

# Office of the Fire Commissioner Strategic Plan

2015/16 – 2017/18



## VISION

The Office of the Fire Commissioner will be recognized as British Columbia’s premier fire safety organization.

## MISSION

The Office of the Fire Commissioner will strive to be the leader in providing fire safety awareness and fire prevention in the Province of British Columbia, establishing a high level of public trust by providing progressive and innovative advice and recommendations.

## Introduction

The primary focus of the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) is one of governance and oversight with emphasis placed on the key concepts of promoting fire prevention and the enhancement of public fire safety awareness. The OFC acts as an advisor to government on broad fire service issues and a liaison between government and the fire service on issues of interest or concern.

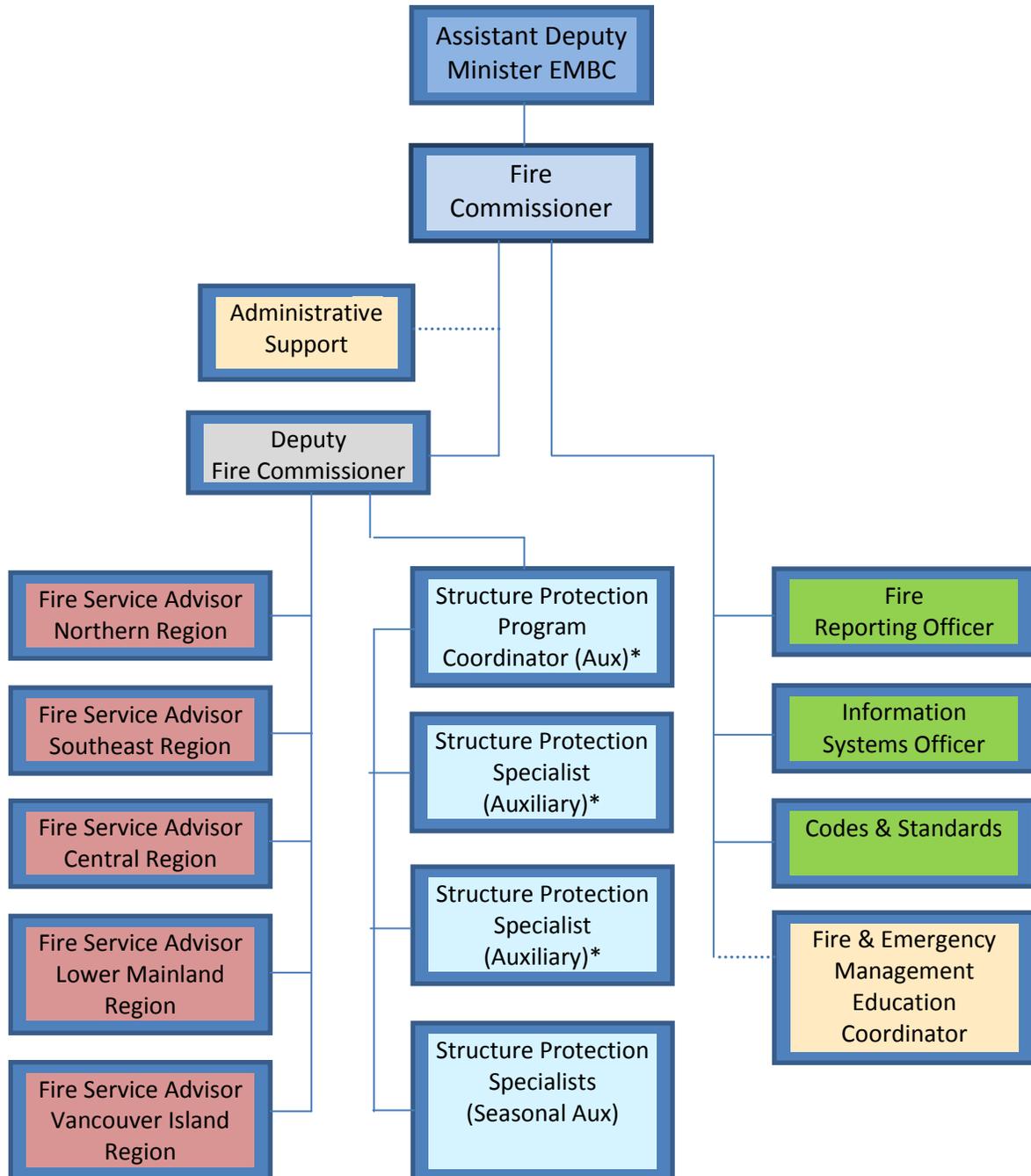
With fire service delivery being a function of local government that is subject to (and impacted by) provincial legislation, it is important for the OFC to review, monitor and address issues that transcend specific local areas to ensure that the broad scope of issues are dealt with in a consistent way for the benefit of the general public and affected stakeholders.



