



## Fire Protection Service Establishment Policy

Department	Community Services	Policy No.	
Section	Emergency Management	Date Approved by Board	
Repeals		Board Resolution #	

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Fire Protection Service Establishment Policy is to set minimum standards for the establishment and funding of a new or expanded fire protection service within the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) that is financially or contractually connected to the Peace River Regional District.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all individuals and groups seeking to establish a new or expanded fire protection service within the PRRD who wish to receive funding, grants or contract fees, from the PRRD.

### 3. Definitions

In this policy, the following words have the meanings assigned below. Terms used and not defined in this policy shall rely on the definitions found in the *Local Government Act*, *National Fire Protection Association*, *Emergency Program Act*, *The Office of the Fire Commissioner of BC Playbook* and *WorkSafe BC Regulation*.

- 3.1 *Fire Protection Service*: all measures taken by a fire department to reduce the burden of fire on the quality of life that includes fire prevention, fire detection, fire suppression, and fire education, and associated rescue and emergency medical services provided in connection with a fire event, under contract or bylaw.
- 3.2 *Office of the Fire Commissioners Playbook BC*: minimum standards of training required for fire services personnel in British Columbia.
- 3.3 *Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS)*: A national organization administered by OPTA Information Intelligence, formerly CGI Insurance Business Services, formerly the Insurers' Advisory Organization and Canadian Underwriters Association, FUS provides data on public fire protection for fire insurance statistical work and underwriting purposes of subscribing insurance companies.
- 3.4 *Not-for-Profit Society*: An organization which is not driven by profit, and is registered and in good standing with the Societies Act of BC.



#### 4. Policy

4.1 PRRD involvement and funding in new or expanded fire departments shall be limited to those that are authorized by an adopted fire service establishment bylaw.

4.2 Fire protection services authorized by a PRRD Service establishment bylaw shall operate under one of the following service delivery models:

- a) Fire service directly operated and funded by the Regional District – whether by means of a full time career department, paid on call, volunteer or composite fire department;
- b) Fire service provided by a member municipality under contract – whether by means of full time career department, paid on call, volunteer or composite fire department; or
- c) Fire service provided by a registered not for profit society, under contract – whether by means of a volunteer or composite fire department.

4.3 Regardless of the composition of the fire department, *OHS Regulation Part 31: Firefighting of WorkSafe BC* as may be amended from time to time, applies to employers and to workers who are employed in firefighting activities on a full or part time basis, including volunteer firefighting in municipal service and industrial fire brigades to which the compensation provisions of the Workers Compensation Act apply, but does not apply to forest fire fighting

4.4 The PRRD will consider establishment, by bylaw with elector approval, of a new fire protection service, or expansion of an existing fire protection service authorized by PRRD service establishment bylaw, only if the following minimum requirements are met:

- a) The population and tax base of the service area are sufficient to create and sustain a fire department with consideration to both the initial capital costs for apparatus, equipment, supplies and facilities and ongoing operational costs.
- b) For fire departments not operated by a municipality, there must be a sufficient number of residents willing and able to participate as active firefighters within the service area to support the new department. Membership in the department should meet the “adequate staffing levels for a recognized fire department” threshold as defined by the Fire Underwriters Survey of Canada.
- c) Members of the department must be able to commit to and meet the minimum training standards set out by the Office of the Fire Commissioner of BC as well as the obligations of WorkSafe BC.
- d) An adequate water supply for fire suppression purposes as described by the Fire Underwriters Survey of Canada must be available.