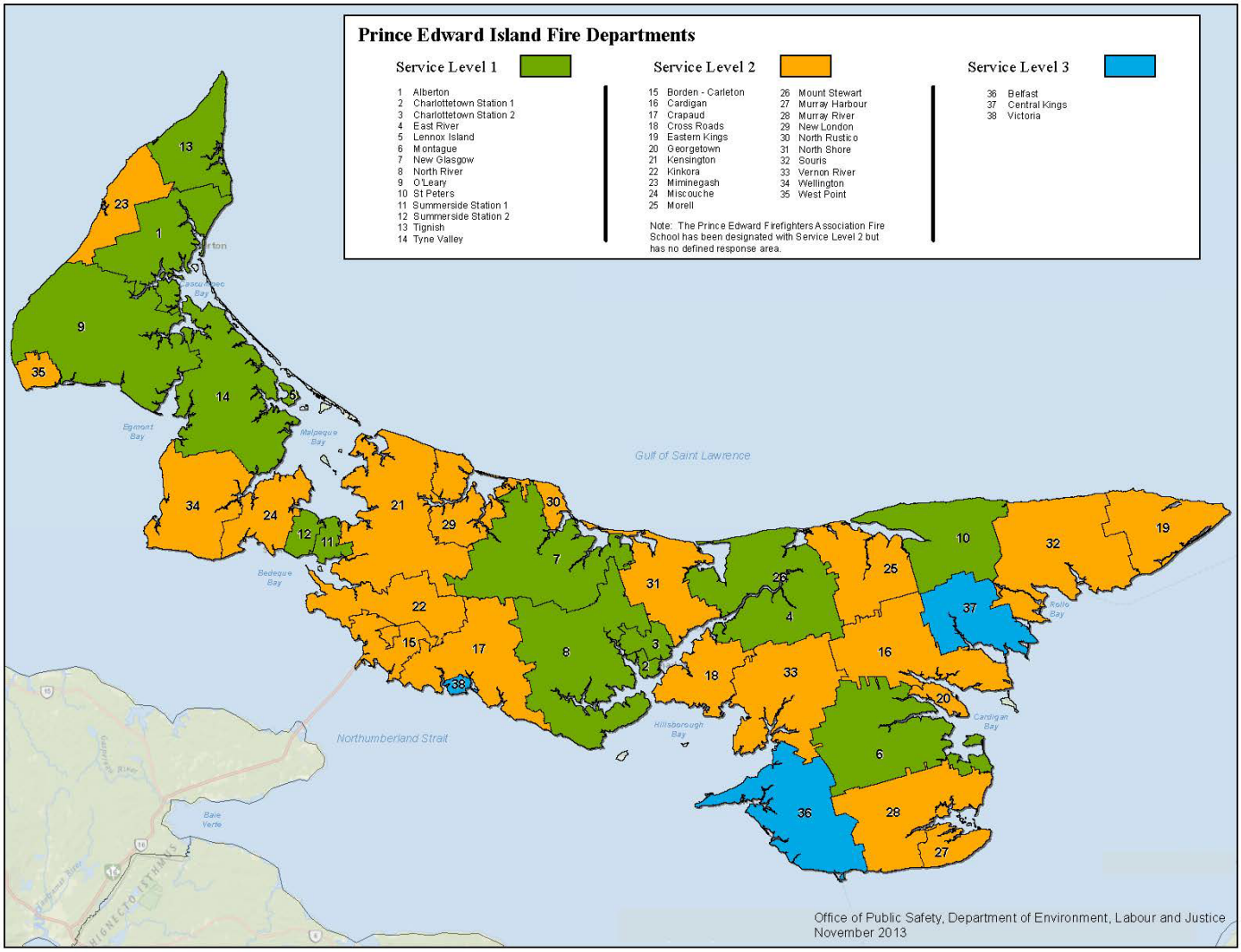
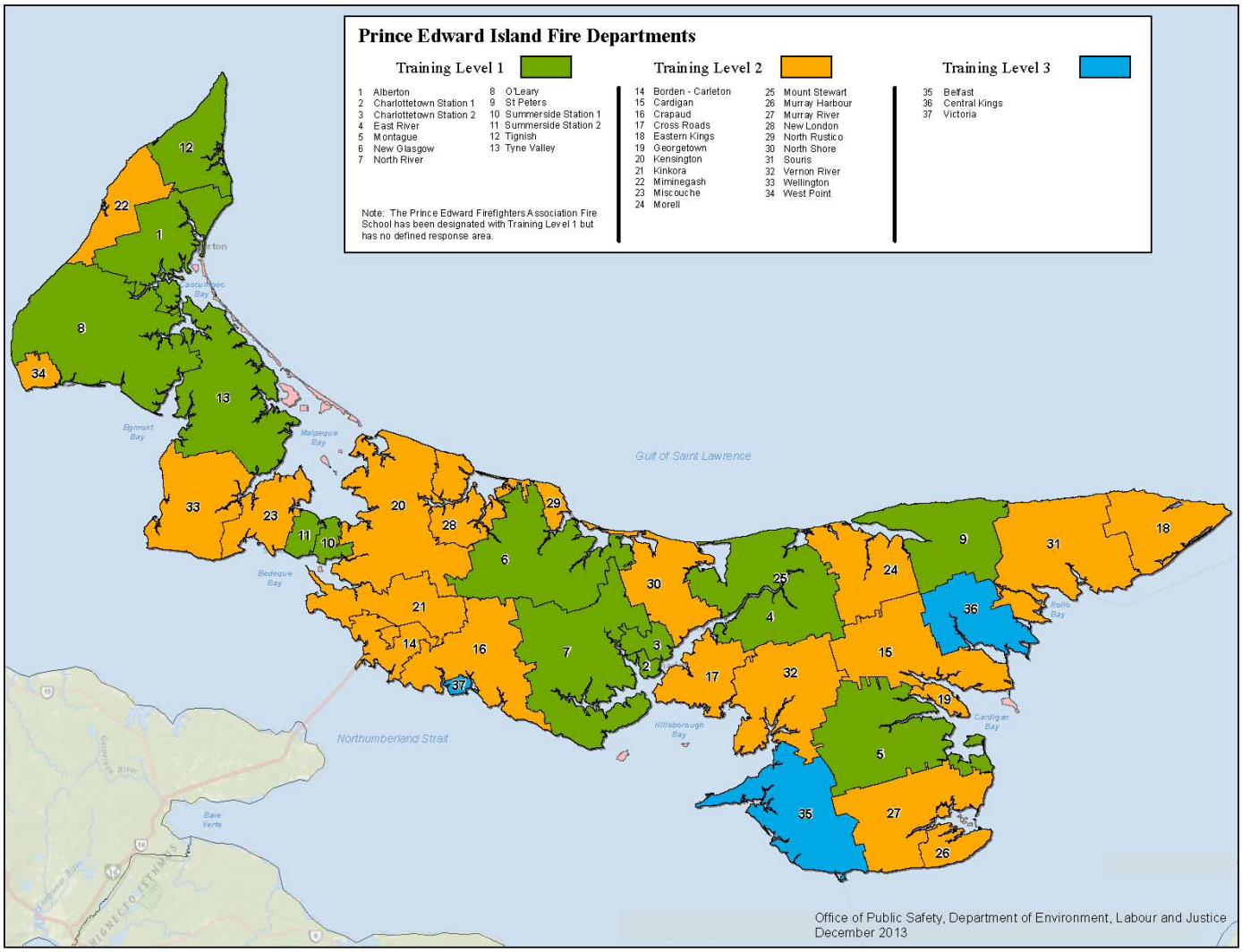


FIGURE 7 - GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT/COMPANY TRAINING LEVELS



8.3.3 MUTUAL AID AND AUTOMATIC AID AGREEMENTS

Municipalities, fire departments and fire companies across North America have been working to increase service provision efficiency and decrease liability issues through Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements. A *Mutual Aid* agreement sets out the terms and conditions for one fire department or company to call upon another fire service for assistance in the event of an emergency. It is based on a shared process of giving and receiving between fire service providers. With the exception of two, all fire departments and companies on PEI participate in

one of three Mutual Aid groups (West, Central and East). The level of mutual assistance to be provided is broadly defined. Article 2 of one of the agreements states:

> *If in the opinion of the Officer in charge at the scene of an emergency, mutual aid is required, the parties to this agreement shall respond to such requests as they are able, keeping in mind any demands that are being made on their equipment at that time.*

An *Automatic Aid* agreement is very similar to a Mutual Aid agreement with one significant difference. With a Mutual Aid agreement the responding department or company decides whether to call for assistance. With an Automatic Aid agreement, the partner service is notified at the same time as the responding service so they automatically arrive at the scene. In PEI, only the O'Leary Fire Department and the West Point Fire Company are called simultaneously to emergencies in their respective coverage areas. There are also some Automatic Aid agreements between individual departments/companies for a specific service such as auto extraction.

8.4 OPERATIONS

8.4.1 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Approximately half of PEI's fire departments and companies have written administrative guidelines related to the provision of fire services. Close to 70 percent have a written manual of operating procedures for the delivery of fire services. However, during the study period, only five guideline or operating procedures documents were provided by the departments and companies.

8.4.2 FACILITIES, APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT

Facilities

There are two more fire station buildings than fire departments and companies because the cities of Charlottetown and Summerside each maintain two station buildings. Most fire stations in PEI have been at their current location for many years. When they were built they were typically located close to the largest population areas they were intended to serve. PEI has experienced tremendous growth and development in certain areas of the province and today, fire stations may not be as close to the largest population clusters as when they were first constructed.

In general, fire department and fire company buildings are in good shape and provide the required space and facilities. Many have received support from various government funding programs to help with capital improvements over the years. To identify gaps in regards to fire service buildings, the construction types in NFPA 220-Standards on Types of Construction were used as a reference point. The NFPA construction types are:

Type I, Fire Resistive: Consisting of concrete slab, cement block, brick or protected steel construction.

Type II, Non-combustible: Generally steel beams and girders, with steel or brick cladding.

Type III, Ordinary: Can consist of a mix of materials, including wood frame, steel, brick and concrete block claddings.

Type IV, Heavy Timber Construction: There are no fire buildings of this type on PEI.

Type V, Wood Frame: All-wood construction

In PEI, nine buildings are of Type V wood frame construction and nine are more than 50 years old. Only two are Type I fire resistant construction and equipped with an automatic sprinkler system. Several buildings are crowded and will require an expansion or replacement in order to meet new or changing needs. Twenty-seven buildings are equipped with emergency shelter accommodations, but only 22 of these have emergency back-up power.

Apparatus and Equipment

Front line apparatus and equipment of most departments/companies meet ULC and NFPA requirements. Ten departments/companies do not have a Class “A” engine. That is an engine equipped with 1050 Gpm pump, meeting ULC/NFPA standards and 20 years old or less. Several departments/companies have tankers and rescue vehicles that do not meet ULC or NFPA standards.

Table 6 shows key features of fire halls, apparatus and equipment by PEI fire department/company.

