

Province of Nova Scotia

Report of the Fire Services Senior Officials Committee

Fire and Emergency Services Scan of Canadian Provinces and Territories

Dated January 9, 2013

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Executive Summary

This paper compares and contrasts Nova Scotia's fire prevention and suppression services with those in Canada's other provinces and territories.

The analysis focuses on nine areas, corresponding with the recommendations contained in the Fire Services Senior Officials Committee Final Report:

1. Governance and Authority – the relevant Acts in each jurisdiction, and the responsibilities of the various government departments¹ and levels of government.
2. Accountability – the mechanisms in place to ensure the system adheres to quality standards and is responsive to the proper authority.
3. Finance – the budget parameters and the costs of administering the system.
4. Operations – the consistency of service throughout a jurisdiction.
5. Interoperability – the extent to which various emergency responders can 'speak to each other' in an emergency response situation.
6. Equipment and Vehicles – the extent to which fire departments are equipped with the same or comparable equipment.
7. Tactical Communications – the public access points and dispatch systems.
8. Training – the training required for firefighters.
9. Human Resources – staffing levels and the mix of professional and volunteer firefighters.

Two additional topics reviewed include stakeholder participation and system performance measures.

While there are several consistencies between Canadian provinces and territories with respect to fire prevention and suppression services, there are many individual differences in how the overall system in each jurisdiction is designed and functions.

¹ The term 'department' in this context is equivalent to a 'ministry' or 'ministere' in other jurisdictions.

Nova Scotia is similar to the majority of Provinces and Territories (P / T's) in several respects:

- Nova Scotia has a Fire Marshal (FM) instead of a Fire Commissioner (FC). The latter typically has more of a direct requirement for overseeing fire service training and operations. That said, Ontario's Fire Marshal, under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, has the duty to develop training programs and evaluation systems for persons involved in the provision of the fire protection services and to provide programs to improve practices relating to fire protection services. Similarly, Quebec's head of fire safety is responsible for a significant education and training component of that province's fire service. The difference in title does not seem to limit the ability of the office to undertake specific responsibilities.
- Nova Scotia divides responsibilities for municipal fire suppression and wildland fires into different government departments. The role of the OFM and suppression rests with DNR and municipalities. In most P / T's, municipal units are not required by legislation to have fire suppression capability.
- Nova Scotia's main piece of legislation for fire prevention – the *Fire Safety Act* – has similar provisions to related Acts from other jurisdictions. These include provisions for public education, firefighter training, investigations, records collection, ongoing advice to senior government officials and to municipalities, submitting an annual report to the minister responsible, the power to appoint local assistants, and inspections.
- Nova Scotia's OFM is partially funded through a levy on fire insurance. This money is collected as general revenue for the province and then distributed back to the OFM.
- Nova Scotia has a mix of career and volunteer firefighters working in full-time, composite, volunteer and industrial departments. Some departments provide compensation based on attendance.
- Nova Scotia has training and certification available for fire fighters.
- Nova Scotia does not have a quality assurance process for municipal fire prevention and suppression.
- Nova Scotia lacks performance measures for municipal fire prevention and suppression, but has measures for wildland fire suppression.

- Nova Scotia has standardized reporting and system metrics in place for municipal and wildland fire suppression.
- Nova Scotia has a provincial 911 system that the public can use to access fire suppression services.
- Fire dispatch is managed at the local level.

Nova Scotia also has key differences from many other P / T's.

- Nova Scotia's OFM is housed in the department responsible for labour.
- Nova Scotia houses the governance responsibilities for fire prevention in a separate department from that of emergency management. The majority of P / T's house these responsibilities in the same department.
- Nova Scotia does not have established training standards or free training for municipal fire fighters.
- Nova Scotia has no established standards for municipal fire fighting equipment.
- Nova Scotia has a quality assurance process for wildland fire suppression.
- Nova Scotia seems to be above most in terms of interoperable communications.

Terms of Reference

Deputy Ministers of key provincial government departments have identified an interest to review the fire and associated services in Nova Scotia. These associated services may include, and are not limited to HazMat, ice/water and confined space rescue, vehicle extrication, and medical first response.

The Fire Services Senior Officials Committee (FSSOC) was established to examine fire and associated services in Nova Scotia. Specifically the FSSOC will review and provide recommendations related to:

- opportunities to better align and co-ordinate services throughout the province;
- opportunities for efficiencies, and to minimize risk to communities and responders; and
- the future governance and operations of the fire and associated services in Nova Scotia.

Deliverables include recommendations related to C3 Governance (co-ordination, co-operation / collaboration, consistency) operations, communications, interoperability, human resources accountability, stakeholder participation, finance, vehicle equipment and facilities.

Participation in the FSSOC includes representatives from the following departments:

- a. Labour and Advanced Education
 - Project Director, Safety Branch (Chair)
 - Fire Marshal
- b. Service NS and Municipal Relations
- c. Transportation and Infrastructure renewal
 - Risk Management
- d. Health and Wellness
 - Health Services Emergency Management (HSEM)
 - Emergency Health Services (EHS)
- e. Natural Resources
- f. Justice
 - Emergency Management Office (EMO)

The FSSOC is accountable to the Fire Services Deputy Ministers Standing Committee.

This report addresses Phase I: Analysis; Provide an analysis of the current status of fire services in Nova Scotia and the overall state of the Fire Service and governance in Canada, including resources (human, equipment, vehicles and supplies) interoperability, accountability, communications/dispatch, risk management, dependencies, costs, expenditures and funding both at the provincial and municipal levels.

Methodology

This report was informed through a jurisdictional scan that was conducted during the spring and summer of 2012. The scan was based on a questionnaire written by the FSSOC. The questionnaire covered a broad range of topics related to fire and emergency services. The questionnaire was circulated to P / T fire marshals, fire commissioners, and wildfire program directors via email in mid-April. Information was then collected over the next few months via email and telephone conversations. Information was also collected from P / T websites, many of which provided considerable detail about how fire and emergency services are delivered in each jurisdiction, and the various roles and responsibilities assumed by government. A copy of the questionnaire can be found at Annex A to this report.

After the initial information was compiled and reviewed by the FSSOC, the draft report was circulated to OFM / OFC and wildland fire officials throughout all P / T's to validate the information and provide additional comments.

Analysis

System Design

1. Governance and Authority

Nova Scotia's OFM operates as a division of the Safety Branch of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education. The office is led by the Fire Marshal, who reports to the Senior Executive Director of Safety. There are nine Deputy Fire Marshals in the branch that report directly to the Fire Marshal. Their primary roles are:

- a. To ensure an effective implementation of the *Fire Safety Act* and associated regulations.
- b. To provide technical support, education, coaching and other assistance as deemed necessary to fire officials as defined in the *Fire Safety Act*.
- c. To manage, supervise, plan and coordinate inspections and / or audits of premises to ensure compliance with the *Fire Safety Act* and associated regulations and to provide reports for the same.
- d. To manage, supervise and direct the course of fire investigations throughout the province in compliance with the *Fire Safety Act* and to assist other authorities having jurisdiction in any prosecutions resulting from a fire investigation.

Fire Marshal / Commissioner

The responsibilities of a FM and a FC differ in a number of key ways. The major difference is that an FC has more of a direct requirement for overseeing fire service training and operations. That said, Ontario's Fire Marshal, under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, has the duty to develop training programs and evaluation systems for persons involved in the provision of the fire protection services and to provide programs to improve practices relating to fire protection services. Similarly, Quebec's head of fire safety is responsible for a significant education and training component of that province's fire service. The difference in title does not seem to limit the ability of the office to undertake specific responsibilities.

While the majority of P / T's have a FM, Canadian jurisdictions are split fairly evenly as to the title and role for the head of fire safety.

Fire Marshal	Fire Commissioner
Nova Scotia	Alberta
New Brunswick	British Columbia
Ontario	Manitoba
Prince Edward Island	Newfoundland and Labrador
Northwest Territories	Saskatchewan
Nunavut	
Yukon	

Table #1

Quebec is an exception in that its *Fire Safety Act* does not make reference to either an FM or an FC for the province. In Quebec, these services are instead led by an Associate Deputy Minister in the Ministère de la Sécurité publique. This department houses several responsibilities common to several OFM / OFC's across Canada.

Governance models for fire-related services (municipal and wildland) are fairly similar across all P / T's. In virtually all cases they receive their annual operating budgets through government allocation processes and their responsibilities are carried out through an office or branch of a line-department. Some exceptions to this standard model are:

- Manitoba's OFC has operated as a Special Operating Agency since 1996. The main characteristic of this is that they are mainly financially self-sufficient, with most of their revenue generated from a tax levy, and tuition fees at the emergency services college. They must present an annual business plan to the provincial Treasury Board to receive any government funding.

- A portion of the wildfire mandate in Quebec has been delegated to the Societe de protection de forets contre le feu (SOPFEU), a non-profit organization. The organization is responsible for forest fire protection, detection, and suppression in the ‘intensive’ zone.

To use Nova Scotia terms, Canada’s FM / FC’s are usually director-level or above, reporting to an Executive Director or above. There are some exceptions. In the Northwest Territories, for example, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs’ Public Safety Division is overseen by a director, who in turn oversees the work of the emergency management coordinator and the fire marshal. In Quebec, the FM is an Associate Deputy Minister.

In some jurisdictions, FM / FC’s are appointed through the public service hiring process, and in others they are appointed by Governor-in-Council. There seems to be no correlation between the type of appointment process and specific functions and title of the office. Nova Scotia hires through the Public Service Commission, which uses a transparent and merit-based process.

