



# Moberly Lake Volunteer Fire Department Needs Assessment

Peace River Regional District

## Needs Assessment

- In response to a request from Moberly Lake, the PRRD issued an RFP for the Moberly Lake VFD:
  - The purpose of the “Moberly Lake Volunteer Fire Department Needs Assessment & Review” is to conduct a needs assessment and review of the Department and identify options for operational models to support the continuation of the service and address workload requirements
- The project required several site visits with the Moberly Lake VFD as well as with:
  - The Saulteau and West Moberly First Nations
  - Chetwynd and Hudson’s Hope
  - PRRD Senior Staff and Director Rose

## Our Background

- Dave Mitchell & Associates Ltd. a BC company formed in 2000
- Independent fire service consultants:
  - BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Yukon, NWT
  - Local and Regional Government
  - Improvement Districts
  - Societies
  - Province of British Columbia
  - Union of BC Municipalities

## Fire Service Context

- You are not alone; a lot has changed, and more is changing
- The regulatory process is increasingly complex
  - OFC Playbook
  - WorkSafe BC, including Part 31
  - Fire Underwriters
  - Fire Safety Act, replacing the Fire Services Act
- Firefighting is more dangerous and more complex
- Increased risk to firefighter health and safety
- Communications & dispatch systems are also complex and evolving

## Fire Service Context 2021 and Beyond

- Playbook, 2021 revisions
  - Revised training standards, will increase scope to include additional functions
- Fire Safety Act
  - Changes to inspections and investigations – may impact RD departments
- Emergency Program Act
  - Consultation underway, new Act expected in Q3 2020
  - Provincial adoption of the Sendai Model
- WorkSafe 2020 Review
  - Including Part 31
- Mutual and Automatic Aid

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## The Issues Arising

- Members of the Society have expressed their reluctance to continue directly operating the Department
- They have expressed an interest in becoming a Regional District Department with the Society remaining in a supporting role
- Service Agreements to be re-negotiated
- Service establishment and operational bylaws to be revised
- Opportunity to ensure full compliance with the training requirements
- Ensure a continuous, safe and effective fire suppression service.

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## Options

- Option 1 –Moberly Lake VFD becomes a Regional Department
  - Transition of employees to become employees
  - Management of OH&S and HR issues
  - Feedback opportunity from a fire management committee with view and voice
  - Communications policy
  - Renewal of service contracts with First Nations
- Option 2 -Society continues to operate Moberly Lake VFD
  - Transition to a new Service Agreement with PRRD to address roles and responsibilities, oversight, reporting, financial reporting, training and accountability.
  - Confirmation of the service level
  - Reporting model & Communications policy
  - Long-term Society sustainability strategic planning
  - Renewal of service contracts with First Nations

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## Long-term Fire Service Strategy

- To consider:
  - Better planning for long term costs – sustainable funding model
  - Achieve statutory and regulatory compliance
  - Ensure consistency of policies and performance
  - Undertake long term planning for:
    - Training
    - Interoperability
    - Effective oversight
    - Apparatus renewal and replacement
    - Small Equipment renewal and replacement
  - Enhanced regional or sub-regional response model

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## PRRD Support and Assistance

- Protective Services Team – Manager, Coordinator & Clerk with support from Charlie Lake Fire Chief & Deputy
  - Coordination of service and operations
  - Records Management
  - Training and Certification
  - Automatic and Mutual Aid agreements
- Finance
  - Operating and Capital Budget development and accounts management
  - Procurement, Payroll
- Human Resources
  - HR Policies and procedures, Personnel records
  - Recruitment
- IT & Communications support

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## Recommendations in Six Areas

1. Bylaws and Agreements
2. Fire Services Act
3. New Fire Safety Act
4. Occupational Health and Safety
5. Training
6. Pre-Plans

## Summary

- Every portion of the review was respectful and positive and the communities support continuation of fire services
- Society has expressed a desire to transition to Regional District
- The Regional District has the requisite staff support for this
- A full transparent transition plan for this will be required
- If the Society does not transition, a revised agreement to be developed
- Renewal of the agreements with the two First Nations is required
- Ongoing review of training and other regulatory issues to ensure compliance
- Recommendations for a sustainable funding model

## Questions