TABLE 6 - FIRE HALLS, APPARARUS & EQUIPMENT SUMMARY

Department/Company	Fire Halls Constuction Type as per NFPA 220**	Estimated Fire Hall Age	2012 Annual Calls	Pumper Class A	Pumper Class B	Pumper Tankers 1000 Gal +	Tankers Tankers 1000 Gal +	Rescue	Aerial Ladder c/w Pump	Other Apparatus	Water Craft Water Rescue Equipment	Vehicle Rescue Equipment	MFR Level
Aleberton	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	170	2	1	0	2	1	0	N/A	10ft. fiberglass Skiff	YES	Yes - level 1
Belfast	Type V- Wood Frame	< 50 yrs old	22	0	0	2	0	0	0	Snuffer	NO	NO	Yes - level 2
Borden/Carlton	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	64	1	1	0	1	1	0	Snuffer	NO	YES	Yes - level 1
Cardigan	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	30	2	0	1	1	0	0	N/A	14 ft. Zodiac 25HP.	NO	NO
Central Kings	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	21	0	1	0	1	0	0	N/A	14 ft. Zodiac 20HP.ft	NO	Yes - level 3
Charlottetown #1	Type I Fire Resistive	< 50 yrs old	360	2	1	0	0	1	1	3 Support Units	25 ft. Zodiac 2x 60hp.	YES	Yes - level 3
Charlottetown #2	Type V- Wood Frame	< 50 yrs old	151	1	1	2	0	1	1	Trailer & ATV	NO	YES	Yes - level 2
Crapaud	Type III"Ordinary Const.	> 50 yrs old	60	1	1	0	2	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 2
Crossroads	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	97	2	1	2	0	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	NO
East River	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	91	1	2	0	2	1	0	Forestery Truck	15 ft. Oceanid RDC	YES	Yes - level 2
Eastern Kings	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	20	0	3	0	2	1	0	N/A	10 ft. Alum. Skiff	YES	NO
Georgetown	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	48	1	1	0	0	1	0	Forestery Truck	Inflatable Raft	NO	Yes - level 1
Kensington	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	92	1	2	0	2	1	0	N/A	12 Zodiac & Rescue raft	YES	NO
Kinkora	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	60	1	0	2	0	1	0	MFR Unit	NO	YES	Yes - level 1
Miminegash	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	74	0	1	1	0	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 1
Miscouche	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	60	1	1	0	1	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 2
Montague	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	82	2	1	1	0	2	0	Hose Truck/Trailer Pump	14 ft. Zodiac 25HP.	YES	Yes - level 2
Morell	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	54	1	1	1	1	1	0	N/A	10ft. fiberglass Skiff	NO	Yes - level 3
Mount Stewart	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	N/A	12 ft. wooden skiff	NO	Yes - level 2
Murry Harbor	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	30	0	1	1	1	1	0	N/A	NO	NO	Yes - level 1
Murry River	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	39	1	1	0	1	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 3
NewGlasgow	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	162	1	1	1	0	2	0	Snuffer	14 ft. Skiff/Oceanid RDC	YES	Yes - level 2
New London	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	50	0	2	0	1	1	0	N/A	Rescue Alive Sled	NO	Yes - level 1
North River	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	172	1	0	3	1	1	0	ATV & Sled	25 ft. Zodiac 25hp.	YES	Yes - level 3
North Rustico	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	88	1	1	0	2	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 1
North Shore	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	63	1	1	1	2	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 2
O'Leary/West Point	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	117	1	1	0	2	1	0	N/A	10ft. fiberglass Skiff	YES	Yes - level 2
Souris	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	100	1	2	1	1	1	0	Forestery Truck	14 ft. Zodiac 25HP.	YES	Yes - level 3
St. Peters	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	40	1	0	1	0	1	0	N/A	17 Inflatable - 40Hp OB	YES	Yes - level 1
Summerside #1	Type I Fire Resistive	< 50 yrs old	180	1	2	0	0	0	1	N/A	Rescue Alive Sled	NO	Yes - level 3
Summerside #2	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	40	1	0	0	0	1	0	2 Support Units	NO	YES	Yes - level 3
Tignish	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	183	2	1	0	1	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 1
Tyne Valley	Type III"Ordinary Const.	< 50 yrs old	63	1	1	0	1	1	0	N/A	NO	YES	Yes - level 3
Vernon River	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	38	0	1	0	3	1	0	N/A	NO	NO	Yes - level 3
Victoria	Type V- Wood Frame	> 50 yrs old	15	0	2	0	0	0	0	N/A	NO	NO	Yes - level 4
Wellington	Type II-Non-combustible	< 50 yrs old	107	1	2	0	1	1	1	Forestery Truck	NO	YES	Yes - level 1
West Point/O'Leary	Type V- Wood Frame	< 50 yrs old	117	0	2	0	0	0	0	Forestery Truck	NO	NO	Yes - level 2

8.4.3 RESPONSE TIMES

Fire departments and companies find daytime the most difficult period in which to get responders. In addition to time of day, whether member firefighters work outside of the coverage area can affect response times. In general, about three quarters of the fire departments/companies can get their first vehicle out of the fire hall within five minutes. Slightly less than three quarters can provide two firefighters in and two out on arrival of the first apparatus. Over 95 per cent can provide water on the fire within two minutes of arrival of the first apparatus.

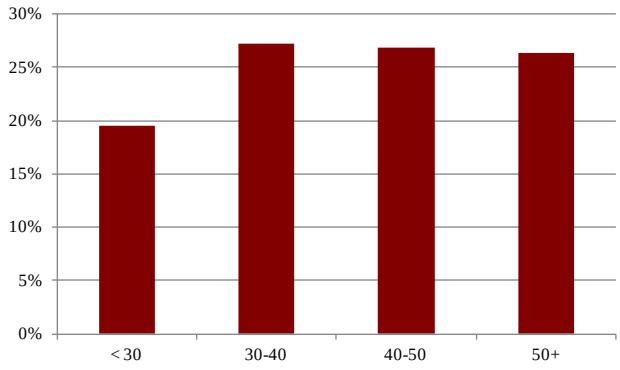
For fire/alarm calls about 40 percent of departments/companies would have five or under firefighters respond and another 40 percent would have between six and 10 members respond. About 20 percent would have more than 10. Some departments/companies noted they get a different response rate for MFR calls; typically five or less.

8.4.4 HUMAN RESOURCES

The PEI Fire Service is primarily a volunteer service. Only one department, the Charlottetown Fire Department has career firefighters (12) in addition to its volunteer firefighters (68). Based on the 2011 resource lists, the number of firefighters per department/company ranges from 15 to 68. When Charlottetown (68) and Summerside (58) are removed the average number of firefighters per department/company is 25 with 17 departments/companies having between 15 and 25 firefighters and 16 having between 26 and 35 firefighters. Four departments/companies have 19 firefighters and four have 28.

Close to 80 per cent of PEI fire departments and companies have female firefighters. The number of female firefighters per department/company ranged from a low of one to a high of six with a total of 60, which represents approximately six percent of PEI's firefighter population. The age distribution of PEI firefighters is shown in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8 - AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PEI FIREFIGHTERS

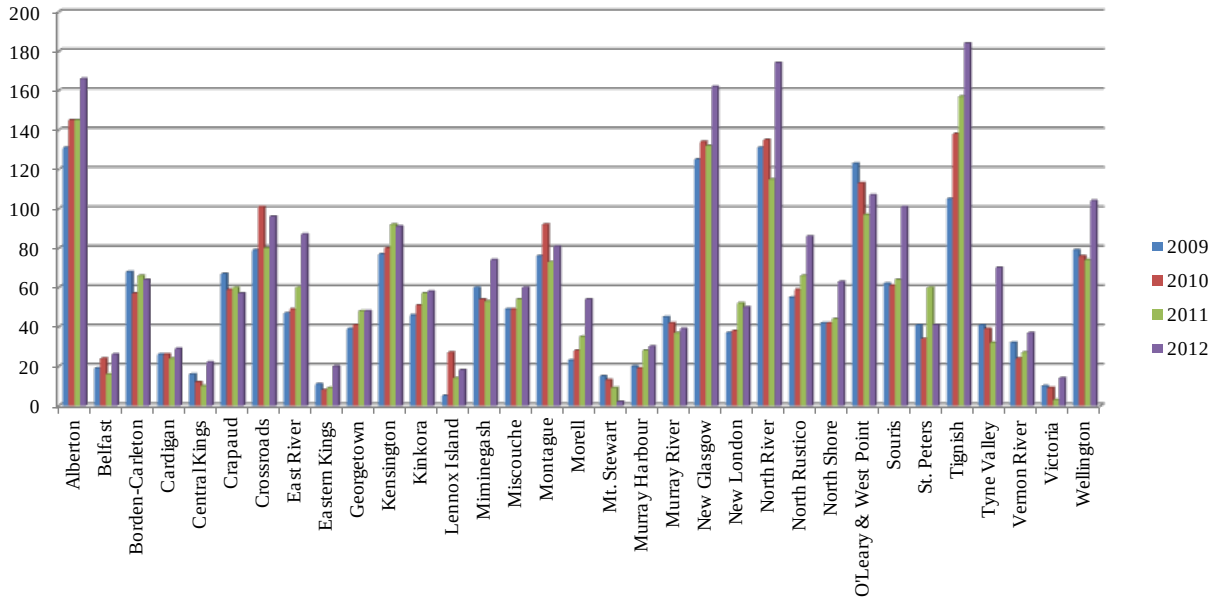


8.4.5 CALL VOLUMES (EXCLUDES CHARLOTTETOWN AND SUMMERSIDE DEPARTMENTS)

It is important to note that regardless of the volume of calls received, an operating fire department/company must be prepared and equipped to deliver the services it is contracted to provide at all times.

Twenty-seven fire departments/companies [7] experienced an increase in call volumes from 2011 to 2012. The amount of the increase ranged from a low of 1.8 percent to a high of 366.7 percent. Overall, the PEI Rural Fire Service responded to 422 more calls in 2012 than in 2011. One department/company did not experience a change and the remainder experienced a decrease in calls. Figure 9 shows the call volume per department/company for the years 2009 to 2012.

FIGURE 9 - CALL VOLUME OF RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND COMPANIES, 2009-2012



8.4.6 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Recruitment and retention challenges are not new to the fire service. In the last decade many jurisdictions across North America have been affected by the following factors which have decreased the available pool of potential volunteers:

- a declining and ageing population in rural areas,
- a movement to major centers to find employment,
- a changing society in which both parents work and children have demanding sport and leisure schedules,

[7] Call volumes from the Charlottetown and Summerside Fire Departments were not available

- and increased expectations and requirements of the firefighting role.

In PEI, approximately 40 percent of fire department and companies are experiencing recruitment challenges. The reasons are the same as those noted above with "lack of incentives" also considered a contributing factor. As noted in the 2009 report from Nova Scotia on Recruitment and Retention, while financial incentives are not the only reason volunteers join the fire service they can be helpful and a lack of honorariums or honorariums of nominal value can make it more difficult to retain firefighters. About 15 per cent of PEI fire departments and companies do not provide an honorarium for their firefighters. The types and amounts of honorariums provided by the other departments and companies vary widely with no two departments or companies doing exactly the same thing.

PEI fire departments/companies provide other types of incentives and recognition for their firefighters in addition to or in lieu of honorariums. The most common ways are covering or providing allowances for fuel and training expenses, providing Christmas dinners and presents, jackets, service rings/medals/pins and/or use of the fire hall. Close to 81 per cent provide life insurance or life insurance and disability coverage.

In over 50 per cent of the departments and companies compensation or recognition for chiefs and other officers is different from what is provided to firefighters. The differences include receiving a higher honorarium amount, being the only ones to receive an honorarium or receiving a special benefit such as a phone credit.

While close to 60 per cent of fire departments/companies are currently not experiencing problems with recruitment only 45 per cent currently have a full complement of firefighters and close to 75 per cent feel recruitment and retention will be a significant issue in the future. Thirty per cent are at or above 80 per cent and 26 are below 80 per cent of a full complement of firefighters.

The most common ways of recruiting new firefighters are newspaper ads, community newsletters and word of mouth.