Hired through Public Service Commission (or equivalent)	Appointed by Governor-In-Council
Nova Scotia	British Columbia
Alberta	New Brunswick ²
Manitoba	Ontario
Prince Edward Island	Quebec
Saskatchewan	
Northwest Territories	
Nunavut	
Yukon	

Table # 2

Lead Department

Fire safety and wildland fires are managed separately in Nova Scotia, with the OFM responsible for the former and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responsible for the latter. The separation of these responsibilities is consistent across much of Canada.

Fire prevention

While department names and responsibilities vary considerably from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, Nova Scotia is nevertheless fairly unique in placing the OFM in the

² The Fire Marshal can be appointed or hired through a competitive process; however most recent Fire Marshals have been appointed.

department responsible for labour. The only other province with this alignment is Manitoba, whose OFC is housed in their Department of Family Services and Labour. A semi-comparable alignment exists in Prince Edward Island, where the OFM is housed in the Department of Environment, Labour and Justice. In this case however, fire marshal services are aligned more with the justice component of its mandate. In Quebec, the Regie du batiment owns and enforces the provincial building code under the jurisdiction of the ministere du travail (labour). In most other P / T's, the OFM / OFC is housed either in the department responsible for municipal affairs or community safety.

Emergency management

Nova Scotia has a clear governance distinction between fire safety and emergency management. This is a fairly unique arrangement. Nova Scotia's emergency management responsibilities are housed in the Department of Justice. The majority of P / T's house fire prevention and emergency management responsibilities in the same department.

Wildland Fire

In Nova Scotia, wildland fire responsibilities are managed by DNR. This is consistent with other P / T's. Wildland fire responsibilities in virtually every jurisdiction are managed separately from municipal fires, and are housed in the department responsible for forestry and / or natural resources. One exception is the Yukon, where the OFM and wildland fire responsibilities are both housed in the Department of Community Services. Quebec and Nunavut are other exceptions. In Quebec, wildland fire suppression is delegated to a non-government organization; however the province's natural resources department maintains oversight. In Nunavut, the lack of major tree or forest cover nullifies the threat of wildland fire as a concern. Nunavut has occasional small tundra fires that are usually handled by the local fire department.

The separation of municipal and wildland fire responsibilities across Canada's P / T's is more nuanced in the case of 'interface' communities, where residential housing and forests meet. In these cases and depending on the severity of the fire, municipal fire fighters, emergency management personnel, and wildland fire suppression crews interact on the scene to manage the response.

Department Responsible			
	OFM / OFC	Wildland Fires	Emergency Management

NS	Labour and Advanced Education	Natural Resources	Justice
AB	Municipal Affairs	Environment and Sustainable Resource Development	Municipal Affairs (Alberta Emergency Management Agency)
BC	Justice	Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations	Justice
MB	Family Services and Labour	Conservation and Water Stewardship	Emergency Measures Organization
NB	Public Safety and Solicitor General	Natural Resources	Public Safety and Solicitor General
NL	Municipal Affairs	Natural Resources	Municipal Affairs
ON	Community Safety and Correctional Services	Natural Resources	Community Safety and Correctional Services
PE	Environment, Labour and Justice	Agriculture and Forestry	Environment, Labour and Justice
QU	Securite publique	Natural Resources ³	Securite publique
SK	Corrections, Public Safety and Policing	Environment	Corrections, Public Safety and Policing
NT	Municipal and Community Affairs	Environment and Natural Resources	Municipal and Community Affairs
NU	Community and Government Services	N / A	Community and Government Services
YT	Community Services	Community Services	Community Services
Table # 3			

Nova Scotia is fairly unique in housing municipal fire prevention, municipal fire suppression, emergency management, and wildland fire suppression responsibilities in different departments. Manitoba is the only other jurisdiction that fully separates the governance of municipal fire suppression services, emergency management and wildland fire suppression.

Legislation

Major Fire-Related Legislation⁴

³ Forest fire suppression is delegated to SOPFEU.

⁴ As of June 2012.

NS	Fire Safety Act	http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/firesafe.htm
	Municipal Government Act	http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/muncpgov.htm
	Forests Act	http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/forests.htm
AB	Safety Code Act⁵	http://www.qp.alberta.ca/574.cfm?page=S01.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779752775&display=html
	Municipal Government Act	http://www.qp.alberta.ca/574.cfm?page=m26.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779756155&display=html
	Forest and Prairie Protection Act	http://www.qp.alberta.ca/574.cfm?page=F19.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779726554
BC	Fire Services Act	http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/LOC/freeside/-%20F%20--/Fire%20Services%20Act%20RSBC%201996%20c.%20144/00_96144_01.xml
	Local Government Act	http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96323_00
	Wildfire Act	http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_04031_01
MB	The Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Act	http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/f080e.php
	The Buildings and Mobile Homes Act	http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/b093e.php
	The Municipal Act	http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/m225e.php
	The Wildfires Act	http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/w128e.php
NB	Fire Prevention Act	http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cs/F-13//20120614
	Municipalities Act	http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cs/M-22//20120703
	Forest Fires Act	http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showfulldoc/cs/F-20//20120614
NL	Fire Protection Services Act	http://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/Annualstatutes/2008/f11-01.c08.htm
	Municipalities Act	http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/m24.htm
	Forestry Act	http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/f23.htm

⁵ There has been no municipal structural fire legislation since the repeal of the *Fire Prevention Act* in 1995. The *Safety Codes Act* was meant to address this as part of its development but never has. New fire legislation is planned for the Spring of 2014.

ON	Fire Protection and Prevention Act	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_97f04_e.htm
	Municipal Act	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_01m25_e.htm
	Forest Fires Prevention Act	http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90f24_e.htm
PE	Fire Prevention Act	http://www.gov.pe.ca/law/statutes/pdf/f-11.pdf
	Municipalities Act	http://www.gov.pe.ca/law/statutes/pdf/m-13.pdf
QU	Fire Safety Act	http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/S_3_4/S3_4_A.htm
	Civil Protection Act	http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/S_2_3/S2_3_A.html
	Forest Act	http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/F_4_1/F4_1_A.html
SK	The Fire Prevention Act, 1992	http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/F15-001.pdf
	The Municipalities Act	http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/M36-1.pdf
	The Cities Act	http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/Statutes/Statutes/c11-1.pdf
	The Fire Departments Platoon Act	http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/F14.pdf
	The Forests Resources Management Act	http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/statutes/statutes/f19-1.pdf
	The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982	http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/P22-1.pdf
NT	Fire Prevention Act	http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/PDF/ACTS/Fire%20Prevention.pdf
	Charter Communities Act	http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/pdf/ACTS/Charter%20Communities.pdf
	Forest Protection Act	http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/PDF/ACTS/Forest%20Protection.pdf
NU	Fire Prevention Act	http://www.justice.gov.nu.ca/apps/authoring/dspPage.aspx?page=CURRENT+CONSOLIDATIONS+OF+ACTS+AND+REGULATIONS&letter=F
	Forest Management Act	http://www.justice.gov.nu.ca/apps/authoring/dspPage.aspx?page=CURRENT+CONSOLIDATIONS+OF+ACTS+AND+REGULATIONS&letter=F

YT	Yukon Fire Prevention Act	http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/fipr.pdf
	Municipal Act	http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/municipal.pdf
	Forest Protection Act	http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/regs/oic2003_057.pdf

Table # 4

Roles and Responsibilities

The following chart outlines OFM / OFC responsibilities (R) and other powers (O) from each jurisdiction according to its main piece of fire safety (for municipal fire suppression) legislation.

Duties Associated with the OFM / OFC												
	Public education	Fire fighter training and education	Advise third parties on fire suppression, safety, etc.	Investigation	Maintain fire losses information	Fire prevention and safety research	Advise government on fire safety	Issue guidelines or advice to municipalities / fire departments	Submit an annual report to minister	Appoint local assistants	Inspection	Certification
NS	O	R	R	R	R	O	R	R	R	R	R	O
AB ⁶					R						R	
BC	O	R	R	R	R	R	O	R	R	O	O	
MB	O	O		R	O			O	R	R	O	O
NB	O	R		R	R			O	R	O	R	
NL		R	R	R	R		R	R	O	O	O	O
ON	R	R	R	R	R	O	R	R		R		R
PE	O	O		O	R	R		O	R	O	O	O
QU ⁸	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	O	R	O	O	O
SK	R	R		R	R			O	R	O	O	O
NT				R	R		R		R	R	R	
NU	R	R		R	R		R	R	R	R	R	
YT	R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	

Table # 5

R = Required by legislation (FM / FC 'shall')
O = Other discretionary powers (FM / FC 'may')

Nova Scotia is similar to many P / T's in a number of ways.

⁶ Alberta and Saskatchewan are both in the process drafting new Acts to replace current legislation.

⁷ As per the *Safety Codes Act* Administrative Regulations.

⁸ Quebec has no OFM / OFC. Instead, a division within the Ministère de la Sécurité publique is responsible for these services.