In addition to the specific activities outlined in this strategic plan, OFC staff will continue to engage in a variety of other activities on an ongoing basis in the course of meeting its mandate. The purpose of this document is to identify key deliverables over the next three years, with a review and update to be conducted on an annual basis.

As a key stakeholder representative, the Fire Chiefs Association of BC (FCABC) strategic plan is seen as an important document that can positively impact the OFC strategic plan when considered together. After consultation, the feedback of the FCABC was incorporated into this document to assist in harmonization of the plans.

## Organizational Chart



\* These auxiliary positions function throughout the year on an “as and when required” basis.

## Challenges

1. Matching the existing responsibilities of the OFC to the available resources in order to address the deliverables identified in the plan. Use of a prioritized approach will be required to achieve progress in each of the lines of effort.
2. Continuing to build and improve relationships with key stakeholder organizations to maximize the capacity of the OFC to move forward capitalizing on the knowledge and experience of those organizations.

## Goals

In developing a strategic plan, the OFC has worked to align itself with the strategic plan objectives contained within the strategic plan adopted by EMBC. Three key goals have been developed that encompass the existing mandate of the OFC that flows from the *Fire Services Act* and the role of the OFC within EMBC and the Ministry of Justice.

The *2015/16 – 2017/18 Office of the Fire Commissioner Strategic Plan* reflects our ongoing commitment to three key goals:

1. Supporting local governments and their fire departments in their fire safety and prevention responsibilities, to ensure a high level of public safety.
2. Prioritizing the use of resources to provide strategic guidance for the fire service.
3. Developing an adaptive organization that encourages resourcefulness, teamwork and innovation.

To meet these goals, the OFC will prioritize its efforts under five strategic lines of effort:

1. Legislative
2. Organizational Capacity
3. Prevention
4. Guidance
5. Enforcement

## Lines of effort and supporting work activities

Each “line of effort” consists of a group of related objectives (shown in blue boxes). The related deliverables are shown with each objective.

## 1. Legislative

### A. Replacement of the current *Fire Services Act*

The existing legislation is outdated and in need of replacement to address issues that have arisen since the last major revision was undertaken. A new Act will be used to clarify policy and mandate requirements to guide the work of the OFC.

#### Deliverables

1. Consultation with stakeholders and review of previously completed efforts. (2015/16)
2. Submission to government for consideration by legislature. (2015/16)

### B. Collection and dissemination of statistical information about fires in BC

There is a statutory requirement for the OFC to collect statistical information on fires occurring within BC. The Local Assistant to the Fire Commissioner (LAFCs) appointed throughout the province are required to submit reports on all fires and this requires a functioning database and collection system. Contingent upon funding becoming available through the overall EMBC Information Systems replacement plans, the following will be undertaken.

#### Deliverables

1. Upgrade/replace existing BC fire reporting system (FIRE System). (2015/16)
2. Ensure data reporting system compatibility with national fire reporting system. (2016/17)
3. Use of data in identification of at risk demographics. (2017/18)

### C. Minimum Fire Training Standard

The previous minimum fire training standard was replaced in 2014 by the new “Playbook” document which outlines the required minimum standards for firefighters to be able to deliver each community’s identified level of fire service. This is a living document that will be subject to ongoing input and amendment where necessary.