Retention is less of an issue than recruitment for the PEI Fire Service with less than 30 per cent of the departments and companies saying it is a problem for them. The most common approaches to retaining existing firefighters are to offer honorariums, a positive and respectful work environment, flexibility in regards to absences for out of province employment, social events for the whole family, and /or tickets to sporting events.

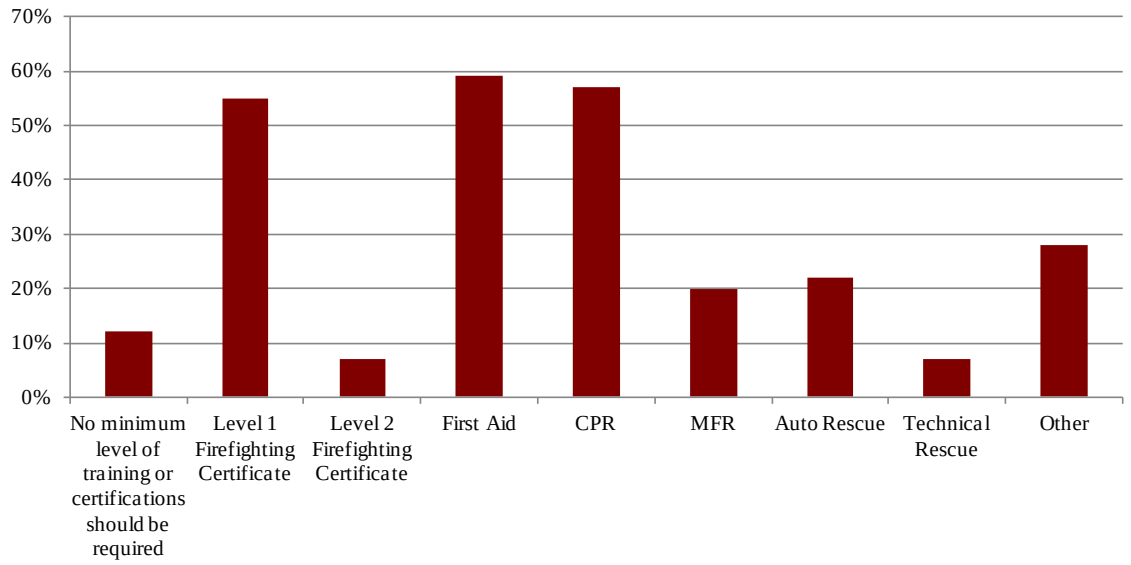
8.4.7 IN-HOUSE TRAINING

Most of PEI's fire departments and companies maintain a schedule of in-house training for their members. However, the frequency and type of training varies widely. Frequencies include weekly, bi-weekly or monthly and the schedules include some combination of specific training (drills, on paper scenarios, apparatus), maintenance and business nights. Some fire

departments/companies have a training officer that plans and monitors a quarterly or annual training schedule.

Training is not mandatory for PEI firefighters and each department or company establishes its own policies and procedures. Over 10 percent of fire departments and companies have no minimum level of training or certification requirements for their firefighters as shown in Figure 10. A majority of departments and companies require their new recruits to obtain a minimum level of training (Firefighter Level 1 and First Aid/CPR) with older firefighters grandfathered in based on their knowledge and experience.

FIGURE 10 - FIRE DEPARTMENT/COMPANY REQUIREMENTS FOR FIREFIGHTERS



8.5 GAPS - FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND FIRE COMPANIES

Fire coverage areas sometimes cut across the boundaries of municipalitites and unincorporated areas so that residents in the same community can be serviced by different fire departments or companies. As a result, residents in the same community may receive a different level of service depending on the capacity of the contracted vendor. They may also pay a different rate for the service.

There is a lack of detail within current Mutual Aid agreements as to what the supporting departments/companies are required to provide (e.g. type of equipment or personnel, response time).

All fire departments and companies are challenged to get enough volunteer responders for daytime incidents.

Most companies and departments do not have a detailed written contract for the services they provide. Many do not have written administrative and operating procedures. Many do not have a strategic or business plan. This lack of documentation and planning has a negative impact on all fire service stakeholders. Rate payers don't necessarily know what level of service to expect and what they are paying for. Fire departments and companies may not get adequately compensated for the level of service they deliver and/or their planning for future training, capital investments and new services is hampered. Municipalities may be open to liability or disruption of service issues.

A majority of PEI Fire departments and companies can provide more than a basic level of service. However, there is not a good understanding of the distribution of services across the Province and whether there is duplication of service capacity within certain geographic areas.

There are no province wide standards or guidelines for service and training levels to serve as a benchmark for departments/companies to aspire to or measure themselves against. During the study, it was identified that some departments and companies meet certain NFPA standards even though they are unaware of their compliance. It is important to note that the service is not looking for standards to be legislated but to have access to supports and guidance that would help them attain province wide standards in certain key areas.

The Medical First Responder (MFR) role that many fire departments and companies have taken on has both positive and negative implications for the service. On the positive side, many departments/companies find the MFR role keeps the service active, their members engaged and is a morale builder. On the negative side, it can make recruitment more difficult as not all individuals want to respond to those types of calls. It can affect retention as it puts more time and training demands on existing volunteers. It also has cost implications and the associated costs are not typically part of fire service contracts and fee negotiations.

There is wide variation in the requirements of PEI's fire departments and companies in regards to the probation, qualifications and training of their firefighters. Some stakeholders noted that if requirements become too onerous it will further hamper recruitment and retention. However, this lack of consistency can also make it more difficult to ensure there is a minimum uniform level of service across the Province.

The number of firefighters under the age of 30 is less than the number over 50, hence there are not enough recruits to replace retirees. To add to this problem, the retention rates of those under 30 are lower than for those over 50.

The time commitment required from today's firefighters for training and MFR calls is having an impact on recruitment.

9.0 FUNDING FOR THE PEI FIRE SERVICE

The main sources of funding for the PEI Fire Service are taxes levied by municipalities and fire districts. **In addition, close to 50 percent of fire departments and companies undertake fundraising campaigns to support the purchase of apparatus and equipment.** The Provincial Government provides funding and financial support to various components of the PEI Fire Service through the budget of the Fire Marshal's Office and EMO, infrastructure programs such as the Island Communities Fund and benefits and allowances to firefighters (e.g. vehicle license and registration).

9.1 MUNICIPAL TAX RATES

Municipal tax rates are set by each municipality based on their own individual tax revenue needs as part of their annual budget process. As already noted, many municipalities are constrained by their limited tax base.

9.2 FIRE DISTRICTS AND RATE STRUCTURES

The Province is divided into 32 fire districts. Fire districts were created in 1988 to provide a means for the collection of fire taxes in areas of the Province which do not have a municipal government. Each fire district has a fire district committee comprised of three residents elected to represent the residents of a fire district. The committee's main role is to negotiate the cost of fire service from a fire department and/or company and to establish a rate of taxation sufficient to defray the cost of the service and the expenses of the committee. The rate is subject to the approval of residents at an annual meeting held on the first Wednesday in March. **The rate is collected by the Province as part of the provincial property tax collection system.**

In general, the fire coverage areas explained in Section 8.3.1 correspond with a fire district area. There are exceptions however. The cities of Charlottetown and Summerside and the communities of Belfast, Eastern Kings and Lennox Island have fire coverage but they are not a fire district. There are two fire districts, Johnstons River and Winsloe North which are part of larger fire coverage areas (Crossroads and North River respectively). Fire departments and companies may negotiate a rate for providing fire coverage with multiple municipalities and fire district committees. Each rate is negotiated separately and may vary from municipality to municipality and from district to district.

The rate structure is based on a levy on real property and varies widely from district to district. Of the 32 districts, nine have a rate based on assessed value (mil rate), with one rate for commercial properties and another for non-commercial properties. One of these districts includes a cap on the rates. The rate varies from $0.05 to $0.13 per $100 of assessed property value.

The other 23 fire districts use a flat rate system based on a number of property categories. The number of categories for properties varies from district to district. They range from as few as three (vacant land, residential, commercial) to as many as ten different categories in one district. The full listing of the 2013 Fire District rates is appended.

The flow of funding from rate payers to fire service providers after the fire district sets the rate and negotiates fire protection from a service provider also takes many forms. Figure 11 shows the scenarios that currently exist for payment flow.

FIGURE 11 - FLOW OF FIRE DUES

Rate Payer ⇒ Province ⇒ Fire Department/Company
Rate Payer ⇒ Province ⇒ Municipality ⇒ Fire Department/Company
Rate Payer ⇒ Province ⇒ Fire District ⇒ Fire Department/Company
Rate Payer ⇒ Province ⇒ Fire District ⇒ Municipality ⇒ Fire Department/Company
Rate Payer ⇒ Municipality ⇒ Fire Department/Company

Stakeholders were divided on whether they would like the rate structure administered through fire districts to change. A higher percentage of fire departments and companies than municipalities expressed a desire for change. Those that were not pleased with their current rate structure wanted it changed to a rate based on assessed value and some stakeholders suggested there should be one rate structure for the whole province. Some municipalities feel they are subsidizing service delivery to unincorporated areas because incorporated and unincorporated areas can have the same service provider but pay a different rate without a perceived difference in service.[8]

9.3 PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Close to a third of the FMO's annual budget goes directly to the fire service as grants to the PEIFFA/Fire School ($33,500) and to pay Workers Compensation benefits for volunteer firefighters (does not include Charlottetown Fire Department career staff). All registered volunteer firefighters in PEI are entitled to workers compensation if hurt or disabled while performing duties associated with fire services. Claims are reviewed and decided on a case by case basis. There are no premiums charged to firefighters or their fire department/companies.

The Provincial Government provides grants through various departmental funding programs that can directed to the improvement of fire service infrastructure. A recent example is the new fire school in Miltonvale Park. Through the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal's Construction budget, the Province contributed $506,300 towards the construction of the Fire School. An additional $150,000 came from the Province's Island Community Fund.[9] The Island Community Fund has provided assistance for a number of fire departments and

[8] Without clear contracts and agreements it is harder to refute perceptions.
[9] The PEIFFA also provided $160,000 towards the project.

companies to undertake upgrades to their halls. Lending programs are available to assist with apparatus and equipment acquisitions.

Other financial supports the Province provides to firefighters include:

- Forgoing the cost of vehicle registration (annual cost of $100) and license renewal ($75 every three years).
- Firefighters with a minimum of 200 hours of service annually are eligible for a provincial tax credit of $500.

9.4 GAPS - FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORTS

It can be difficult to make rate changes in small communities where members of the fire district committee or municipal council and members of the fire department or company are neighbors or even co-committee/co-council members. Negotiations between the fire district committee and potential service providers (the fire departments and/or private fire companies) have historically been focused on meeting the concerns of ratepayers to keep rates low and not on the actual expenditures required to support the type or quality of service ratepayers are receiving (e.g. MFR).

There are a few occurrences of the coverage and district boundaries not aligning resulting in small areas across the Province where residents do not pay a fire tax but do receive fire coverage.

The variation in rates and rate structures across the Province and the limited tax base of many small municipalities means there is also great variation in the amounts paid to fire departments and companies. This has resulted in a situation where the tax funding is not always sufficient to cover service expenditures. This can be a constraint to the operational capacity of some departments and companies.

Planning and requirements for training, capital expenditures and other costs at the fire department/company level are not always considered in the development of fire department/company budgets and not adequately covered by the fire tax.

The flow of fire dues is extremely varied and often based on past practice. Waivers are often signed by Fire Districts or municipalities that allow funding to be directly transferred from the Province to the fire service provider.

10.0 SUPPORTING SYSTEMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

10.1 911

The 911 Administration Office is part of the Office of Public Safety within the Department of Environment, Labour and Justice. It is the coordinating agency for the operation of the emergency 911 service and the maintenance of the provincial civic addressing system. The Province has jurisdiction for the answering and transferring of 911 calls to an appropriate agency; it does not have authority for dispatch services.