- Like Nova Scotia, most OFM / OFC's have some responsibility for educating the general public on fire safety. As with the majority of P / T's performing this role, it is optional rather than required.
- Almost all have some legislated responsibility for training. In Nova Scotia, the FM can provide support and advice related to training, while in other jurisdictions the FM / FC has a much more direct role. Quebec's legislation, for example, establishes a firefighting school and a bylaw making education and training mandatory for firefighters and officers, and Ontario's FM has a duty to develop training programs and evaluation systems, and to maintain and operate a central fire college.
- Like Nova Scotia, almost every P / T has some investigative responsibility following a fire.
- Like Nova Scotia, every P / T is either required or is authorized to maintain a record of all fires and fire incidents reported to their office.
- Every provincial FM / FC has either the duty or the power to provide advice related to fire suppression at the municipal level.
- Like Nova Scotia, most FM / FC's are required to submit an annual report to the minister.
- Like Nova Scotia, most FM / FC's have the power to appoint local assistants to represent the OFM / OFC and carry out some of its duties.
- Like Nova Scotia, most FM / FC's are required to ensure some level of inspection takes place. These may be done either by OFM / OFC staff or at the municipal level.

Several jurisdictions include unique features in their main fire safety legislation. Examples are outlined in the following table.



Legislative Features Related to Fire Safety in Other P / T's	
AB	Alberta has a Safety Codes Council which represents all disciplines related to public safety in the built environment and advises the Minister on any issues regarding safety and also acts as an appeal board for any decisions made by a safety codes officer. The council (which is arms-length from government) may acquire property, and may charge fees for materials, information sharing, education, appeals hearing and research.
NB	The FM and his / her designates can regulate the smoking of pipes, cigars or cigarettes in public places by requiring an establishment to construct a smoking room or ban smoking altogether. This is unlike Nova Scotia where smoking may only be done in open areas.
NL	The St. John's Regional Fire Department Chief has the powers and duties of the provincial fire commissioner within the City of St Johns. The FC can order a person, firm, corporation, or other organization to discontinue supplying electrical energy to a structure or property, until the time when the order is rescinded.
PE	The FM automatically possesses the power of a peace officer, but is not empowered to carry a firearm. The <i>Fire Prevention Act</i> covers forest fires and rural fire services. The subsection of the Act on rural fire services calls for the collection of additional fire taxes in areas of the province which do not have a municipal government.
QU	When a fire involves a loss of life, the coroner has the responsibility to determine the point of origin, probable causes and circumstances of the fire. Once the causes and circumstances have been established, the fire investigation commissioner may examine them if they have any connection with other fires. In Nova Scotia, the responsibility to determine the point of origin, etc. is placed on the fire investigator. Nova Scotia's <i>Fire Safety Act</i> does not stipulate any responsibility to examine the data in order to connect them with other fires. A single inquiry may be held concerning two or more fires if the probable causes of the fires are similar. The Minister or a designate of the Minister may enter a fire station or any other place that hold fire safety equipment in order to inspect the equipment and verify their effectiveness.
NT	The FM or the Supreme Court may order the sale of salvageable materials from a building or structure. The profits of the sale shall be given to the Minister.
YT	The FM shall advise and make recommendations regarding the organization and coordination of fire brigades for the purpose of civil defence.
Ot her	In Nova Scotia, appeals to the decision by the fire marshal shall be heard by a Fire Safety Appeal Board. In Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon an appeal to the decision by the FM / FC may be presented to a Trial Division Court or the province's Supreme Court. In Saskatchewan , appeals from decisions by the provincial inspector, local assistant, or municipal inspector can be appealed to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board. In Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon , every member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is automatically considered a local assistant to the FM / FC. When such RCMP officer is acting as a local assistant shall be subject to the direction of the FM / FC.

Table # 6

P / T and Municipal Responsibilities

Fire prevention and suppression responsibilities are fairly consistent across all P / T's. Although there are some significant differences, in broad terms the standard relationship between P / T's and municipalities can be described this way:

- In the case of municipal fires, the P / T government provides the legislative framework (to determine the roles and responsibilities of the various players), provides and / or supports some degree of professional training, inspects (some) premises, investigates fires, and collects statistics and information related to fire losses.
- Wildland fire suppression is a joint responsibility between P / T governments and municipalities. P / T crews have primary responsibility for wildland fires outside of established municipal boundaries. In most jurisdictions, municipal fire departments are expected to fight smaller (ie brush) fires within their own boundaries, while P / T crews are available to assist. At least one jurisdiction reported that municipal fire departments can be easily overwhelmed at the size of some fires due to limited training and experience on wildland fires.
- Municipalities typically have primary responsibility for municipal fire suppression and (some) inspections. While P / T governments have generally delegated municipal fire responsibilities to municipalities, legal requirements vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Nova Scotia's *Municipal Government Act* gives municipalities the ability to provide fire services if they choose, however they are not required to. For those that choose to provide the service, fire departments must register with the municipality and provide a list of services they will offer (for example, interior and exterior fire suppression, vehicle extrication, confined space, water rescue, medical first response, etc). The municipality then makes a decision on whether or not the fire department is allowed to carry out these functions.

DNR has primary responsibilities for wildland fires in Nova Scotia. DNR can call on municipal fire departments to assist if necessary. This is similar to the approach across Canada. Through a long history of cooperation in Nova Scotia, municipal fire departments frequently respond to wildland fires in their area, and now arrive first at the fire scene almost 60 percent of the time before DNR crews arrive.

Municipal Responsibilities – Fire Suppression			
	Level of government responsible for fire safety / suppression	Is there a legislated requirement for municipal fire suppression?	Municipal Fire Department (FD) Responsibilities in Wildland Fire Response
NS	Municipal.	No.	Municipal FD's are responsible for wildland fires within their boundaries; however the province usually becomes involved.
AB	Municipal, however the province partially funds / operates some departments in Special Areas.	No.	Municipal FD's are responsible for all fires outside of the Forest Protection Area (FPA), and all structural fires within this area. They also provide support as requested inside the FPA.
BC	Municipal.	No.	Municipal FD's are responsible for wildland fires in immediate protection area.
MB	Municipal.	No, however municipalities must provide fire protection services (though these services are not defined in legislation).	Some responsibility, mainly in agri-zones and rural area, and mainly for grass fires.
NB	Municipal.	No.	Community FD's are responsible for fire suppression within their own boundaries, and support the Department of Natural Resources on larger fires.
NL	Municipal.	No.	Community FD's are responsible for fire suppression within their own boundaries, however they seldom act alone for anything more than small brush fires.
ON	Municipal.	Under the <i>Fire Protection and Prevention Act</i> , if a municipality decides to establish a fire department, than that department shall provide fire suppression services.	Every municipality in the fire region is responsible for suppression of grass, brush and forest fires. Municipalities can choose to form a fire department to suppress wildland fires or they can enter into fire suppression agreements with the Ministry of Natural Resources, or it can be a combination of both. The <i>Forest Fires Prevention Act</i> legislates this responsibility to the municipality. The <i>Fire</i>

			<i>Prevention and Protection Act</i> enables the municipality to form a fire department.
PE	Municipal.	No.	Forest fires are fought both by Forestry staff and Volunteer Fire Departments. Some of the latter are municipal, but many are fire companies as well. The Department of Agriculture and Forestry covers the out of pocket costs for repairs on the fire equipment responding to a forest fire and pays collective agreement hourly pay. Grass fires, which are included in the definition of wildfire, are the responsibility of the Volunteer Fire Department.
QU	Municipal.	No.	SOPFEU has responsibility for wildland fires, and may draw on municipal resources if necessary.
SK	Municipal.	No.	Community FD's are responsible for fire suppression within their own boundaries, and the Wildfire Program can provide aerial firefighting services provided that the resources are not engaged.
NT	Municipal.	Yes (but very limited in some cases).	Community FD's are responsible for fire suppression within their own boundaries.
NU	Municipal.		N / A
YT	OFM directly operates 16 rural FD's, and oversees the remaining 10.	Yes, as it is a responsibility of the territorial OFM.	Municipal departments are usually first on the scene and are trained to deal with small interface fires.
Table # 7			

Inspections

In Nova Scotia, the OFM is responsible for inspecting provincial buildings, while most other buildings (municipally owned, etc.) are a municipal responsibility under the *Fire Safety Act* and associated regulations. Municipalities in most P / T's have some responsibilities for inspections. In some cases, the responsibility is shared along community lines, with larger communities responsible for their own inspections, and in some jurisdictions both the senior government and municipalities have a role depending on the type or category of building.

Municipal Responsibilities – Inspections		
	Are municipalities responsible for some building inspections?	Division of Responsibilities
NS	Yes.	Municipalities are responsible for some categories of buildings, and OFM is responsible for others.
AB	Yes.	Accredited municipalities inspect their own, and OFC inspects all others.
BC	Yes.	Municipalities are responsible for hotels, public buildings, churches, theatres, halls, or other buildings used a place of public resort.
MB	Yes.	Municipalities must establish a system for conducting regular fire safety inspections of prescribed buildings within their boundaries.
NB	Yes.	Larger municipalities inspect their own, and OFC inspects all others.
NL		Inspections are carried out by the FC or his / her designate.
ON	Yes.	All buildings are inspected by municipal resources, except 77 buildings in unorganized communities, which are inspected by OFM.
PE	No.	There is no legislated requirement; however some provincial agencies require fire inspections for licensing purposes, and the OFM carries out these inspections when needed.
QU	Yes.	Municipalities have the responsibility to inspect all residential buildings to verify at least the presence and good functionality of smoke alarms as well as all other buildings to enforce their by-laws.
SK	Yes.	Inspections are a municipal responsibility if they have a by-law in place, and are otherwise not done (however they can be done by the OFC upon complaint).
NT	Yes.	Three communities inspect their own, and OFC inspects all others
NU	No.	OFM provides bi-annual inspections in all public facilities, buildings, structures and common housing units (duplex and up).
YT	Yes.	Building and life safety inspections for all communities except the Cities of Whitehorse and Dawson, and the Town of Watson are carried out by the territorial government (OFM or building safety depending on the nature of inspection or permit). Dawson and Watson usually chose to have assistance from the territory, but are nevertheless the responsible agency.

