



2015-2018

# MANITOBA PROVINCIAL FIRE PROTECTION PLAN



Manitoba 

# MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE COMMISSIONER



I am pleased to present the Manitoba Provincial Fire Protection Plan. This four-year plan was compiled by a dedicated group of stakeholders who share the common vision of ensuring that municipalities and the Manitoba Fire Service remain strong and well positioned to collectively meet the challenges of the future.

Providing effective fire and emergency services is a key responsibility for all local authorities. The Office of the Fire Commissioner has the primary responsibility to ensure that local authorities and the Manitoba Fire Service are supported in the development and strengthening of their respective programs. We will ensure that the Provincial mutual aid system remains strong and capable of responding effectively to emergency situations by working together.

On behalf of the staff of the Office of the Fire Commissioner, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service for their representation on the working group and their contribution to this provincial plan.

The Manitoba Provincial Fire Protection Plan will be Manitoba's "Playbook" for the next four-years and will advance the Manitoba Fire Service. A commitment from all stakeholders is required to ensure that the goals and action items identified are fully implemented.  
Sincerely,

*original signed by*

David Schafer  
Fire Commissioner



# PROVINCIAL FIRE PROTECTION PLAN WORKING GROUP INTRODUCTION



## SUMMARY

As part of the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC)'s ongoing commitment to public safety, a Provincial Fire Protection Plan working group was formed to review challenges facing the Manitoba Fire Service and municipalities. The working group found ways to ensure that the Manitoba Fire Service and the mutual aid system will continue to be ready to meet the future needs of municipalities and the public.

The working group first met in September 2012 and included delegates from the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs, the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service and the OFC. Over the course of a year, the members consulted stakeholder groups, mutual aid districts and fire departments. The working group reviewed the present and future service conditions, collected documents currently used by provincial bodies and studied strategic plans from other jurisdictions. In analyzing the data, the working group identified five goals for the Manitoba Provincial Fire Protection Plan:

1. Identify public expectations to ensure excellent customer service to stakeholders and clients.
2. Facilitate effective communication between the government, local authorities, the Manitoba Fire Service and the public.
3. Strengthen partnerships and management and improve the way fire services are organized.
4. Streamline service delivery to the public.
5. Promote recruitment and retention efforts by investing in employees and providing management with the tools to succeed.

The plan combines the shared vision and best practices of the various organizations in the Manitoba Fire Service. This document sets out a four-year mandate guided by specific goals that will help local authorities keep Manitobans safe.

# FIRE PROTECTION PLAN

## PURPOSE

To establish partnerships, tasks and measurable outcomes for success through which municipalities may provide high-quality, efficient and consistent fire services to Manitobans.

## SCOPE

The Manitoba Provincial Fire Protection Plan will be the main reference point for local governments, fire departments, the OFC and stakeholder groups in managing current operations and planning for the future. It also establishes a network for assigning resources to projects, co-ordinating efforts and communicating ideas.

## USE

The document outlines common goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Each stakeholder is expected to complete the steps in a timely, co-operative way.

The working group will set priorities, co-ordinate the flow of resources, delegate staff to help meet common goals and monitor progress. The group's major focus will be supervising the plan, adjusting the plan as needed and providing updates about its progress to the stakeholders.

The goals and checklists of the plan will be updated at future planning meetings. The group encourages active support from all stakeholders, including local governments and fire services.



# GOAL 1

## IDENTIFY PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS



Manitobans expect their local fire departments to be well trained and equipped to protect them from many types of hazards. Ensuring a match between public expectations and municipal capabilities is crucial to ensuring local authorities are able to respond effectively to life safety events. This goal focuses on providing tools and references that may be used at the local level.



TIMELINE	ACTION ITEM	RATIONALE	FACILITATORS
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a model of fire protection bylaws distributed for local governments to compare.</li> <li>• Create a fire protection reference library for existing documents that may be used by departments and local government.</li> </ul>	There must be consistency in service delivery across departments and a wide range of fire service tasks.	AMM, OFC, MAFC
2015/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate fire protection considerations into all local government activities, boards and community planning.</li> </ul>	Community planning needs to include wider fire protection considerations beyond fire suppression. Local government law needs to reflect service provision within the region.	AMM, OFC
2016/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and preplan significant hazards.</li> </ul>	The fire service is an all-hazards public service agency. Government and fire department leadership require common capability to manage and co-ordinate in all cases.	MAFC, OFC
2017/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish expanded provincial fire statistics for use by stakeholders.</li> <li>• Select references (ex: standards, textbooks, and other documents) for fire departments to determine where gaps exist.</li> </ul>	Local governments must be in a position to provide clear answers to the public, including definitive explanations of what departments can and cannot do.	OFC  Working Group

# GOAL 2

## FACILITATE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



Improving communication between the government, local authorities, the Manitoba Fire Service and the public can enhance services, limit duplication and make better use of resources.



TIMELINE	ACTION ITEM	RATIONALE	FACILITATORS
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate attendance at meetings and allied conferences by each stakeholder group to promote communication and share best practices.</li> <li>Encourage updates in each other's stakeholder publications.</li> <li>Ratify terms of reference for the Working Group.</li> </ul>	Improved communication and common understanding between stakeholders.	AMM, MAFC  Working Group  Working Group
2015/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify critical elements needed for fire protection and emergency services.</li> <li>Develop and introduce "Introduction to the Fire Service" seminar that provides reference and training materials for elected and administrative officials.</li> </ul>	Ensuring information and updates are widely available will facilitate sharing of valuable information.	OFC  MESC, MAFC, AMM
2016/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model common reports from fire departments to local government that may be used for claims, training reports, inventory, procedures and governance.</li> </ul>	Best practices can be extended to other jurisdictions to enhance the success of the entire fire service in Manitoba.	OFC, MAFC
2017/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold a "Strategic Fire Planning" conference where all stakeholders can review the strategy's progress.</li> </ul>	Address concerns and collectively determine next steps.	Working Group

# GOAL 3

## STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND MANAGEMENT



Forming efficient partnerships and good management are essential to safe operations. A well co-ordinated fire service can increase resources and strengthen public safety for Manitobans.