PEI currently contracts with Medacom Atlantic Inc. (a division of Medavie EMS) for the provision of a centralized 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) service. Callers to the service only have to provide the details of the emergency to one call taker who then routes the call to the appropriate response agency for dispatch.

10.2 CIVIC ADDRESSING

The province of PEI is responsible for issuing civic address signs for incorporated and unincorporated areas of the Province with the exception of seventeen municipalities which issue their own. Municipalities that issue their own signs do not have to comply with provincial signage rules. Current signage is single-sided with numbers facing the road. This makes it difficult for firefighters and other emergency responders to see the address. The Office of Public Safety is aware of this challenge and is working within government to seek authorization to amend current civic address sign standards to double-sided, perpendicular to the road so approaching vehicles can see the sign in advance and from both directions.

10.3 DISPATCHING

The dispatch of calls is also managed from the 911 centralized PSAP service location for all rural fire departments and Island EMS. Dispatch services are contracted from Medacom Atlantic by the individual fire departments and companies. Medacom has developed standardized dispatch protocols that are in effect with the fire departments and companies that contract their services. The RCMP, Charlottetown Police/Fire and Summerside Police/Fire have their own dispatch services and do not contract with Medacom.

10.4 COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Effective and reliable communications are key elements in managing emergency situations. 911 and central dispatching provide a good process but they need to be underpinned with reliable technology infrastructure.

Radio communication is still the primary mode for emergency services to communicate in the field. Only a small percentage of the fire departments and companies have a radio rack on the EMS tower, which provides optimum radio range. Many find the cost of installing a radio rack prohibitive. Thus, reception is troublesome by times and communication cumbersome. One department/company may have to serve as a intermediary between another department/company and dispatch to help address the communication challenges when at a scene. Departments and companies are also responsible for purchasing and maintaining their hand held radios which cost approximately $3,000 per department.

A new communication tool in place with most department and companies is the "IamResponding" web-based system. It is a tracking and display system that interacts with mobile phones. Firefighters speed dial one number on their phone to say they are responding which is then relayed to Medacom and the computer screen at the fire hall. This allows dispatch and Chiefs to know how many are coming and whether Mutual Aid will be required. While a valuable addition, it does not provide notice of when a firefighter arrives at the station or when the responders have left the station and are on their way to the emergency.

10.5 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

EMS is contracted to manage the ambulance service delivery system for the Province, including maintaining the communication system, bases, vehicles and equipment, purchasing supplies and services for the system and reporting on performance.

As already noted, many firefighters have taken on the role of being a Medical First Responder (MFR). This increases the capacity of having a responder on scene in a timely manner particularly in rural areas that are further from an ambulance depot. This service is provided on a voluntary basis and fire department and companies do not receive reimbursement from EMS or the Province. MFR activities are delivered within the parameters of the overall fire department /company budget supported by municipal and fire district tax levies.

EMS and the Fire Service have a good relationship. They work collaboratively to disperse information and establish protocols. EMS staff and MFR firefighters co-train and in some instances are co-located. Fire Chiefs are responsible for notifying Medacom dispatch if they are able to respond to MFR calls and to confirm the MFR certifications of firefighters are up to date. There is no requirement that once a fire department or company starts offering MFR service it

must continue to offer that service. Its continuation is dependent on the availability of certified volunteers.

10.6 CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CISMC)

The Critical Incident Stress Management Committee is a volunteer group that evolved from training brought to the Provincial Corrections Service in 1994. The group does not receive mileage or any other reimbursement and has no administrative support. Through their efforts a $15,000 donation from Bell Aliant was secured in 2012 to provide one time awareness level training on Critical Incident Stress to the PEI Fire Service.

Traumatic and stressful events can cause unusually strong emotional feelings and reactions; more than a person can cope with normally. Stress reactions can appear immediately, a few hours later or even days later. Symptoms include physical, mental, cognitive and behavioural responses that if left unresolved can create physical and mental health issues leading to increased sick leave, marital breakdown, loss of employment los and other negative impacts.

Firefighters and first responders often see the worst of the worst, with a high probability of the incident involving people in their home community, and it is completely normal for such incidents to have an impact. After experiencing a traumatic event, it is estimated that 80 to 85 percent of emergency responders will be affected by the event. It is also normal for firefighters and first responders to require assistance in coping with severe, adverse events.

The PEI CISMC team is comprised of mental health professionals, employee assistance workers, nurses, social workers, police, paramedics, search and rescue personnel, fire service personnel and representatives of child welfare. There is a core group of 12 on the team (most of who have been with the Committee since its inception almost 20 years ago) with approximately 25 other trained individuals that can be called upon as needed. The PEI CISMC team works with First Responders only and estimates that over 50 per cent of their case load is related to the fire service. Because they are volunteers, firefighters often don’t have access to an Employee Assistance Program through their employer for trauma incurred in their volunteer role. Since 2008, close to 300 firefighters have benefitted from services provided by the CISMC.

The Committee works with individuals and small groups to help them understand and cope with their reactions so as to minimize the development of traumatic stress response syndrome and decrease the occurrence of absenteeism, physical and mental health problems and family difficulties. There are proven ways to help prepare and build the resiliency of emergency workers prior to and after a traumatic incident and ways.

10.7 RED CROSS

In partnership with first responders, emergency managers, public officials and other voluntary sector organizations, the Red Cross can provide emergency and disaster services such as emergency lodging; reception and information; emergency food; emergency clothing; personal services and family reunification services.

In past years these services were often left to the local fire departments as they were the only ones on scene when people affected by fire were left to deal with the results. The local Red Cross services are very helpful now that they alleviate that concern, especially for those who do not have close family or are new to the area. Fire service providers are able to leave the scene once their fire duties are done.

10.8 GAPS - SUPPORTING SYSTEMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

PEI's civic address signs (one sided, parallel to the road) make it difficult for emergency responders (firefighters, paramedics, police, etc.) to find the address they are looking for. The current signage means responders must slow to read the signs or risk driving past the entry.

There are concerns and frustrations with the capability of the current communications system firefighters use to communicate with dispatch and vice versa. There is limited capability to track response times.

Not all firefighters have a data plan so text messaging is not a universal communication option.

The CISMC has a limited base of trained volunteers from which to draw and could not meet a big spike in demand. There may also be a decline in these numbers as current members retire. The continuity of the group rests with key individuals, and the loss of these key individuals could affect service availability.

The scope of emergencies will likely continue to expand for the fire service (e.g. Medical First Responder role, new hazardous materials and other threats). CISM training, either as part of the curriculum for Level 1 and 2 Firefighter training or as part of the ongoing training schedule at the individual department or company' level, can help to prepare firefighters for the impacts of critical incidents and improve their ability to cope.

The adverse effects of critical incident stress are not limited to the emergency first responder; they also affect the responder's family. The CISMC does not have the resources to include families in their education and support efforts.

11.0 EXTERNAL INFLUENCERS

11.1 PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

The following four pieces of legislation or "Acts" relate directly to PEI Fire Services.

1. Fire Prevention Act (FPA)
    a. FPA Codes Regulations
    b. FPA Extinguisher Regulations
    c. FPA Fire District Regulations
    d. FPA General Regulations
2. Rural Communities Fire Companies Act
    a. Rural Communities Fire Companies Regulations
3. Long Service Medal Act
4. Volunteer Liability Act

There are various types of legislation related to the fire service and to firefighters and their families that have been adopted singly or collectively by provinces and territories other than PEI. They include Cardiac/Cancer legislation, Fire Department Indemnity legislation and Provincial LTD/Dismemberment legislation.

11.1.1 FIRE PREVENTION ACT

The ***Fire Prevention Act*** has not changed in over 20 years. It gives authority to the provincial Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) and outlines the core functions of the FMO. It includes provisions for administration, investigation of fires, appeal from orders, reports and records of fires, offences and penalties, regulations, forest fires, rural fire services and a general category.

The world has changed a lot in the last 20 years. Terrorism, climate change, globalization and other factors have made all jurisdictions more aware of and more vulnerable to a wide range of emergency events. In response, many jurisdictions have moved to a more comprehensive legislative framework and governance structure for the management of emergencies. For example, in 2007 Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) began a process of developing and maintaining a more modern and robust emergency management system. A new Emergency Services Act to provide for the organization and administration of emergency services in NL was proclaimed in 2009. Its key provisions included the establishment of a Fire and Emergency Services Agency, responsibilities of municipalities, regions and the province in regards to planning for and responding to municipal, regional, provincial and national emergencies, and administrative provisions.

The Fire and Emergency Services Agency (FES-NL) is responsible for both the provision of emergency preparedness and emergency response, planning and training, and for a leadership

role in the coordination and/or delivery of fire protection and fire prevention services throughout the province. The agency considers citizens and families, local governments, fire departments and firefighters, first responders, police agencies; individuals impacted by fires, emergencies and disasters; government departments and agencies and the private sector to be their client base. The Agency focuses on the following key lines of business:

- Awareness, education, training and certification
- Fire services, emergency management and support services (such as financial assistance for firefighting infrastructure and equipment in the volunteer fire service, emergency air services, guidance and advisory on organizational, technical and tactical issues, and others)
- Regulation, enforcement and reporting
- Fire incident and loss statistics

A key feature of the Agency is its responsibility to legislate and regulate the provision of fire protection services in the province and to set and develop training standards (or adopt national standards) to ensure consistent application. It also takes a key role in assessing the asset base and the training requirements of municipal fire departments. It does so to assist communities make evidence based decisions about the types of service they can provide and to assist FES-NL be proactive and responsive in regards to training needs and enhancing fire protection across the Province.

11.1.2 RURAL COMMUNITIES FIRE COMPANIES ACT

The ***Rural Communities Fire Companies Act*** authorizes the Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice and the Attorney General to approve applications for the incorporation of fire companies to serve a designated area. The related Regulations address how such companies can be established and their organization. If the application is made by a rural community, the petition requires the signature of at least ten residents 18 years or older. If the application is made by a rural community and one or more municipalities, the petition requires the signature of at least ten residents 18 years or older and those of the Mayor, Chief Commissioner, Town or Village Clerk or other duly authorized officers of the municipality.

11.1.3 LONG SERVICE MEDAL ACT

The ***Long Service Medal Act*** provides for the award of a medal to volunteer firefighters and/or paid firefighters with 20 years of service in the province. It also provides for the award of bars for each ten years of subsequent service.

11.1.4 VOLUNTEER LIABILITY ACT

The ***Volunteer Liability Act*** waives liability for volunteers including volunteer firefighters coming to the aid of a person in an emergency unless the assistance provided by the volunteer falls under the terms of gross negligence. It does not include provisions for career firefighters.

11.2 THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY

A provincial Superintendent of Insurance is responsible for licensing insurance companies and agents, administering the Insurance Act and ensuring insurance products are available at a reasonable cost within the province. Insurance companies also remit their fire premiums which support the FMO to the Superintendent's office.

The Insurance industry is comprised of many different stakeholders including insurance companies, insurance brokers, insurance adjusters, and rating agencies such as the Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS). One of the main ways the insurance industry impacts the fire service is through the assessment and grading of the fire risks and fire defenses present in municipalitites and unincorporated areas. The intent of assessment and grading is to provide a standardized measure of the ability of the protective facilities of a community to prevent and control the level of fire risk in the community based on the features of its built environment.