Table # 8

2. Accountability

Accreditation / Certification

There are two fire service accrediting agencies in North America: the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (commonly called IFSAC); and the (United States) National Professional Qualifications Board (commonly called ProBoard). Whereas training leads to ‘certification’, ‘accreditation’ is the process that recognizes the quality and standards that went into the training program. In other words, accreditation means the process that went into training the firefighter met a certain standard in terms of test security, test questions validity, reference materials, testing policies and procedures, and the appeal process. This helps to ensure consistency from one jurisdiction to another that holds the same accreditation.

Firefighters in Nova Scotia are not required to be accredited; however accreditation can be acquired through the Nova Scotia Professional Services Qualifications Board, which is accredited through IFSAC and ProBoard. This is similar to the majority of P / T’s, who have at least some form of accreditation process, generally through IFSAC and ProBoard.

	Certification Process for Municipal Firefighters	Is it funded by P / T?
NS	Certification can be acquired through the NS Fire Services Professional Qualifications Board, which is accredited through IFSAC and ProBoard, and reports to OFM.	No.
AB	OFC is accredited through IFSAC and ProBoard.	Yes.
BC	Fire service training institutions are accredited by IFSAC and ProBoard.	No.
MB	The Manitoba Emergency Services College is accredited by IFSAC and ProBoard for all of its NFPA Professional Qualifications certifications.	Yes.
NB	Currently no accreditation, however moving in this direction.	N / A
NL	FES-NL is accredited through IFSAC.	No.
ON	OFM is accredited through IFSAC and ProBoard.	Yes.
PE	Currently no accreditation, however looking at ProBoard.	N / A
QU	The Ecole nationale des pompiers du Quebec’s programs F1 and F2 are accredited by IFSAC but the program delivered through the education department for firefighters is not (but is funded).	Partly.
SK	OFC’s host branch is accredited by IFSAC.	Yes.
NT	Accreditation is provided by Alberta’s OFC.	Partly.
NU	The training college is accredited by IFSAC and ProBoard.	Yes.
YT	Currently no accreditation, however working towards ProBoard.	Yes.

Table # 9

Reporting

Most P / T's require at least some formal reporting from municipal fire departments on a regular basis⁹. There seems to be a mix of systems in use, including custom designed in-house databases. Several P / T's use the Flexible Data Management¹⁰ (FDM) system.

Reporting Software		
	Software / Reporting Platform for Municipal Fire Suppression	Software / Reporting Platform Wildland Fires (not reported by municipal FD's)
NS	FDM (under review).	Electronic wildfire reporting system.
AB	Fire Electronic Reporting System.	Fire Electronic Reporting System (FERS).
BC	Fire Loss Reporting System.	Fire reporting and tracking system.
MB	FDM.	Database designed in-house.
NB	Fire Incident Reporting System.	Wildfire reporting program.
NL	Database designed in-house.	
ON	Custom database which reads reports from municipal departments using multiple systems.	A number of custom built software packages that track a large number of things. One system – DFOSS – tracks fires, responses and the lifecycle of the fire (among other things).
PE	None.	Quattro Pro spreadsheet
QU	Currently reviewing statistics platform which dates back to 2003.	Database designed in-house based on NFPA 901 standard.
SK	Moving towards FDM.	Wildfire Integrated Information Network being implemented this year.
NT	FDM.	EMBER.
NU	Database designed in-house.	N / A
YT	Database designed in-house.	Internet-based fire management system contracted through Jaquar (out of Quebec).

Table # 10

Quality Assurance (Targets)

Nova Scotia has no formal quality assurance process in place for fire safety, but does for wildland fires. Six jurisdictions reported having a quality assurance process in place for municipal fires; while eight jurisdictions (including Nova Scotia) reported having a

⁹ The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs is currently working on a review of fire incident reporting as a national concern; however reporting remains the responsibility of P / T's.

¹⁰ FDM is also commonly referred to as the 'Fire Department Manager' system.

process in place for wildland fires (or are in the process of developing one). Most that reported a system in place for municipal fires also had a system in place for wildland fires. Examples of quality assurance processes include:

- Management manuals (NS for wildland fires)
- Firefighter training (NS for wildland fires)
- Standing committees (NS for wildland fires)
- Standardized equipment (NS for wildland fires)
- Reviews and on-site investigations (NS for wildland fires and BC for municipal fire suppression)
- Performance measures (AB for municipal fire suppression and wildland fires)
- Standard operating procedures (AB for wildland fires)
- Regular reporting (BC and QU for municipal fire suppression)
- Excellence Canada Quality Assurance Program (BC for wildland fires)
- Firefighter evaluation and performance appraisals (MB for municipal fire suppression and NB for wildland fires)
- Routine reviews (MB, NB and PEI for wildland fires)
- Guidelines and best practices (ON for municipal fire suppression)
- Quality standards (ON for wildland fires and YT for municipal fire suppression)
- ISO 9001 (QU for wildland fires)
- Q / A's (SK for wildland fires)
- Insurance underwriters survey (YT for municipal fire suppression)
- Equipment servicing schedules (YT for wildland fire suppression)

Nova Scotia does not have established performance measures in place for municipal fires; however it does for wildland fires. In both cases this reflects the national landscape, as four OFM / OFC's have measures for municipal fires, and seven jurisdictions have measures for wildland fires. Examples include:

- Vehicle (Helicopters, aircraft, trucks, etc.) maintenance, readiness and inventories (NS for wildland fires, and NL for municipal fire suppression)
- Preparedness (NS for wildland fires)
- Fire crew schedules (NS for wildland fires)
- Automated fire weather system for alerts and resource basing (NS for wildland fires)
- Burning permits (NS for wildland fires)
- Response times (QU for municipal fire suppression, and NS, AB, NB ON and QU for wildland fires)
- Density, development and building conditions (AB and NL for municipal fire suppression)
- Area burned (AB, MB and ON for wildland fires)
- Loss of life and injury (AB, ON and QU for municipal fire suppression, and MB for wildland fires)
- No major fires in red zone (MB for wildland fires)
- Training (NL, QU and NU for municipal fire suppression)
- Inspections (NL for municipal fire suppression)
- Communications (NL for municipal fire suppression)
- Attendance and other records (NL and QU for municipal fire suppression)
- Water supply (NL and QU for municipal fire suppression)
- Administration (NL for municipal fire suppression)
- Building conditions (NL for municipal fire suppression)
- Records (NL for municipal fire suppression)

- Response levels (NL and QU for municipal fire suppression, and ON for wildland fires)
- Containment (SK for wildland fires)
- Reduction of human-made fires (SK for wildland fires)
- Investigation requirements (QU for municipal fire suppression and SK for wildland fires)
- Number of fires (NU for municipal fire suppression)
- Calls (YT for municipal fire suppression)
- Performance (YT for wildland fires)
- Costs (MB and YT for wildland fires)

Nova Scotia has standardized reporting and system metrics for both municipal and wildland fires. This reflects the national landscape, as 11 P / T's reported having reporting and metrics for municipal fires, and 10 reported having reporting and metrics for wildland fires. Examples include:

- Property classification (NS, QU and NT for municipal fire suppression)
- Igniting object and possible cause (NS, BC and QU for municipal fire suppression, and BC, NL, ON and QU for wildland fires)
- Response times (QU for municipal fire suppression, and NS, NB ON and PEI for wildland fires)
- National standards (AB for municipal fire suppression)
- Financial reporting (AB, ON, PEI and YT for wildland fires)
- Resource tracking (AB and ON for wildland fires)
- Wildfire information and status (AB and ON for wildland fires)
- Fires reported (BC, SK, NT, QU and NU for municipal fire suppression, and BC, ON and QU for wildland fires)
- Smoke alarms (BC and QU for municipal fire suppression)
- Fire losses (MB and QU for municipal fire suppression)

- Staff activities (MB and NU for municipal fire suppression, and ON for wildland fires)
- Mutual aid activities (MB for municipal fire suppression)
- Training (NB and QU for municipal fire suppression)
- Area burned (NB, NL, ON and QU for wildland fires)
- Cause (NB for wildland fires)
- Equipment (ON and NU for wildland fires)
- Weather (ON for wildland fires)
- Vehicles (aircraft, trucks, etc.) (NU for municipal fire suppression, and ON and PEI for wildland fires)
- Loss of life and injury (SK, QU and NT for municipal fire suppression)
- Buildings (NT for municipal fire suppression)
- Calls (YT for municipal fire suppression)
- Performance (YT for wildland fires)

The only jurisdiction reporting no specific quality assurance process, measures or metrics was Prince Edward Island (for municipal fires).