TIMELINE	ACTION ITEM	RATIONALE	FACILITATORS
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update existing model guidelines for creating municipal and department programs, including fire prevention and public education.</li> <li>• Update existing model guidelines for creating department and Mutual Aid District (MAD) training plans.</li> </ul>	Ensuring that Mission, Vision, and Values of fire departments are understood and practiced is essential. Education is key to ensuring goals are understood and achieved.	OFC, MAFC  MESC
2015/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model Workplace Safety and Health Safe Work procedures.</li> <li>• Model human resource policies.</li> <li>• Model available fire department policy documents, including capital and operational budgets.</li> </ul>	Ensuring the health and welfare of responders is the primary concern. MAD and regional view of services can increase the capability of teams and improve efficiency in dealing with hazards.	OFC, MAFC  AMM, Working Group  Working Group
2017/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model common equipment and purchasing references.</li> </ul>	Financial efficiency is required for well-functioning departments. Plans, tracking and reporting procedures must be identified and followed.	MAFC, AMM

# GOAL 4

## STREAMLINE SERVICE DELIVERY



Better co-ordination and support between jurisdictions will ensure necessary resources are available so departments can fulfill their mandates. Streamlining tools, documents and procedures that departments need will improve individual department function as well as multi-department scene response.



TIMELINE	ACTION ITEM	RATIONALE	FACILITATORS
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model operating guidelines.</li> </ul>	Operating guidelines (OGs) are predetermined processes and should be consistent across jurisdictions. Few departments have published OGs and this is an important area of opportunity.	MAFC, OFC
2015/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review fire protection and MAD agreements.</li> <li>Ensure common reporting and recordkeeping practices.</li> </ul>	Enforcing best practices will increase transparency and accountability and provide a measurable way to gauge success.	AMM, OFC OFC, AMM
2016/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an inventory/review of existing response capability by specialized teams to minimize overlap.</li> <li>Model best practices with Fleet Maintenance and Infrastructure Plan to ensure continuity.</li> </ul>	Ensuring the availability of specialized teams and resources will allow for resources to be dispatched to high-risk areas.	OFC, MAFC AMM
2017/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop incident management teams to support leadership at a regional level.</li> <li>Create procurement plans and stockpiles of strategic equipment.</li> </ul>	Having a reserve of incident management teams and specialized support can provide robust command-and-control structures at large incidents.	OFC, MAFC; supported by AMM OFC



# GOAL 5

## PROMOTE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS



Providing leadership tools and investing in high-value employees is very important to ensuring a high level of fire service quality into the future. Clear mandates and practical tools will allow fire service leadership to retain valuable employees and build strong, sustainable teams.



TIMELINE	ACTION ITEM	RATIONALE	FACILITATORS
2015/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and provide job descriptions for fire department staff.</li> <li>• Make the Rural Company Officer and Fire Officer Level I courses available to interested candidates.</li> </ul>	Ensure that skills and knowledge for Fire Officers is optimized to meet departmental needs.	MAFC, OFC  MESCC
2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the Fire Officer Level II course available to interested candidates.</li> <li>• Adopt a model Fire Chief/Fire Officer/Fire Fighter document that outlines compensation and classification for positions and work assignments.</li> <li>• Create a succession plan from Fire Fighter to Fire Chief.</li> </ul>	Specific training for Fire Chiefs and Officers should be provided to support decision making at an incident. Succession plans will ensure business continuity and adequate staffing levels.	MESCC  MESCC  MESCC
2017/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a universal staffing and recruitment plan that includes both emergency and non-emergency response staff (ex: a media campaign, recruitment brochures).</li> </ul>	Provincial and local government require tangible ways to recruit and retain quality staff.	AMM
2018/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure adequate communication and technology for management, training and response is available. Make investment plans for purchasing, training and partnerships with suppliers (ex: installing geographic information systems in all emergency vehicles).</li> </ul>	Equipping staff with current technologies will help ensure they are equipped to perform job functions at optimum levels.	AMM, MAFC, OFC

# CONCLUSION

The Manitoba Provincial Fire Protection Plan provides direction for a proactive fire management program for the province. It will take commitment and dedication from all of the stakeholders to fully achieve the strategy. Several aspects are currently underway, including:

- **fire officer programs**
- **collection of operating guidelines and reference documents**
- **partnership groups**
- **safe work procedures**

Completion of the action items identified within this plan will support the continued professional development of the Manitoba Fire Service and will ensure the long term sustainability of our provincial mutual aid system. This will ultimately ensure that municipalities are well positioned to provide high-quality, efficient and consistent fire services to Manitobans.







**Office of the Fire  
Commissioner**

508 - 401 York Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0P8  
Phone: 204-945-3322  
Fax: 204-948-2089  
Toll Free: 1-800-282-8069  
Email: [firecomm@gov.mb.ca](mailto:firecomm@gov.mb.ca)

**Office of the Fire  
Commissioner  
Manitoba Emergency  
Services College**

1601 Van Horne Avenue East  
Brandon, MB R7A 7K2  
Phone 204-726-6855  
Fax: 204-726-6847  
Toll Free: 1-888-253-1488  
Email: [firecomm@gov.mb.ca](mailto:firecomm@gov.mb.ca)