Locally owned and operated insurance companies typically develop their own standards such as proximity to a fire hall or water source. Standards such as FUS are used by up to 85 percent of the other private sector property and casualty insurers in Canada for their underwriting purposes. The insurance premiums paid by rate payers can be reduced or increased depending on the capacity of their municipal fire department or private fire company. For example, firefighting operations are dependent on water and/or other extinguishing agents to succeed. In developed areas, water supplies are provided through a network of distribution pipes, storage and pumping facilities. In areas without municipal-type water supplies, firefighting presents a significantly greater challenge. With automotive fire apparatus and road infrastructure, it is possible to move water from a source location to the fire ground in an effective and efficient manner. The Fire Marshal is working with Mutual Aid associations in obtaining Superior Water Shuttle Accreditation through the Fire Underwriters Survey for the benefit of Island residents.

11.3 INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND CODES

11.3.1 NFPA STANDARDS

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is an international trade association that creates and maintains private, copyrighted, standards and codes for usage and adoption by local governments. This includes publications from model building codes to the many on equipment

utilized by firefighters while engaging in hazardous material (HAZMAT) response, rescue response, and firefighting.

PEI fire departments and companies are not mandated to follow any particular NFPA standards. Fire departments and companies by their nature follow a paramilitary structure and understand the importance of following rules in dealing with chaotic situations. Most are aware of the standards and several fire departments and companies use NFPA standards or strive to meet them, but cost is a major factor in being able to claim full compliance.

Certain NFPA standards relating to building codes have been adopted as part of the PEI Fire Prevention Act. The PEI Fire School follows NFPA standards for training, operations and governance. The NFPA standards applicable to most Fire Departments and Companies in PEI are:

NFPA 1001

NFPA 1001 identifies the minimum job performance requirements for career and volunteer firefighters whose duties are primarily structural in nature.

NFPA 1201

This standard contains requirements on the structure and operations of emergency service organizations including governance, by-laws, SOPs, chain of command, apparatus and equipment requirements

NFPA 1720

This standard specifies the minimum criteria for addressing the effectiveness and efficiency of volunteer public fire suppression operations, emergency medical service, and special operations delivery in protecting the citizens of the jurisdiction.

11.4 GAPS-EXTERNAL INFLUENCERS

The PEI Fire Prevention Act is outdated. It does not provide for adequate fine amounts and other enforcement tools. Provisions are inadequate in regards to dealing with vacant and unsafe properties and for issuing licenses, permits and certificates of fitness on the fire protection industry. It does not include provisions for new areas such as fire service training or special service teams such as HAZMAT that have come within the sphere of the Fire Marshal's Office operations within the last five to ten years.

Firefighting is a dangerous profession. PEI has limited legislation related to ensuring the fire service and firefighters and their families receive compensation and/or benefits for a wide range of possible health and safety issues.

Adherence to standards is becoming increasingly important to ensure the safety of the public and to meet insurer requirements. Fire departments/companies require assistance to assess their level of compliance with benchmark standards and to develop a plan for improvement.

12.0 GAP ANALYSIS

The gaps detailed in the previous sections of this report in relation to specific components of the PEI Fire Services are summarized below.

Fire Marshal's Office

- The FMO is constrained by a lack of human and financial resources to fully act on all aspects of its mandate.

PEIFFA/PEI Fire School

- The Association and School have key volunteers who are nearing retirement age.
- It is becoming more difficult for the PEIFFA and the Fire School to spearhead new projects and initiatives and ensure the continuity of existing operations without a paid Executive Director or comparable resource.
- The School is underutilized by some departments and companies and there are no province wide training standards or incentives for volunteer firefighters and their related departments and companies to aspire to.
- The School does not have third party accreditation.

The Hazardous Materials Response Team

- The current funding model for the team is insufficient to maintain operations and conduct necessary upgrades to apparatus and equipment.
- A functioning and capable HAZMAT team is required to address public safety risks and obligations to Atlantic Canada partners.

Municipalities

- There is a lack of capacity within small municipalities to provide oversight and guidance to their fire departments, to manage potential conflict of interest situations, and to ensure written agreements or contracts with clear definitions of roles and service levels are in place. It is important to note that lack of written agreements and contracts is not limited to small municipaltities and the risks associated are widespread.
- Current legislation does not require PEI Municipalities to have an emergency measures plan.

Fire Departments and Fire Companies

- The third, fourth and fifth largest communities on PEI, Stratford with a population of 8,574, Cornwall with a population of 5,162, and Montague with a population of 1,895 do not have their own fire departments. Are safeguards in place to protect residents from an unexpected interruption of services?
- There are places in the province where residents do not pay a fire tax but do receive fire coverage.
- Residents in the same community can be serviced by different fire departments or companies, receive a different level of service and/or pay a different rate.
- Current Mutual Aid agreements are high level and do not provide details on the terms and conditions of providing the aid (e.g. type of equipment, number of personnel, time of response, etc.).
- All fire departments and companies find it difficult to get enough responders for daytime incidents.
- Many companies and departments do not have a detailed written contract for the services they provide or written administrative and operating procedures.
- There is not a good understanding of the distribution of services across the province and whether there is duplication of service capacity within certain geographic areas.
- There are no province wide standards or guidelines for service and training levels to serve as a benchmark for departments/companies to aspire to or measure themselves against.
- Not all fire departments and companies want to assume the Medical First Responder (MFR) role. It can make it harder to recruit and retain firefighters. Providing MFR services are supported through fire taxes and not the health budget.

Funding and Other Supports

- Negotiations between the fire district committee and potential service providers (the fire departments/companies) have historically been focused on meeting the concerns of ratepayers to keep rates low and not on the actual expenditures required to support the type or quality of service ratepayers are receiving (e.g MFR costs, training costs, capital costs).
- The fire district rate structure process and the limited tax base of many municipalitites has resulted in great variation across the province as to the resources and capability of individual fire departments and companies.
- Some PEI residents do not pay a fire tax but do receive fire coverage.

Supporting Systems and Organizations

- Current civic adddress signs (one sided, parallel to the road) are difficult for emergency reponders to see and read without slowing or stopping their vehicle.
- The current communications system firefighters use to communicate with dispatch and vice versa is unreliable. There is no capability to track response times.
- Not all firefighters have a data plan so text messaging is not a universal communication option.
- The CISMC, like much of the fire service, relies on volunteers for continued operations. This could result in an interruption of service and does result in a limited number of services being available (e.g. families of firefighters affected by a critical incident are not eligible for service)

External Influencers

- The PEI Fire Prevention Act is outdated. It does not adequately address current expectations of the FMO or the full scope of response activities provided by the fire service.
- PEI has limited legislation related to ensuring the fire service and firefighters and their families receive compensation and/or benefits for a wide range of possible health and safety issues.
- Fire departments and companies want provincial guidleines with respect to administrative and operating procedures.

During the online survey process, stakeholder interviews and regional meetings, some gaps were cited as a concern more frequently. They included:

1.	Current legislation does not reflect the realities of a modern fire/emergency service.
2.	Being able to access adequate funding through a more equitable and standardized tax structure – As a firefighter noted, "We are providing a vital public service, we shouldn't also have to raise the money (fund raise) to support it."
3.	The lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities between municipalities, fire departments and fire companies in regards to governance, performance and accountability.
4.	There are less new volunteers being recruited and retained who are willing to commit to the training levels required.
5.	The Fire School is not being fully utilized by departments and companies.
6.	The lack of paid resources (especially of an administrative nature) at many levels throughout the fire service (e.g.FMO office, PEIFFA/Fire School, CISMC) increases the burden on volunteers and negatively impacts the leadership's ability to undertake strategic planning and lobby for key initiatives.
7.	Fire departments and companies operate as silos rather than as part of a larger public emergency response system. This is not a reflection on the fire departments/companies themselves but on the way fire services grew and developed independently over time.

It should not be assumed that these gaps are the most important or would have the most beneficial impacts if addressed. This is a decision that should come from the Fire Service itself based on collaborative discussions with the many fire service stakeholders noted in this report.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Gary Richardson, former Fire Chief of the City of Ottawa in his presentation on the Canadian Fire Service of the 21rst century, noted communities have three lines of defense against fire, 1) fire safety education, 2) fire safety standards, and 3) an efficient and effective emergency response. A key message received during this environmental scan and gap analysis study is PEI is well served by its volunteer firefighters who are second to none in their passion, commitment, dedication and work ethic. However, when looking beyond the competency and reliability of the firefighters, there is room for improvement in all three areas noted by former Chief Richardson.

It was beyond the scope of this study to make recommendations, to determine total fire service expenditures in the province or to assess if expenditures are adequate to meet needs. The gaps identified and explained in this report are intended to serve as a basis for future actions and initiatives. Many gaps are interrelated and cannot be addressed in isolation. By developing a comprehensive plan to address gaps, PEI has the opportunity to develop a more sustainable and integrated emergency response service; one that fully utilizes best practices, technology, and training to protect the public and its firefighters while balancing the demands of public safety with fiscal responsibility and accountability.

The PEI Fire Service has many strengths – existing capital assets, organizations, training resources and collaborative working relationships – and these can be leveraged to facilitate change and help address gaps. PEI's Fire Service is not the only one being affected by societal pressures and trends. Lessons learned by our sister Provinces in regards to updating legislation, strengthening recruitment and retention practices and ensuring the most effective and efficient utilization of resources can help.

While PEI is not alone in dealing with decreasing volunteerism, outmigration from rural areas, and the broader response mandate of fire services, for a small province we have a complex array of types of fire service providers (municipally owned and operated, municipally owned but operated independently, and owned and operated by the firefighter members), funding sources (municipal taxes, fire districts, volunteer fundraising) and funding levels (each municipality and district is different). There is also significant variation in the types of services that can be provided by individual fire departments and companies, in how their firefighters are compensated and the types of training member firefighters receive. This complexity and variation is a significant challenge that will require greater study and discussion if changes to PEI's current system are required to effectively and efficiently address the gaps identified.

This report would not have been possible with out the contribution of the many stakeholders who completed the survey and participated in interviews. This high degree of participation reflects the sincere commitment of fire service stakeholders to ensuring PEI residents have the fire and emergency response services they require. The momentum and willingness for change created by this Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis should not be lost. It is hoped that the PEIFFA and

other stakeholders see this report as a first step in the development of a comprehensive, integrated Fire/Emergency Services Plan for PEI.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - LIST OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Brennan, Member Services Officer, Federation of PEI Municipalities

David Rossiter, Provincial Fire Marshal

David Swan, Board of Directors, Crossroads Community Fire Department

Harley Perry, Fire Chief, Tignish Fire Department

Jason Peters, President, PEI Firefighters Association

John Dewey, Executive Director, Federation of PEI Municipalities

Linda Myers, Board of Directors, East River Fire Company

Tim Jenkins, Past President, PEI Firefighters Association

APPENDIX B - LIST OF EXTERNAL REPORTS REVIEWED

Alberta Fire Chiefs Association. AFCA Working Group Report, Recruitment & Retention, Canada, 2010

Bain, Sir George, et al. The Future of the Fire Service: reducing risk, saving lives. The Independent Review of the Fire Service, United Kingdom, December 2002

Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs. Consolidated National Survey Results for Volunteer Fire Departments, Canada

Department for Communities and Local Government, Fire Futures Reports Government response, United Kingdom, 2011

Fire and Emergency Services-Newfoundland and Labrador. Annual Report 2012-13, Canada

Fire Services Liaison Group. Public Safety in British Columbia: Transforming the Fire/Rescue Service, Canada, September 2009

International Association of Fire Chiefs, We're Here for Life - The Orange Ribbon Report: Leading and Managing EMS in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, United States, December 2008

International Association of Fire Chiefs. A Call For Action - The Blue Ribbon Report: Preserving and Improving the Future of the Volunteer Fire Services, United States, March 2004

Knight, Sir Ken. Facing the Future: Findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England, United Kingdom, May 2013

New Brunswick Association of Fire Chiefs. White Paper, New Brunswick Fire Service Regionalization, Important Considerations for the Minister of Local Government and the Minister of Public Safety, Canada

Richardson, Gary, former Fire Chief, City of Ottawa. Presentation on the Canadian Fire Service, Canada

The Office of the Fire Marshal Nova Scotia and the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia. Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, Canada, November 2009

APPENDIX C - INTERVIEWEES AND ON LINE SURVEY TEST GROUP

Aaron Campbell, Manager of Public Safety, Department of Environment, Labour and Justice

Art McKay, Representative of a Fire District Committee in Kings County

Blair Campbell, Claims Manager, PEI Mutual Insurance Company

David Rossiter, Provincial Fire Marshal

David Swan, Board of Directors, Crossroads Community Fire Department

Gary Ellis, Executive General Adjuster, AMG Claims Inc.