Quality and Research			
	Quality assurance program	Performance measures and targets	System metrics and standardized reporting
NS	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> DNR maintains a wildland fire management manual of policies and procedures, fire training, standing committees, standardized equipment and related OHS SWP's for their own staff and resources. All fires are investigated for cause, as well as a new After Action Review (AAR) system to identify areas of improvement.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Helicopter readiness, general preparedness, fire crew schedules, automated fire weather system for alerts and resource basing, burning permits, and tracking of response time. Responses to wildfires are based on rapid response (currently averaging less than 20 minutes from reporting and 95 percent out by 9 am on the second day).</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Property classification, igniting object, possible cause.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Electronic system is designed to collect standardized wildland fire information for analysis.</p>
AB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Deaths per hundred thousand as a performance measure.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Primarily use performance measures, standard operating procedures and business rules.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> As relates to density and development (Building Code).</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Many targets that are too numerous to mention, however examples are to contain wildfires by 10 am the next day, and to initiate suppression before fire exceeds 2 hectares in size.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> National standard accepted by all P / T's in 2002.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> FIRES database manages information and flow, including performance measures, metrics, standards, financial reporting, resource tracking, wildfire information and status, etc.</p>
BC	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> OFC does on-site investigations and regular reporting.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Enlisted in Excellence Canada Quality Assurance Program.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None currently established.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> None currently established (in process of being developed).</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Standardized reporting covering fires reported, smoke alarms, cause of fires.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Number and cause of fires.</p>

MB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Evaluation of candidates upon completion of training.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Informal review of a couple of fires per year to see what worked and lessons learned.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> No specific targets.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Loss of life and injury, cost / space for suppressing fire, no major fires in red zone.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Fire losses, staff activities, mutual aid activities.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u></p>
NB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u></p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Performance appraisals for firefighters leaving province, after-action review of every in or out of province incident, verbal recap of each day's events.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> NFPA</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Objectives for certain aspects of fire operations such as time to get strike airborne.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Training.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Time, resource used, what burned, cause of fire, etc.</p>
NL	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> See performance measures.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> None.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Training, inspections, communications, attendance records, vehicle inventory, building condition, water supply, administration, response levels, vehicle maintenance, records, etc.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> None.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> In 2010-11, FES NL completed implementation of the fire service report management system.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Area burned and cause of fire (yes to reporting, but no to metrics).</p>
ON	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None, but OFM has developed Public Fire Safety Guidelines that make reference to industry best practices.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Standards for aircraft and pilots.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Injuries in preventable structure fires.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Fire response and area burned measures have been developed for each area.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Costs, fires, weather, fire equipment, personnel, aircraft.</p>
PE	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Forest fire reviews are conducted.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Time, expenditures and trucks.</p>
QU	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> All regional authorities must submit an annual report concerning their fire safety cover plan,</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Obligation to respond within a certain time and with a certain number of firefighters.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Number of fires, number of hectares affected,</p>

	<p>which must include performance targets and their degree of achievement. Each fire service must also submit individual incident reports based on NFPA 901 standards after they have established the probable cause / place of origin.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u> ISO 9001 and others.</p>	<p><u>Wildland</u>: Time it takes to detect, intervene, and extinguish a fire.</p>	<p>causes of fires.</p>
SK	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services</u>: None at the moment but committed to developing some.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u>: Q / A's in place for the Sask911 system (quite extensive), and for training pieces (typically post-training survey's). Certification also has some Q / A's involved, enforced by IFSAC.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services</u>: None.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u>: Containment, reduction of human-made fires, investigation requirements.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services</u>: Number of fires, deaths, injuries, etc.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u>: A new system is being implemented this year that will standardize reporting of wildfires.</p>
NT	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services</u>: None.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u>: None.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services</u>: No.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u>: Yes.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services</u>: Fires, buildings, casualties, etc.</p> <p><u>Wildland</u>: Standardized reporting.</p>
NU		<p>Training, fire reporting, maintenance records, etc.</p>	<p>Fire chiefs provide monthly reports for incidents, department activities vehicle and equipment issues.</p>

YT	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Based on standards that must be met for training, compliance, equipment, etc. The Insurance Underwriters' Survey is also a means of quality assurance.¹¹</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Currently developing an SMS system; repair and service on schedule or as needed.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Statistics related to calls.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Periodic reviews related to performance and cost.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Volumes related to calls (using FM / FC Code Book).</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Periodic reviews to assess performance and cost.</p>
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A number of jurisdictions have undertaken major reviews in recent years focusing on their response to major fires and / or emergency situations.

- Alberta's Minister of Sustainable Resource Development established a committee to review the department's response to the fire in the Town of Slave Lake and surrounding communities in May 2011. The committee's report identifies opportunities for improvement in seven areas, including wildfire prevention, preparedness and capacity, communications, organization and incident management, post-wildfire business resumption, policy and legislation, and research and development. The report can be found online at: <http://www.srd.alberta.ca/Wildfire/WildfirePreventionEnforcement/WildfireReviews/documents/FlatTopComplex-WildfireReviewCommittee-May18-2012.pdf>
- The Government of British Columbia commissioned a team to examine the large-scale interface fires that caused significant damage in 2003, and to provide analysis and recommendations. The team's report focuses on areas related to forest and emergency management, command and control, communication, evacuations, resources, financial accountability, and post-emergency recovery. The report can be found online at: <http://bcwildfire.ca/History/ReportsAndReviews/2003/FirestormReport.pdf>
- Saskatchewan's Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing released a 'Lessons Learned' report in October 2011 focusing on major spring flooding that year. The report called attention to a greater integration for integrated provincial

¹¹ Yukon considers the insurance underwriters' survey a means of quality assurance. Since municipalities are not required to have fire suppression services, it is difficult to ensure a certain standard. Insurance rates as determined by underwriters are considered an indication of the level of service provided.

resources, set roles and responsibilities for the province and municipalities, and increased capacity for managing hazards.

3. Operations

Consistency

The level of service delivery in a given community can depend on a number of factors, including local governance decisions, local needs, population size, and geography and so on.

P / T's reporting consistency of service delivery throughout the jurisdiction cited the following factors as reasons why:

- Building / Fire Code. Canada has a national building / fire code that helps ensure a degree of consistency in terms of service. The insurance industry also sets national standards. Some provinces, including Nova Scotia, have also adopted provincial building / fire codes.
- Training Standards. Most jurisdictions have standards for fire fighter training and education, thereby ensuring a level of consistency of service throughout. Nova Scotia is a notable exception in that it does not have established standards.
- Service Delivery Models. Some P / T's have developed minimum standards or fire prevention planning templates to ensure a consistent application of fire prevention and suppression measures.
- Wildland Fire Zones. Several jurisdictions have a 'zoned' approach to wildland fire response, each with its own crews, dispatch, etc. This allows for a more consistent response time standard throughout the jurisdiction¹².

The following themes emerged among jurisdictions reporting a lack of consistency in service delivery:

- Legislation. Almost all P / T's give local authorities the option of providing certain services, as opposed to a directive to do so. This can lead to some inconsistencies throughout a jurisdiction in terms of what services are offered. A key example is that in most jurisdictions, municipalities are not required to have fire suppression capacity. Each municipality decides what level of service they want to provide, if any. This can lead to differences in capacity and capability.

¹² This approach is typical of larger forested provinces where protection is not provided to remote areas with little or no human habitat, as well as allowing natural fire-based ecosystems to maintain themselves.

- Competing Priorities and Local Needs. The level of local service depends on the ability of the community to support it, including factors such as local leadership and taxation.
- Urban / Rural Differences. Many P / T's have a mix of large cities, and rural and remote areas. This can lead to differences in terms services and service delivery, the number or types of stakeholders that may be involved, response times, etc.
- Recruitment and Retention. Some communities have a high turnover rate in fire departments, which leads to a loss of corporate knowledge and potential inconsistencies. Rural depopulation over time has led to insufficiently staffed fire departments. In some communities, this was followed by re-population, which created more pressures and demands on already understaffed fire departments. Smaller municipalities have difficulties having enough members on their fire departments.

Based on factors identified elsewhere, the following table identifies what may contribute to consistent service delivery in Nova Scotia, or limit it.

Factors supporting service delivery consistency in Nova Scotia	Factors limiting service delivery consistency in Nova Scotia
National and provincial building / fire codes.	Lack of standards for training and equipment.
No major urban / rural divide.	No requirement for municipal service delivery, leading to different services by location.
Table # 12	

4. Finance

Budget

Operating budget

OFM / OFC budgets vary considerably due to population size, geography and the scope and scale of the office's responsibilities. Nova Scotia's OFM had an operating budget of almost \$1.7 million in fiscal 2012-13.

- On a per capita basis for Nova Scotia, this translates to spending of \$1.84. The average provincial (territories not included) per capita expenditure is \$2.86.
- The highest provincial expenditure per capita is in Manitoba at \$13.24, likely in large part because of the inclusion of technical safety under the Fire Commissioner's Office / budget. The lowest per capita expenditure is in British Columbia, at \$0.20. Not including Manitoba, the average per capita expenditure is \$1.70.
- Of the ten provinces, Nova Scotia has the fifth highest per capita spending.

Per capita funding for OFM / OFC by province ¹³			
	OFM / OFC Budget (millions)	Population (2011 Census)	Per Capita Funding
NS	\$1.7 (2012-13)	921,727	\$1.84
AB	\$3.7 (2012-13)	3,645,257	\$1.02
BC	\$0.9 (2012-13)	4,400,057	\$0.20
MB	\$16.0 (2012-13)	1,208,268	\$13.24
NB	\$1.49 (2012-13)	751,171	\$1.98
NL	\$2.4 (2010-11)	514,536	\$4.66
ON	\$24.6 (2012-13)	12,851,821	\$1.91
PE	\$0.3 (2012-13)	140,204	\$2.14
QU	\$2.4 (2011-12)	7,903,001	\$0.30

¹³ Dollar figures are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand. Figures are meant to capture the operational requirements of the office, and do not necessarily include extra line-items like grants and contributions. The OFM / OFC from one jurisdiction may not fund the same programs or services that are funded through the same office in another jurisdiction.

SK¹⁴	\$1.3 (2010-11)	1,033,381	\$1.26
NT	\$0.6 (2012-13)	41,462	\$14.47
NU	\$3.0	31,906	\$94.03
YT	\$2.9	33,897	\$85.55
Table # 13			

Additional Sources of Revenue

The operating budget for Nova Scotia's OFM is provided entirely through the province's general revenue fund¹⁵. This is not the case in every province and territory.

- Manitoba's OFC is a Special Operating Agency. They are for the most part self-sufficient. Approximately 50 percent of their budget comes from a 1.25 percent fire insurance levy. Another 10-15 percent comes from tuition at the Emergency Services College. They are required to present a business plan / business case to the provincial Treasury Board prior to receiving any provincial funding. Approximately 40 percent of their budget comes from the fire levy.
- In Saskatchewan, the Emergency Management and Fire Services Branch's operating budget is \$3.8 million annually. Provincial 911 services are operated through a special fund, collected through a special fee (currently 62 cents) on every consumer telephone bill in the province. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick also have levies, although it is not collected by the OFM and the amounts vary.
- With the exception of Quebec and Nunavut, every P / T levies a tax on insurance. The rate is 1.25 percent in Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia, and 1 percent elsewhere (except Quebec and Nunavut). Manitoba is the only jurisdiction where this levy goes directly into the budget of the OFC. In all other jurisdictions the money goes into the P / T's general revenues.

A number of jurisdictions reported additional sources of revenue related to wildland fires.

- In several jurisdictions, wildland fire units can generate significant revenue. In British Columbia for example, the wildland fire unit provides services (training, fire suppression, etc.) to other jurisdictions both in Canada and internationally on a cost-recovery basis.

¹⁴ Saskatchewan has had a single budget for fire and emergency services since 2012. In 2010-11, the OFC budget was approximately \$1.3 million annually.

¹⁵ The 1.25 percent levy on fire insurance in Nova Scotia goes into the province's general revenue stream. The *Fire Safety Act* stipulates that this be transferred in full to fund the OFM, however in practice only about half of the amount generated through the levy is transferred to the OFM.

- Ontario and Manitoba both have cost-sharing agreements with the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, who pay a percentage of the costs on Crown land and First Nations reserves.
- A number of jurisdictions reported a cost-recovery mechanism that can be triggered in the event that a wildland fire was set deliberately.

5. Equipment and Vehicles

In Nova Scotia, municipal fire departments are responsible for purchasing their own equipment. Though there is no formal requirement to do so, municipal fire departments generally purchase through recognized standards when financially possible.

Most P / T's apart from Nova Scotia have standards for equipment, or some sort of process to ensure quality equipment is used in the fire service. Not including jurisdictions that operate a number of municipal fire departments, at least three P / T's (Alberta, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador) provide some amount of equipment to municipal fire departments. This can help ensure common standards for equipment.

Wildland fire equipment standards are generally consistent throughout Canada and are available to the volunteer fire service in Nova Scotia if requested. In several joint Atlantic tenders, reference is made for volunteers to obtain some equipment through the same tender if they wish to do so (ie wildland fire protective clothing).

Standards for Equipment	
NS	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> No requirement, however municipal fire departments generally purchase through recognized standards.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Air fleet has standards for capacity. Much of the wildland fire equipment has Canadian standards guided by a national mutual aid sharing agreement and some joint purchasing arrangements. VFD limitations can mean limited services on some fires.</p>
AB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Purchasing is done via a competitive bid, with some standards depending on area.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Multiple procedures and standards, especially for aircraft and a long list of requirements for heavy equipment.</p>
BC	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Municipalities are responsible for purchasing. There is no provincial regulation, however NFPA is followed.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes, as well as provincial equipment working group who look at standards, new equipment trends, etc.</p>
MB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes, NFPA, CSA and ULC.</p>

	<u>Wildland:</u> Similar to OFC, and also using CIFFC.
NB	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Municipalities are responsible for purchasing. Insurance advisory organization sets standards for trucks and a number of other pieces of equipment. <u>Wildland:</u> None.
NL	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> <u>Wildland:</u> Fleet management has a formula for replacing vehicles based on mileage, year and general condition.
ON	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Municipalities are responsible for purchasing. NFPA for communication system. <u>Wildland:</u> MNR has Forest Fire Suppression Equipment Standards Manual, which includes fireline equipment, camp and crew support equipment, and ignition equipment, while OFM has guideline specifications for equipment.
PE	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> <u>Wildland:</u> Some standards.
QU	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Pumpers and tankers must be ULC rated, all vehicles and portable pumps tested annually, and vehicles must be recertified every five years after 15 years of service. <u>Wildland:</u> Yes, SOPFEU has province-wide standards.
SK	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> A schedule has been established for inspecting / ensuring equipment is in good condition. <u>Wildland:</u> Transport Canada Standards for aircraft and much of the other equipment meets CSA standards where applicable and is assessed internally as well.
NT	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Mostly NFPA standards, some CAN / ULC, some CSA. <u>Wildland:</u> Yes
NU	All equipment purchases are made by OFM and fit standards at time of purchase.
YT	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes, NFPA / CSA / ULC. Municipal standards are also in the OH&S regulations. <u>Wildland:</u> A mix of formal and informal standards, sharing information and aiming to be consistent with CIFFC partners (ie for pumps, fire hoses, quick connect couplings, etc.).
Table # 15	

Bulk Purchasing / Supply Chain Management

In Nova Scotia, medical responders' consumable supplies are supplied through the provincial government's Emergency Health Services. Most fire departments, with the exception of Halifax Regional Municipality, and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality acquire the supplies either through the department or the municipality. Efforts are being made to coordinate bulk purchasing through municipalities and fire departments.

6. Tactical Communications

Access and Dispatch

There are some consistencies between P / T's with regard to tactical communications, and information management tools and technologies.

In Nova Scotia, the general public can report a fire either by dialing 911 or their local fire department. This is consistent with most P / T's, however in virtually every case the 911 service does not reach the entire jurisdiction.

In Nova Scotia, fire calls are initially taken by 911 and then sent to a fire service dispatch. Dispatch centres are managed at the local level, and range from house phones, to business phones, to recognized dispatch facilities in larger communities like Halifax. Most P / T's have at least some dispatch services managed at the local / municipal level. In six jurisdictions dispatch is managed exclusively at the local level, in the others it is split between P / T management for some communities and local management for others.

Wildland fire management and dispatch also vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Many provinces, especially the larger ones, have a 'zoned' approach to managing wildfires. In this case, each zone is managed separately with its own crews and dispatch services. This approach is not necessary in Nova Scotia because of the province's relatively small size.

Public Access and Dispatch		
	Is 911 access available for fire suppression?	Dispatch
NS	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Managed through DNR, and all fires are reported to the Provincial Fire Coordination Centre in Shubenacadie.</p>
AB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes, except for First Nations communities.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Provincial 310-FIRE call centre and 911 system are both available.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Calls route through Edmonton and back to the respective area (10 in total) who then manage their own dispatch.</p>
BC	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Fires are reported through 911 or 1-800.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> 1/3 of fire services are on one system (ECOMM), 2/3 on another (Intergraph).</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Managed at the local level.</p>
MB	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Winnipeg 911 centre provides access to police, fire and</p>

	<u>Wildland:</u> Most responses come in through 911.	EMS for Winnipeg, and Brandon 911 centre provides to all other municipalizes. <u>Wildland:</u>
NB	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes. <u>Wildland:</u> Fires are reported through 911.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level. <u>Wildland:</u> The Provincial Forest Fire Centre coordinates activity and authorizes dispatch of aircraft; however initial response is done by staff and equipment from one of 11 districts.
NL	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes, but not province-wide. <u>Wildland:</u> Fires are reported to district provincial field offices.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level. <u>Wildland:</u> Province has some dispatch responsibility through 3 individual district offices (21 district offices and 4 satellite offices overall).
ON	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes in almost all areas of the province. <u>Wildland:</u> Yes for much of Ontario (911 in southern Ontario, and 310-FIRE in northern Ontario).	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level. <u>Wildland:</u> 310-FIRE number is shared with Alberta, and calls are auto-routed to one of two dispatch centres (Sudbury and Dryden). The municipal fire service is also notified by MNR when fires are reported through their number.
PE	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes. <u>Wildland:</u> Most calls come in through 911.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> One public service access point that dispatches 34 of 36 FD's, and Charlottetown and Summerside manage their own. <u>Wildland:</u>
QU	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> There is no provincial 911 system; however a bylaw regulates 911 operations for private or municipal call centres. <u>Wildland:</u> Yes, 1-800-463-FEUX is province-wide. There is also a partnership with 911.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Dispatched through 911 call centres. <u>Wildland:</u> One provincial coordination centre dispatches to all regions, assigning each reported fire to one of the four main bases.
SK	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes, most fires are reported through 911. <u>Wildland:</u>	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Regina, Saskatoon, Lloydminster each manages their own, and the province manages everywhere else. <u>Wildland:</u>
NT	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Not one number, but 2222 suffix in every community. <u>Wildland:</u> Most responses come in through 911.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level. <u>Wildland:</u> Dispatch is managed through regional fire centres.
NU	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> No.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Managed at the local level.
YT	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Whitehorse has 911 for contact and dispatch, and all other	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> All FD's are responsible for their own dispatch, with the

	<p>areas have fire phones with local phone number.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Fires can be reported either through a well-advertised 1-888 number, 911, or municipal number.</p>	<p>exception of those in the 911 area, where they can be dispatched by 911 or their local number.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> From the initial call, a report is then sent to the appropriate regional operations office (6 in total); dispatch tracking system owned by BC allows YK to track aircraft and some trucks progressing towards a fire.</p>
Table # 16		

Radios

Depending on the emergency, Nova Scotia’s emergency response system may include everything from municipal fire departments to other first responders. Each fire department in Nova Scotia is provided with TMR communications radios from the Department of Transportation and Public Works’ Public Safety division. This provides interoperability possibilities between fire and other emergency response agencies.