Jason Peters, President, PEI Firefighters Association

John Dewey, Executive Director, Federation of PEI Municipalities

Karen Doiron, Vice President Underwriting, Hyndman & Company Ltd.

Matt Crossman, General Manager, Medacom and Island EMS

Miles Boulter, Fire Chief, PEI Fire School

Phil Hughes, Representative of a Fire District Committee in Queens County

Rick Niblett, Deputy Fire Chief, PEI Fire School

Robert Bradley, PEI Superintendent of Insurance

Ronnie MacWilliams, Representative of a Fire District Committee in Prince County

Samantha Murphy, Manager Municipal Affairs, Department of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs

Sharon Baxter, Communications Manager, Medacom

Tim Jenkins, Hazardous Materials Response Team

Verna Ryan, Critical Incident Stress management Committee

ON-LINE SURVEY TEST GROUP

Municipal Fire Departments

Colin La Vie, Fire Chief, Souris Fire Department

Harley Perry, Fire Chief, Tignish Fire Department

Municipalities that Contract Fire Services

Robert Hughes, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Stratford

Brenda MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer, Resort Municipality of Cavendish

Bart Bourne, Councilor responsible for Fire Services, Resort Municipality of Cavendish

Rural Fire Companies

Kirby Wakelin, Fire Chief, North River Fire Department

Harry Annear, Fire Chief, Montague Volunteer Fire Department

Ron Young, Fire Chief, Crossroads Community Fire Department

David Swan, Board of Directors, Crossroads Community Fire Department

Linda Myers, Board of Directors, East River Fire Company

APPENDIX D - ON LINE SURVEY

Introduction and Instructions

The PEI Firefighters Association (PEIFFA) is sponsoring a PEI Fire Services Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis. This survey is one of the tools being used to collect information. Representatives of PEI's municipalities, fire departments and fire companies are being asked to contribute their views. This is the first project of its kind for PEI and your input is important!

The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. All questions may not be applicable to all respondents. If you do not know the answer to a question please select N/A (Not Applicable) or indicate you don't know in the comment box.. For tracking purposes, the first three survey questions are mandatory. *Individual responses will not be identified and responses will only be used in aggregate form for analysis and presentation.*

If you experience any technical issues in completing the survey please contact Cathy McPhail at 368-2643 or cathy.mcphail@mrsbgroup.com. If you have any questions about the study please contact Jason Peters, President of the PEIFFA at jpeters@peiffa.com.

Thank you for your participation!

Mandatory Section

*1. I am completing this survey as:

- an employee or council member of a municipality
- a representative of a municipal fire department
- a representative of a rural fire company

*2. What is your name, position and the name of the municipality, fire department or fire company you represent ?

*3. Please identify yourself by selecting the appropriate description from below:

- I represent a municipality with its own municipal fire department
- I represent a municipality that contracts its fire services from another municipal fire department
- I represent a municipality that contracts its fire services from a rural fire company
- I represent a municipal fire department
- I represent a rural fire company

SECTION I

4. Please indicate which of the following most closely reflects the governance structure of your fire department or company?

- Fire department is fully accountable to municipal Management and Council
- Fire department receives funding from council but operates independently
- Fire company is governed by an independent Board
- Fire company is governed by member firefighters
- Other (please specify)

5. Who determines the level of service provided in your community / district ?

- The Municipality
- The Board of Directors
- The Fire Department
- The Fire Company
- N/A
- Other (please specify)

6. What is the current rate structure in your district based on?

- Assessed property value (mill rate)
- Category of property (flat rate)
- A combination of mil rates and flat rates

Comments

7. How long (in years) has the current rate structure for your district been in place?

8. Do you feel the rate structure needs to be changed?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

If YES, please describe what changes you would like to see.

9. Does your municipality / fire department / fire company have written contracts for all fire service arrangements?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Comments

10. If your municipality / fire department / fire company has written contracts in regards to fire services, which of the following types of provisions are included ?

- Financial (e.g. amount of payments, schedule of payments)
- Liability
- Service Levels
- Process for Changes or Amendments
- N/A

Comments

11. Does your municipality have a Fire Service By-Law or a Fire Prevention By-Law?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

12. Do the municipalities you cover have a Policy or By-law related to minimum standards for residential and commercial occupancies (i.e. building codes, height restrictions, etc.) built in the community?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Comments

13. Does your municipality / fire department / fire company have written administrative guidelines related to the provision of fire services?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Comments

14. Does your municipality / fire department / fire company have a written manual of operating procedures for the delivery of fire services?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Comments

15. How does your municipality / fire department / fire company ensure compliance with your administrative and/or operating guidelines?

16. Which NFPA standards, if any, does your municipality / fire department / fire company follow?

17. Has your municipality / fire department / fire company completed a fire underwriters survey / study of your department's / company's operations?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

If YES, when?

18. Does your municipality / fire department / fire company have a long term plan for fire service operations, apparatus and facilities?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

19. Does you fire department / fire company participate in any of the following (please indicate all that apply)

- Mutual Aid Agreements
- Automatic Aid Agreements
- Joint Service Agreements
- N/A
- Another type of partnership or joint venture (please specify)

20. Is your municipality / fire district satisfied with its current contracted fire services?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Why or why not?

21. What changes, if any, would your municipality / fire department / fire company like to see in regards to the 911 system (dispatching and/or addressing)?

22. Are there any programs or services, not provided now, that the Fire Marshall's Office, the PEI Firefighters Association or the Province should be providing?

23. What are the most significant gaps or challenges in regards to the delivery of Fire Services in your district?

24. What are the most significant gaps or challenges in regards to the contracting of Fire Services in your district?

25. What trends/factors could interfere with the ability of your municipality / fire department / fire company to provide the best service to your community in the future?

SECTION II

26. What types of honorariums (amount, frequency, etc.), if any, does your municipality / fire department / fire company provide to firefighters?

27. What types of insurance coverage (Life, LTD, etc.), if any, does your municipality / fire department / fire company provide to firefighters?

28. Please describe any other compensation or recognition (RRSPs, awards, etc.) your municipality / fire department / fire company provides firefighters?

29. Is compensation or recognition for the chief or other officers different from what is provided to the firefighters?

30. What is a full complement of fire fighters for your fire department / fire company?

31. How many firefighters does your department / company currently have?

32. How many of your firefighters are male?

33. How many of your firefighters are female?

34. Please estimate the number of firefighters in your department / company in each of the following age categories.

< 30	
30-40	
41-50	
50+	

35. Does your fire department / fire company have problems with recruitment?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Why or why not?

36. Does your fire department / fire company have problems with retention?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Why or why not?

37. Please describe what your fire department / fire company does to recruit and retain firefighters.

38. Please describe your fire department's / fire company's training program.

39. What is the frequency of your in-house training offerings?

- Not applicable
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Annually
- N/A
- Other (please specify)

40. What are your training and probationary period policies for new recruits?

41. Which of the following do you require of all your firefighters? (select all you require)

- No minimum level of training or certifications should be required
- Level 1 Firefighting Certificate
- Level 2 Firefighting Certificate
- First Aid
- CPR
- MFR
- Auto rescue
- Technical rescue
- N/A
- Other (please specify)

42. What specialized training, if any, should chief officers / officers be required to have ?

43. Does your fire department / fire company have task only trained personal such as apparatus driver / operators, MFR, etc.?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

If YES, what ones?

44. Describe your fire department's / fire company's inspection / maintenance program for your apparatus and equipment?

45. Are all your fire department / fire company inspections on air and other equipment and bunker gear up to date?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

If NO, why not?

SECTION III

46. When is it hardest to get enough responders?

- Daytime
- Evening
- After midnight
- Weekends
- N/A

47. What is the minimum number of firefighters that might respond to a dispatch?

48. Can your fire department / fire company provide 2 firefighters in and 2 firefighters out on arrival of the first apparatus?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

49. Can your fire department / fire company provide water on the fire within 2 minutes of arrival of the first apparatus?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

50. How long from receipt of alarm does it take your fire department / fire company to get your first vehicle out of the fire hall?

51. What impact has the increased Medical First Responders role had on your fire department / fire company?

52. Which of the following fire prevention activities does your fire department / fire company participate in?

- None
- Fire Prevention Week activities
- School visits
- Local newsletters
- N/A
- Other (please specify)

53. How often does your fire department / fire company undertake fundraising campaigns to support charity?

54. How often does your fire department / fire company undertake fundraising campaigns to purchase apparatus and equipment for the fire station?

55. Do you have any other comments about fire services and/or this review?

APPENDIX E - SUMMARY OF ON LINE SURVEY RESULTS – MUNICIPALITIES

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN AND GAP ANALYSIS:

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

Municipality Summary of Online Survey

November 2013

Survey Response

- 60 of 74 Municipalities
  - Majority completed by Administrators
  - Although 60 representatives of municipalities started the survey, ten answered less than five questions each.
  - Also not everyone completed every question so the total responses vary for each question.

Please indicate which of the following most closely reflects the governance structure of your fire department or company?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Fire department is fully accountable to municipal Management and Council	31.1%	14
Fire department receives funding from council but operates independently	31.1%	14
Fire company is governed by an independent Board	4.4%	2
Fire company is governed by member firefighters	8.9%	4
Other (please specify)	24.4%	11
	answered question	45

What is the current rate structure in your district based on?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Assessed property value (mill rate)	48.9%	22
Category of property (flat rate)	24.4%	11
A combination of mil rates and flat rates	26.7%	12
Comments		10
	answered question	45

- Mill rates range from $0.05 to $0.13 per $100 assessed value.
- Flat rates range from $0 (Vacant Land) to $690 for a category.
- Rates are often set on a historical basis rather than actual costs.
- Rate structure time periods range from changing annually to being in place since fire department inception.

Do you feel the rate structure needs to be changed?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	22.2%	10
No	64.4%	29
N/A	13.3%	6
	answered question	**45**

Suggestions/comments from YES respondents:

- Often municipality rate payers pay more than those in rest of fire district.
- Prefer rates based on cost of services exactly.
- One provincial rate.

Does your municipality have written contracts for all fire service arrangements?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	18.6%	8
No	55.8%	24
N/A	25.6%	11
	answered question	**43**

Suggestions/comments from YES respondents:

- primarily for financial arrangements
- some for specific services

Does your municipality have a Fire Service By-Law or a Fire Prevention By-Law?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	15.2%	7
No	69.6%	32
N/A	15.2%	7
	answered question	**46**

Does your municipality have a Policy or By-law related to minimum standards for residential and commercial occupancies?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.9%	18
No	44.2%	19
N/A	14.0%	6
Comments		12
	answered question	**43**

- Mostly related to building codes, height restrictions, and zoning and subdivision.