Nova Scotia seems to have a more interoperable radio and telecommunications system for fire and emergency responders than most other P/ T’s, however this also varies considerably from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

- Nova Scotia and Nunavut are the only two jurisdictions in Canada with fully interoperable radio and telecommunications systems.
- Five jurisdictions (Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Yukon) are not fully interoperable but are close to it.
- Several others reported that systems are not interoperable, mainly because purchasing is done at the local level.

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	Are fire and emergency services personnel connected seamlessly through their communications tools, infrastructure, etc.?
NS	Yes.
AB	Yes, there is a mutual aid channel for municipal and wildland firefighters.
BC	No because systems are a municipal responsibility and fire departments tend not to be interoperable with other first responders however a common frequency has been established for interface fires.
MB	Yes, except for the north.
NB	No.
NL	No.
ON	Generally no because equipment is a local decision, however interoperability is encouraged and in some places dispatch is shared between fire, police etc., and are therefore interoperable. MNR aircraft have fire marshal response frequency to talk with municipal resources. During wildland fires, MNR interagency guidelines are followed to ensure common communications are established in the Incident Command.
PE	No.
QU	In most rural areas, yes for fire and ambulance but no for police.
SK	The majority of FD's are on a common system, but not all. Work is underway to connect all systems. All of the RCMP and EMS responders use the same system, and nearly all of the fire departments. A number of the larger departments (for example Regina and Saskatoon) still maintain their own radio system.
NT	No.
NU	Yes.
YT	OFM departments / individual municipal departments / wildfire use separate systems, however there are interagency channels that allow departments to speak to each other.

Table # 17

Beyond more traditional means of direct communication, fire departments and emergency managers now have a broader range of new technologies at their disposal. Fire and emergency service providers are increasingly using social media as a way of finding out about emergency situations. In this case, the sheer volume of information coming in creates a new challenge of sorting through it.

7. Training

In terms of training, Nova Scotia seems to differ from a large number of P / T's in at least two key respects. While Nova Scotia (like every jurisdiction) has a variety of training opportunities available for fire fighters, it differs in that (unlike most, for municipal firefighters) it does not have established standards and (unlike some) it does not provide training for free. On the other hand, with respect to wildland firefighters, Nova Scotia provides training for free, as does most jurisdictions.

Training and Standards			
	Is training available?	What standards are required?	Is training provided for free?
NS	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Basic training – fire suppression and crew leader. Wildland fire standards are referred to in the OFM Code of Practice document. Wildland fire fitness standards and personal protective equipment are not enforced on volunteers.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> No.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes for Volunteer FD's.</p>
AB	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Model competencies.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Fitness standards.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> \$500,000 conditional grants are provided to regional training groups made up of municipalities, Metis settlements and first nations.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes.</p>
BC	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> NFPA.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Tactical, skill, fitness, etc.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> No.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes for own staff, and some training to FD's where capacity allows.</p>
MB	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> NFPA.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> CIFFC (fitness, WHMIS, radio code, etc.)</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes for most firefighters.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes for initial attack crews.</p>
NB	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression</u></p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression</u></p>

		<p><u>services:</u> Training is not mandatory, but any training that is done must be to NFPA standards</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> National standards in place through CIFFC. Staff are also required to take a matrix of courses and track their individual fire experience to be considered for higher employment.</p>	<p><u>services:</u> Yes if the training is through NFPA, but no if the course is through the community college</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes.</p>
NL	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> NFPA.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Two-year diploma.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes.</p>
ON	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Ontario standards and NFPA.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Wildland fire fighting training for MNR firefighters and municipalities with agreements, as well as standards for pilots, fitness, first aid, etc.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes for students from the municipal fire service.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Some provincial spending.</p>
PE	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> None, but encourages adherence to NSA.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Depends on course and specific job responsibilities.</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Annual operating grant and other funding to school.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes.</p>
QU	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Depends in part on size of community.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Training is done annually, with amount of training depending on experience (managed by SOPFEU).</p>	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Only the program intended for major cities is fully funded.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Yes, those needed for wildland fires.</p>
SK	Yes.	<p><u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> NFPA.</p> <p><u>Wildland:</u> Sask standards and CIFFC.</p>	Training is provincially funded.
NT	Yes.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Currently no minimum	<u>Municipal fire suppression</u>

		requirements. Wildland: National or agency standards.	<u>services:</u> Yes. <u>Wildland:</u> Yes.
NU	Yes.	Volunteers must have or be working towards Nunavut standard.	Yes.
YT	Yes.	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> National standards (NFPA) and OHS statutory regulations. <u>Wildland:</u> Internal certification / standards, moving towards national standards (mainly fitness).	<u>Municipal fire suppression services:</u> Yes, the Office of the Fire Marshal runs a continuous firefighter training program that is free for all fire departments. <u>Wildland:</u> Yes for staff.

Table # 14

P / T's offer a variety of training courses. Some of the common courses provided include:

- Fire education and instruction, inspection and investigation
- Fire fighting (standard, industrial, marine, interface, etc.)
- Rescue and first response
- Incident / emergency management
- Driver-operator
- Fire service instructor
- Hazmat
- Public safety
- Fire prevention
- Building standards
- Incident command system

8. Human Resources

Fire services in every P / T are delivered through a mix of career and volunteer fire fighters.

Nova Scotia has a mix of career and volunteer firefighters working in full-time, composite, volunteer and industrial departments. Some departments provide compensation based on attendance, which can be considered part-time employment.

While the proportions and percentages differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, every jurisdiction has a mix of career and part time firefighters.

Paid versus volunteers¹⁶

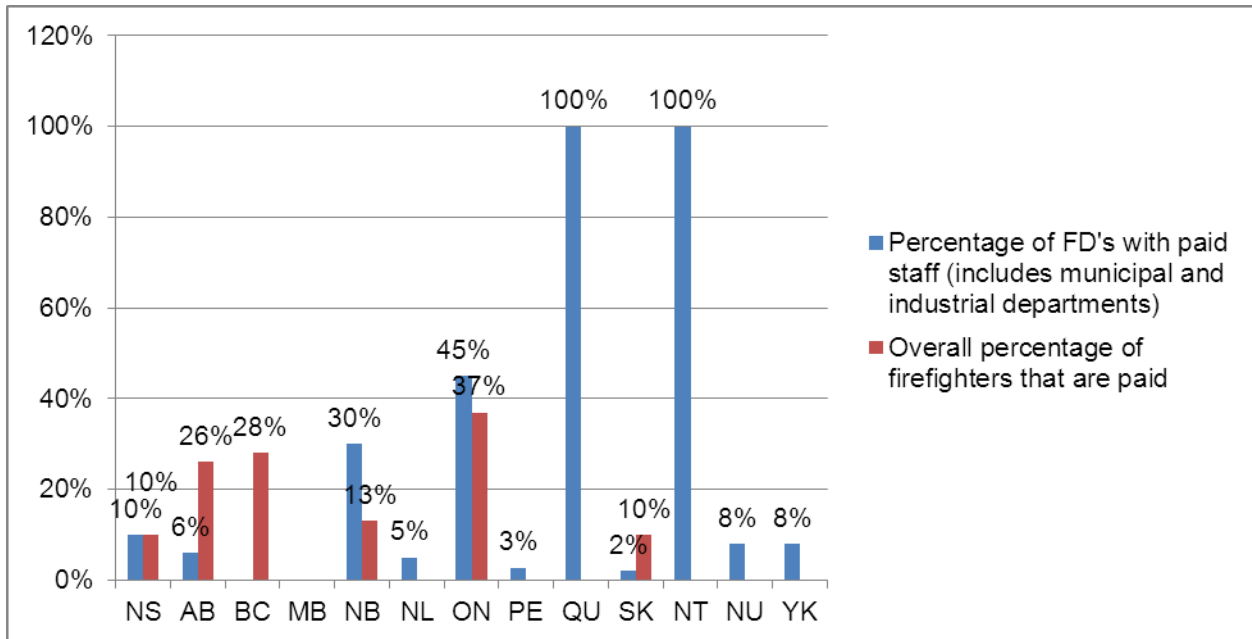


Chart # 1

¹⁶ In Ontario, almost all fire fighters (including volunteer) receive at least some compensation. The 45 percent identified refer to full time and composite departments (excluding volunteer-only departments).

Full Time / Composite / Volunteer / Private

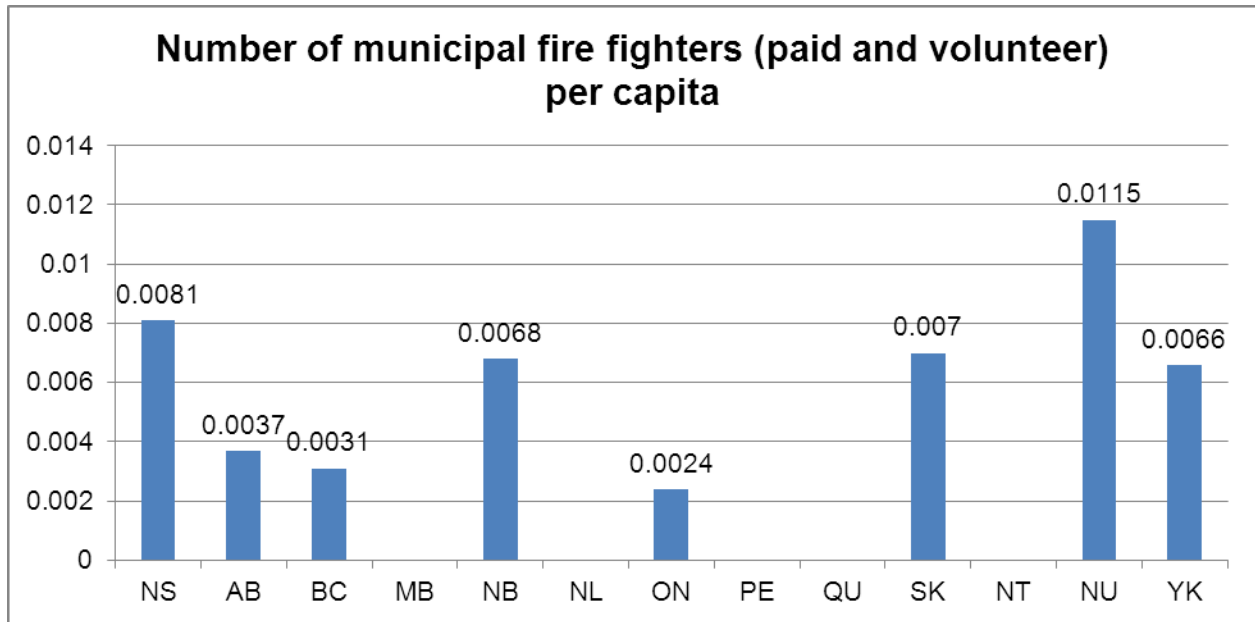


Chart # 2

Stakeholder Participation

Provincial / Municipal / Private Sector

While mutual aid agreements between P / T's on municipal fires can be complicated by geography and the limited amount of time in which to act, neighboring communities will provide assistance to each other across P / T borders as needed. Moreover, major chemical events can require action over several days, during which time other jurisdictions can mobilize.

The Government of Nova Scotia partners with a number of public and private sector organizations on fire safety and suppression. Based on the responsibilities and activities of other OFM / OFC's, these stakeholders are likely common in other P / T's as well.

- OFM's major stakeholders include municipalities and municipal fire departments. As described through this report, every P / T typically has an ongoing relationship with municipalities for some level of fire suppression and inspections. Municipal fire departments are also a way to promote fire safety and education.
- In Nova Scotia, as in all jurisdictions, the federal government has responsibility for fire suppression on military bases and in National Parks.
- Nova Scotia has a number of private, rural fire departments. There do not appear to be a large number of private fire departments in Canada, however at least one other jurisdiction (PEI) has this type of department.
- Nova Scotia engages an Industrial Fire Brigades Association as partners in fire prevention and inspection services. This is a similar approach in many other jurisdictions as well, who report at least some level of private industry involvement in fire suppression (mainly on their own work sites). At least one jurisdiction (Yukon) has a unique arrangement, as the OFM has jurisdiction over the industrial fire brigades at mine sites. In this case, OFM's role is to ensure they meet minimum training standards. An exact opposite arrangement exists in Nunavut, where large mining companies have their own fire and emergency services with no connection to government.
- Nova Scotia's Fire Marshal participates on the Council of Canadian Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners. This organization includes participation from all Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners across Canada, as well as representatives from the federal Department of National Defense and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

- In terms of wildland fire suppression, Nova Scotia (as with every P / T in Canada) is a member of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), which provides support through a Mutual Aid Resource Agreement (MARS). CIFFC is a means through which P / T governments can support each other in the event of a wildland fire and related areas (ie exchange standards, fire science, aviation, fire equipment, etc.). P / T's often support each other in these situations by sending fire crews and equipment to other jurisdictions when needed. CIFFC, on behalf of its members, also has a MARS with the United States, as well as developing MARS agreements with New Zealand, Australia and Mexico. Nova Scotia is also a member of the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Commission (NFFPC), commonly called the 'Fire Compact', which has a MARS with the seven New England States, Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the US Federal Parks and the US Fish and Wildlife Organization.
- Nova Scotia's OFM works directly with stakeholder organizations such as the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia, the Fire Inspectors Association, and the Insurance Bureau of Canada.
- Nova Scotia's OFM works with the training school to ensure adequate and proper training opportunities are available.
- Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are currently working to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for interoperability on multi-hazard events. This is not a unique type of arrangement between P / T's. For example, Saskatchewan and Manitoba on mutual aid during emergency response and a future partnership for better strategic alignment.

A number of P / T's reported working with additional stakeholders, including:

- Machinery and equipment manufactures
- Communications infrastructure
- Other private sector (forestry, oil, gas, fertilizers, etc.)
- Outfitters, campers and cottage owners (for wildfire)
- Ambulance and dispatching services

9. Interoperability

Most fire departments in Nova Scotia have mutual aid agreements in place. However, there is minimal consistency in terms of content and scope of these agreements. In Nova Scotia, the OFM plays no role in formulating these agreements.

Mutual aid agreements between municipal departments exist in almost every P / T, however these relationships tend to be organized differently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction that reported no mutual aid agreements, because the geography and the lack of ground transportation infrastructure tend to prohibit easy movement between communities.

Mutual Aid Agreement Examples	
AB	<p>The Alberta Emergency Resources Inventory System (AERIS) is a single database containing a listing of fire service resources across the province. In the event of a major emergency, fire departments can directly access this information and quickly locate the resources they require.</p> <p>Alberta has multiple interagency agreements for resource sharing with municipalities, other provinces and National Parks through CIFFC, other inter-agency agreements including the Northwest Compact. This includes western provinces and the Northwestern United States, and agreements with the timber industry for shared resources during periods of extreme wildfire loads.</p>
BC	<p>Many fire departments (large and small) frequently engage in mutual aid assistance at the local level. These agreements are between the parties involved. The OFC does not participate in that process. The OFC often acts as a medium between departments on various topics but not the subject of local mutual aid agreements. The OFC is working with the Fire Chiefs Association of BC to complete development of a mutual aid plan for use in major events. This plan will be used to enhance the facilitation of the movement of fire departments around the province as needed during a major disaster.</p> <p>Due to the complex nature of forest fires, many agencies may become involved (ie local fire departments, BC Forest Service, RCMP, BC Ambulance Service and Emergency Management BC). These agencies form a unified command structure to determine objectives, identify strategies, assign tasks, etc.</p> <p>The BC Forest Service has entered into many mutual aid protection agreements with local fire departments. In times of need, the BC Forest Service will assist local fire departments and the local fire departments will respond in kind.</p> <p>Interface committees have been established in the Coast, Kamloops and Kootenay areas to address unified command and other organizational issues. Other parts of the province work on a department-by-department basis.</p>
MB	<p>Manitoba has a provincial mutual aid system that provides coordination amongst a group of fire departments located in the same geographic area. This is a free, reciprocal exchange of services when another department requires additional resources on the fire ground. There are 17 mutual</p>

	<p>aid districts and three northern training districts in the province.</p> <p>OFC implemented the Mutual Aid District Training Incentive Fund to promote and enhance training programs at the district level across the province.</p>
NB	Mutual aid agreements in New Brunswick are drawn up by each fire department as required and they vary in scope.
ON	<p>In Ontario, fire coordinators (under the direction of the Fire Marshal) are required to establish and maintain a mutual aid plan under which the fire departments that serve the designated area agree to assist each other in the event of an emergency. The OFM maintains a repository of all Ontario mutual aid plans and can refer to them to determine which resources can be called upon in regional or provincial emergency situations.</p> <p>For wildland fires in municipalities within the Fire Region of Ontario, MNR has fire suppression agreements with some municipalities that direct how resources will interact and be compensated. For those municipalities without fire suppression agreements, Interagency Guidelines are followed for joint operations.</p>
PE	There are three main groups in PEI that have mutual aid agreements (Kings, Queens, and West Prince) in place to provide fire suppression assistance. The OFM is working with the fire service to encourage automatic aid agreements as well through the Island Fire Service.
QU	In Quebec, through fire safety cover plans, local authorities are obligated to agree to mutual aid from the nearest fire service available.
SK	In Saskatchewan, the provincial government developed mutual aid agreement guidelines in 2011 to assist communities with the protocol and tools to conduct and participate in the development of fire protection agreements and mutual aid area agreements.
YT	Mutual aid agreements exist in three cases. The territorial policy on fire protection provides for a mutual aid process that allows fire departments in unincorporated communities to support each other in emergency situations.
Table # 18	

System Performance

1. Response Times

In Nova Scotia, nothing is mandated, but insurance premiums are dictated by fire protection (hydrants, fire departments, proximity, etc.). There are also building code requirements directly related to response times.

2. Call Types and Activities

At present we are only legislated for fire, although it is desired to record all types of response and activities. Some activities need to be recorded for presumptive cancer.

3. Community Coverage

Community coverage varies depending on the resources and experience.

4. Scope of Response

This is currently the responsibility of the municipal fire department and can range from one person response to a larger response from the entire fire department.

5. Dispatch

This may be by private fire phone or a recognized dispatch centre.

6. Charting Performance

This is a responsibility of municipal fire departments.

7. Human Performance

This is a responsibility of municipal fire departments.

8. Financial / Efficiencies

This is split between municipalities and municipal fire departments.