Does your municipality have a long term plan for fire service operations, apparatus and facilities?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	31.1%	14
No	37.8%	17
N/A	31.1%	14
	answered question	**45**

Is your municipality satisfied with its current contracted fire services?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	78.3%	36
No	4.3%	2
N/A	17.4%	8
	answered question	**46**

- Very positive comments in general about fire services provided.

Are there any programs or services, not provided now, that the Fire Marshall's Office, the PEI Firefighters Association or the Province should be providing?

- Of the 30 responses, the most common were:
  - More funding for departments that have to raise money.
  - Subsidizing MFR calls.
  - Paying for Pager service.
  - More administrative/financial/communications training for chiefs and officers.
  - Participate in Federation of Municipalities AGM or information sessions.

What are the most significant gaps or challenges in regards to the delivery of Fire Services in your municipality?

- Of the 30 responses, the most common were:
  - Recruitment and Retention
  - Financial issues with regards to purchasing new equipment.

What trends/factors could interfere with the ability of your fire municipality to provide the best service to your community in the future?

- Of the 32 responses, the most common were:
  - Aging demographics
  - Shrinking tax base in rural areas
  - Ability to fund capital costs
  - Current firefighters moving due to a lack of employment in their rural area
  - Capacity of fire departments to provide needed services.

Do you have any other comments about fire services and/or this review?

- Of the 20 responses the most common were:
  - With services provided.
  - There is an increased call volume with MFR.
  - Training courses could be subsidized by government as not all municipalities have large training budgets.
  - More communication between fire departments.
  - Recruitment and retention is an issue given the time commitment.

APPENDIX F - SUMMARY OF ON LINE SURVEY RESULTS – FIRE DEPARTMENTS/COMPANIES

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN AND GAP ANALYSIS:

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

Fire Department and Company Summary of Online Survey

November 2013

Survey Response

- 32 of 36 Fire Departments/Companies
  - Majority Completed by Fire Chiefs
  - Although 32 representatives of fire departments/companies completed the survey, not every respondent completed every question so the total responses will vary for each question.

Please indicate which of the following most closely reflects the governance structure of your fire department or company?

- In theory, 25 fire departments should be accountable to the municipality. In practice close to a third, receive funding from the municipality but operate independently.

- 11 rural companies, two are governed by an independent Board and 9 by the fire company members themselves.

What is the current rate structure in your district based on?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Assessed property value (mill rate)	31.3%	10
Category of property (flat rate)	50.0%	16
A combination of mil rates and flat rates	18.8%	6
	answered question	**32**

- Mill rates range from $0.05 to $0.13 per $100 assessed value.
- Flat rates range from $0 (Vacant Land) to $690 for a category.
- Rates are often set on a historical basis rather than actual costs.
- Rate structure time periods range from changing annually to being in place since fire department inception.

Do you feel the rate structure needs to be changed?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.9%	13
No	51.6%	16
N/A	6.5%	2
	answered question	**31**

Suggestions/comments from YES respondents:

- A mill rate based on assessed property value.
- There is pressure not to change rates based on potential community backlash.
- One provincial rate.

Does your fire department/fire company have written contracts for all fire service arrangements?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	21.9%	7
No	71.9%	23
N/A	6.3%	2
Comments		6
	answered question	**32**

Suggestions/comments from YES respondents:

- primarily for financial arrangements
- some for specific services

Does your fire department / fire company have written administrative guidelines related to the provision of fire services?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	46.9%	15
No	46.9%	15
N/A	6.3%	2
	answered question	**32**

Does your fire department / fire company have a written manual of operating procedures for the delivery of fire services?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	65.6%	21
No	31.3%	10
N/A	3.1%	1
Comments		4
	answered question	**32**

- We received operating policy and guideline documents from 5 fire departments.

How does your fire department / fire company ensure compliance with your administrative /operating guidelines?

- Of the 25 responses, they were fairly evenly split between formal and informal methods of compliance.
- The most common practice is for the Chief and officers to ensure compliance.

Which NFPA standards, if any, does your fire department / fire company follow?

- Of the 22 responses, most tried to follow as many NFPA standards as they could.
- Some were following NFPA standards they didn't know about.
- Cost was an issue, as many followed standards unofficially.

Has your fire department / fire company completed a fire underwriters survey / study of your operations?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	65.6%	21
No	34.4%	11
N/A	0.0%	0
	answered question	**32**

- Survey/studies done in various years from 1999-2013.

Does you fire department / fire company participate in any of the following (please indicate all that apply)?

- Summary Results
  - All departments/companies have Mutual Aid Agreements in PEI except for two
  - There are two full Automatic Aid Agreements, one in the west, one in the east.
  - Some departments/companies have call specific Automatic Aid Agreements (Auto extracation, MFR etc)
  - Other arrangements include METRO in Queens County and Forestry Service Truck contracts.

What changes, if any, would your fire department / fire company like to see in regards to the 911 system (dispatching and/or addressing)?

- Of the 31 responses, the most common were:
  - Civic address signs to be doubled sided, larger, facing traffic rather than facing across the road.
  - Some communication issues identified with regards to being in contact with paramedics, radio coverage, and supplying home owner names.

Are there any programs or services, not provided now, that the Fire Marshall's Office, the PEI Firefighters Association or the Province should be providing?

- Of the 28 responses, the most common were:
  - FMO needs more resources in order to reach out to local fire departments with issues like inspections, training, and policy development.
  - Central purchasing.
  - Joint recruitment programs.
  - More provincial minimum standards.

What are the most significant gaps or challenges in regards to the delivery of Fire Services in your district?

- Of the 29 responses, the most common were:
  - Fire School attendance
  - Department/Company training attendance
  - Rate structures
  - Funding
  - Recruitment and Retention

What trends/factors could interfere with the ability of your fire department / fire company to provide the best service to your community in the future?

- Of the 28 responses, the most common were:
  - Aging demographics
  - Shrinking tax base in rural areas
  - Ability to fund capital costs
  - Current firefighters moving due to a lack of employment in their rural area

What types of honourariums (amount, frequency, etc.), if any, does your municipality / fire department / fire company provide to firefighters?

- Of the 32 responses, 27 provide some type of honorarium and 5 do not:

Annual Honourariums:

- Provided once a member meets certain criteria (min. hours of training/meeting/call hours)
- Amounts range from $100 to $5,000

Per Call Honourariums

- Based on the number of calls, training sessions, meeting, etc they attend.
- Ranges from $5 to $25 per call or training

Other

- Fuel and training expenses or allowances provided at the end of the year based on participation.

What types of insurance coverage (Life, LTD, etc.), if any, does your fire department / fire company provide to firefighters?

- Of the 31 responses:
  - At least 6 suggested they had no life insurance or LTD coverage

Please describe any other compensation or recognition (RRSPs, awards, etc.) your fire department / fire company provides firefighters?

- Of the 30 responses:
  - Large majority said the extras were Christmas dinners, jackets, service rings/medals/pins, and use of hall.
  - One department/company has an RRSP program for members where dept contributions start at $120 per year and increase to $720 per year after 15 years of service.

Fire Department Membership

Of 31 responses:

- 14 have full complement or above.
- 9 are at or above 80% of their full compliment.
- 8 are below 80% of their full compliment.

Of 31 responses:

- 19% of firefighters are under age 30
- 27% of firefighters are between 30 and 40
- 27% of firefighters are between 40 and 50
- 26 % of firefighters are over 50

Of 32 responses:

- 26 departments/companies have female members.

Does your fire department / fire company have problems with recruitment?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	40.6%	13
No	59.4%	19
	answered question	**32**

Main reasons given for recruitment challenges:

- Time commitment
- Lack of incentives
- Demographics

Does your fire department / fire company have problems with retention?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	28.1%	9
No	65.6%	21
N/A	6.3%	2
	answered question	**32**

Please describe what your fire department / fire company does to recruit and retain firefighters.

- Of the 29 responses, the most common recruitment methods are:
  - Newspaper ads
  - Newsletters
  - Word of mouth
- To retain members, the most common methods are:
  - honouraríums
  - being flexible about members being away for work
  - promoting the value/respect of being a firefighter in the community

What is the frequency of your in-house training offerings?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Weekly	31%	10
Bi-weekly	31%	10
Monthly	38%	12
	answered question	**32**

- The majority use some combination of training, meeting, and business nights throughout their schedule.
- Also do various joint training sessions outside of the normal schedule.

What are your training and probationary period policies for new recruits?

- Of the 30 responses:
  - Probationary periods range between 3 months and 1 year.
  - Majority require new members to get Level 1 within 1-2 years.
  - Some do not go on calls or get a pager until probation period is over.

Which of the following do you require of all your firefighters? (select all you require)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No minimum level of training or certifications should be required	15.6%	5
Level 1 Firefighting Certificate	68.8%	22
Level 2 Firefighting Certificate	6.3%	2
First Aid	75.0%	24
CPR	71.9%	23
MFR	25.0%	8
Auto rescue	25.0%	8
Technical rescue	3.1%	1
Other (please specify)	37.5%	12
	answered question	**32**

- "Other" answers included grandfathering in members who do not have level 1, ice rescue, jaws of life equipment, and other mixed training requirements.

What specialized training, if any, should chief/officers be required to have ?

- Of the 26 responses, the majority noted:
  - Levels 1 and 2
  - Leadership, HR, Management Training
  - Incident command
  - Disaster courses on PEI

Does your fire department / fire company have task only trained personnel such as apparatus driver / operators, MFR, etc.?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	51.6%	16
No	45.2%	14
N/A	3.2%	1
	answered question	**31**

- The most common 'task only' trained personnel were for Pump Operators, MFR, rope and ice rescue.

Describe your fire department's / fire company's inspection / maintenance program for your apparatus and equipment?

- Of the 31 responses there were a variety of programs used:
  - Rotating weekend duty
  - Dedicated members who do maintenance
  - Independent contractors

Are all your fire department / fire company inspections on air and other equipment and bunker gear up to date?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	74.2%	23
No	25.8%	8
	answered question	**31**

- Most common reason for not being up to date was funding.

When is it hardest to get enough responders?

97% of respondents listed daytime.

What is the minimum number of firefighters that might respond to a dispatch?

- Of the 31 responses for Fire/Alarm Calls:
  - 25 departments/companies have 1-10
  - 6 departments/companies have 10+
- Of the responses for MFR:
  - 6 departments/companies have 1-5
  - 2 departments/companies have 5+

Can your fire department / fire company provide 2 firefighters in and 2 firefighters out on arrival of the first apparatus?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	71.9%	23
No	25.0%	8
N/A	3.1%	1
	answered question	**32**

Can your fire department / fire company provide water on the fire within 2 minutes of arrival of the first apparatus?

97% of respondents can.

How long from receipt of alarm does it take your fire department / fire company to get your first vehicle out of the fire hall?

- Of the 32 responses for Fire/Alarm Calls:
  - 25 departments/companies can have first vehicle out of fire hall in 5 minutes or less.
  - 7 are over 5 minutes on average.

What impact has the increased Medical First Responders role had on your fire department / fire company?

- Of the 31 responses the most common were:
  - Majority of calls
  - Increased call volume
  - Impacts recruitment and retention with increased volunteer hours
  - Morale booster as pride increases in communities
  - Increase not as great in areas where ambulance located

Which of the following fire prevention activities does your fire department / fire company participate in?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	6.3%	2
Fire Prevention Week activities	59.4%	19
School visits	71.9%	23
Local newsletters	56.3%	18
N/A	3.1%	1
Other (please specify)	31.3%	10
	answered question	**32**

- "Other" includes: newspaper ads, public demonstrations, social media, Fire Chief for a day program, lunch and learn programs, and parades.

How often does your fire department / fire company undertake fundraising campaigns to support charity?

- Of the 30 responses:
  - 20 departments do charity fundraising at least once a year, with some doing monthly events
  - 10 do not fundraise for charity but some still find other ways to volunteer and contribute

How often does your fire department / fire company undertake fundraising campaigns to purchase apparatus and equipment for the fire station?

- Of the 30 responses:
  - 16 do fundraising campaigns for their department/company
  - 14 do not fundraise for their department/company

APPENDIX G – FIRE DISTRICT RATES (2013)

2013 Fire District Rates

Fire District Number	Fire District Name	Categories	Category Description	2013 Rate	2012 Rate	Increase / Decrease
1900	Tignish	0		Nil		
		1	Structures over 1500 sq ft.	$80.00	$80.00	0.00
		2	Vacant Lot	$20.00	$20.00	0.00
		3	Farm	$100.00	$100.00	0.00
		4	Fisher	$100.00	$100.00	0.00
		5	Small Business	$100.00	$100.00	0.00
		6	Medium Business	$200.00	$200.00	0.00
		7	Large Business	$300.00	$300.00	0.00
		8	Structures Under 1500	$25.00	$25.00	0.00
1901	Miminegash	0	Land, Gov Pty, Churches and some not charged Fire Dues	Nil		
		1	Homes	$60.00	$60.00	0.00
		2	Homes with Business	$120.00	$120.00	0.00
		3	Barns	$35.00	$35.00	0.00
		4	Home & Cottages	$305.00	$305.00	0.00
		5	Rental Home & Cottages	$690.00	$690.00	0.00
		6	High Risk Buildings	$405.00	$405.00	0.00
		7	Business alone	$115.00	$115.00	0.00
		8	Home & High Risk Business	$225.00	$225.00	0.00
hange in Cat 9: only one		9	Vacant Property	$20.00		**20.00**
pty previous now vacant			Was High Risk Businss in 2012		$185.00	**-185.00**
1902	Alberton	0				
		1	Houses	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		2	Cottages	$60.00	$60.00	0.00
		3	Two Houses	$130.00	$130.00	0.00
		4	One House & Cottage	$125.00	$125.00	0.00
		5	Small Business	$90.00	$90.00	0.00
		6	Two Houses & One Cottage	$190.00	$190.00	0.00
		7	Big Business	$315.00	$315.00	0.00
		8	Farms	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		9	Medium Business	$115.00	$115.00	0.00
New Category in 2013		10	Vacant Land	$5.00		**5.00**
1903	O'Leary	0		Nil		
		1	House	$63.59	$60.56	**3.03**
		2	Cottage	$54.51	$51.91	**2.60**
		3	Small Business	$90.85	$86.52	**4.33**
		4	Vacant Lot	$21.53	$20.50	**1.03**
		5	Big Business	$550.12	$523.92	**26.20**
1904	West Point	0	Vacant	Nil		
		1	Residential	$60.56	$60.56	0.00
		2	Cottages	$52.91	$52.91	0.00
		3	Business	$86.52	$86.52	0.00
		4	Exempt	Nil		

2013 Fire District Rates

Fire District Number	Fire District Name	Categories	Category Description	2013 Rate	2012 Rate	Increase / Decrease
1905	Tyne Valley	0	Exemptions	Nil		
		1	Vacant	$10.00	$10.00	0.00
		2	Residential	$85.00	$80.00	**5.00**
		3	Commercial	$105.00	$100.00	**5.00**
1906	Wellington	0		Nil		
		1	Cottage	$50.00	$50.00	0.00
		2	Residential	$90.00	$90.00	0.00
		3	Business in Home	$97.00	$97.00	0.00
		4	Duplex	$97.00	$97.00	0.00
		5	Farm / Commercial	$200.00	$200.00	0.00
		6	Exempt	Nil		
		7	Business	$90.00	$90.00	0.00
		8	Vacant Lot	$7.00	$7.00	0.00
1907	Miscouche	0		Nil		
		1	Single Family	$85.00	$85.00	0.00
		2	Farm Including Barn	$150.00	$150.00	0.00
		3	Commercial Including House	$150.00	$150.00	0.00
		4	Cottage	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		5	Multi Family	$115.00	$115.00	0.00
		6	Building No House	$115.00	$115.00	0.00
		7	Farm and Cottage	$150.00	$150.00	0.00
1910	Kensington	0	Properties with no Fire Dues Levied	Nil		
		1	Residential	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		2	Small Farm, Commercial	$65.00	$85.00	**-20.00**
		3	Large Farm, Commercial	$65.00	$135.00	**-70.00**
		4	Large Corporation	$535.00	$535.00	0.00
New Category in 2013		5	Vacant / Unimproved Property	$10.00		**10.00**
New Category in 2013		6	Mobile Home	$55.00		**55.00**
1911	Kinkora	19110	Non Commercial (Capped $250)	$0.11	$0.11	0.00
			Commercial (Capped $250)	$0.13		
		19111	Non Commercial (No Cap)	$0.11		0.00
			Commercial (No Cap)	$0.13	$0.13	0.00
New Category in 2013		19112	Non Commercial (No Cap)	$0.13		**0.13**
Ptys with Farm Blds.			Commercial (No Cap)	$0.13		
1912	Borden	0		Nil		
		1	House	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		2	Cottage	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		3	Multi	$100.00	$100.00	0.00
		4	Farm	$80.00	$80.00	0.00
		5	Commercial	$300.00	$300.00	0.00

2013 Fire District Rates

Fire District Number	Fire District Name	Categories	Category Description	2013 Rate	2012 Rate	Increase / Decrease
2900	Crapaud	0		Nil		
		1	Residences	$80.00	$80.00	0.00
		2	Cottages	$90.00	$90.00	0.00
		3	Farm	$130.00	$130.00	0.00
		4	Buildings	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		5	Large Business	$230.00	$230.00	0.00
200 Pty's added to Cat 6		6	Property	$40.00	$40.00	0.00
		7	Small Farm / Business	$95.00	$95.00	0.00
2902	New London	0		Nil		
		1	Residence < 100,000	$80.00	$80.00	0.00
		2	Residence > 100,000 and < 250,000	$96.50	$96.50	0.00
		3	Residence > 250,000	$160.00	$160.00	0.00
		4	Vacant Lot captialing ?	$40.00	$40.00	0.00
		5	Vacant Lot	$20.00	$20.00	0.00
2903	New Glasgow		Non Commercial	$0.09	$0.09	0.00
			Commercial	$0.09	$0.09	0.00
2905	North Rustico	0	Exempt	Nil		
		1	Subdivision - Vacant Lots	$25.00	$25.00	0.00
		2	Single Accomodation or Building on Lot	$68.00	$68.00	0.00
		3	Dual Accomodations Duplex / House & Cottage	$100.00	$100.00	0.00
		4	Farm Land with Buildings	$110.00	$110.00	0.00
		5	Farm as Above with Living Accomodations	$150.00	$150.00	0.00
		6	Licensed Business Operation on Lot	$120.00	$120.00	0.00
		7	Licensed Business with Living Accomodation	$149.00	$149.00	0.00
		8	Vacant Lots up to 10 Acres	$28.00	$28.00	0.00
		9	Vacant Lots over 10 Acres	$50.00	$50.00	0.00
2906	Winsloe North		Non Commercial	$0.07	$0.07	0.00
			Commercial	$0.07	$0.07	0.00
2907	North Shore		Non Commercial	$0.08	$0.08	0.00
			Commercial	$0.08	$0.08	0.00
2910	Crossroads	0	No Charge (Mobile Home Etc)	Nil		
		1	Single Family	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		2	Duplex	$130.00	$130.00	0.00
		3	Business	$150.00	$150.00	0.00
		4	Vacant Lots	$30.00	$30.00	0.00

2013 Fire District Rates

Fire District Number	Fire District Name	Categories	Category Description	2013 Rate	2012 Rate	Increase / Decrease
2911	East River	0	No Charge with Buildings	Nil		
		1	Singel Property with Buildings	$95.00	$92.00	**3.00**
		2	Two or more Properties	$165.00	$160.00	**5.00**
		3	Vacant Property	$30.00	$30.00	0.00
		4	Multiple Vacant	$30.00	$30.00	0.00
		5	Cottages Units Income	$95.00	$92.00	**3.00**
2912	Vernon River	0		Nil		
		1	Residential	$60.50	$60.50	0.00
		2	Capped	$121.00	$121.00	0.00
		3	Land Only	$18.15	$18.15	0.00
		4	Land and Building	$24.20	$24.20	0.00
		5	Government Land	$18.15	$18.15	0.00
		6	Government Land and Buildings	$24.20	$24.20	0.00
2914	Johnstons River	0	Non Taxable	Nil		
		1	Vacant Land	$30.00	$30.00	0.00
		2	Buildings and Land	$55.00	$55.00	0.00
		3	Commercial	$150.00	$150.00	0.00
2915	North River		Non Commercial	$0.07	$0.07	0.00
			Commercial	$0.07	$0.07	0.00
2916	Victoria	0	No Charge	Nil		
		1	Residential	$75.00	$75.00	0.00
		2	Cottage or Separate Buildings	$70.00	$70.00	0.00
		3	Farm or Small Business	$160.00	$160.00	0.00
		4	Lot with Building	$65.00	$65.00	0.00
		5	Large Business	$260.00	$260.00	0.00
		6	Property Only	$35.00	$35.00	0.00
		7	Property without Building	$90.00	$90.00	0.00
3900	Montague		Non Commercial	$0.07	$0.07	0.00
			Commercial	$0.07	$0.07	0.00
3901	Morell	0		Nil		
		1	Residential and Others	$80.00	$80.00	0.00
		2	Commercial 250 - 500,000	$400.00	$400.00	0.00
		3	Commercial 500,000 +	$700.00	$700.00	0.00
		4	Vacant	$30.00	$30.00	0.00

2013 Fire District Rates

Fire District Number	Fire District Name	Categories	Category Description	2013 Rate	2012 Rate	Increase / Decrease
3902	St. Peters	0	New Property	Nil		
		1	Residential Home	$78.00	$78.00	0.00
		2	Farm	$185.00	$185.00	0.00
		3	Commercial	$185.00	$185.00	0.00
		4	Two Residents on Same PID	$166.00	$166.00	0.00
		5	Vacant Land Non Resident	$40.00	$40.00	0.00
		6	Vacant Land Resident	$28.00	$28.00	0.00
		7	National Park and Resort	$1,600.00	$1,600.00	0.00
3903	Souris	0		Nil		
		1	Property with Buildings	$85.00	$85.00	0.00
		2	Non Residence Land - No Buildings	$55.00	$55.00	0.00
		3	Residence Land No Buildings	$30.00	$30.00	0.00
3904	Georgetown		Non Commercial	$0.05	$0.05	0.00
			Commercial	$0.05	$0.05	0.00
3905	Central Kings		Non Commercial	$0.09	$0.08	**0.01**
			Commercial	$0.09	$0.08	**0.01**
3907	Cardigan		Non Commercial	$0.10	$0.10	0.00
			Commercial	$0.10	$0.10	0.00
3908	Murray Harbour	0		Nil		
		1	Houses	$50.00	$50.00	0.00
		2	Farms	$70.00	$70.00	0.00
		3	Commercial	$100.00	$100.00	0.00
		4	Vacant Land	$26.00	$26.00	0.00
		5	Cottages	$50.00	$50.00	0.00
		6	Non Working Farm	$55.00	$55.00	0.00
3909	Murray River	0		Nil		
		1	Dwelling	$60.00	$55.00	**5.00**
		2	Double Dwelling	$115.00	$110.00	**5.00**
		3	Vacant Land	$32.00	$27.00	**5.00**
		4	Multiple Use	$170.00	$165.00	**5.00**