#### Deliverables

1. Amend existing Playbook based on fire service and community feedback.(2015/16)



2. Analyze the scope of the existing standard to identify additional areas for inclusion. (2016/17)

#### **D. Fire Service Advisory Committees**

From a requirement contained within the existing *Fire Services Act* and as identified in the FSLG report, a need has been identified to establish Fire Services Advisory Committees.

##### **Deliverables**

1. Identify appropriate committees and related stakeholder organizations to establish the committee(s), along with the necessary Terms of Reference. (2015/16)

## **2. Organizational Capacity**

#### **A. Develop operational plan for the provincial coordination of resources in a State of Emergency**

In accordance with the Provincial Coordination Plan for Wildland Urban Interface Fires, in the event of a declaration of a Provincial State of Emergency, a Provincial Fire Department (PFD) can be created and control of it delegated to the Fire Commissioner. A plan is required to detail the processes involved in the creation/operation of such a department.

##### **Deliverables**

1. Engage Fire Chief's Association of BC to establish a combined effort to develop the framework for the provincial coordination of resources in the event of a state of emergency. (2015/16)
2. Complete a review of previous planning efforts. (2015/16)
3. Complete a draft plan for the creation of a PFD. (2016/17)

#### **B. Organizational capacity to meet OFC mandate**

In order to best meet the mandate requirements and current tasking, it is necessary to ensure essential positions are filled and an analysis and prioritization of work is done.

##### **Deliverables**

1. Develop a staffing plan that aligns staff priorities to meet OFC mandate and tasking priorities. (2015/16)

### C. Business Continuity

In order to ensure there is the ability to continue the provision of OFC services/duties in the event of a major event, it is necessary to establish a business continuity plan.

#### Deliverables

1. Evaluate resource requirements for continuity of operations. (2016/17)
2. Create a business continuity plan for OFC. (2017/18)

### D. Provide leadership and expertise to local governments for wildfire interface events



The OFC is assigned the responsibility to administer and operate the Structure Protection Program (SPP) on behalf of Wildfire Management Branch (WMB). The overall SPP administration and operations requires a comprehensive plan that outlines all facets of its responsibilities.

#### Deliverables

1. Engage WMB and establish financial process management plan. (2015/16)
2. Update existing operational guidelines for SPP. (2015/16)
3. Engage and educate local authorities on Interface Fire procedures. (2015/16)
4. Create expandable OFC staffing structure for major Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) deployment situations. (2016/17)

## 3. Prevention

### A. Dissemination of fire safety and prevention information

In order to ensure fire safety in the broad context, it is important to harness methods of communication to reach all potential stakeholders in delivery of information.

#### Deliverables

1. Re-establish functional Provincial Fire Public Education Committee. (2015/16)
2. Overall OFC website reconfigured to user friendly format and update of content. (2015/16)
3. Update the content of Fire Prevention Week campaign materials. (2015/16)
4. Increased use of social media. (2015/16 – 2016/17)

## 4. Guidance

### A. Stakeholder Engagement

In order to be accessible to stakeholders and ensure awareness of issues of concern, it is important for OFC staff to regularly attend meetings and other events. This enhances the ability to share information, respond to concerns and obtain feedback from a broader stakeholder base.

#### Deliverables

1. Identify key (Fire Chiefs, Prevention Officers, Training Officers) meetings and workshops to network with stakeholders and provide information and guidance on fire service issues. (ongoing)
2. Update accessibility and relevance of OFC bulletins. (2015/16)
3. Participation in Inter-Ministry Working Groups on an “as needed” basis. (ongoing)

### B. Develop Awards and Recognition Program

The provision for recognition of both firefighters and civilians is an important means of acknowledgement for efforts that extend beyond normal expectations. The existing program requires an update of both the process and criteria for the various forms of recognition that are available, to ensure a transparency of process and ease of application.

#### Deliverables

1. Identify types and levels of recognition for fire service and civilian recipients. (2015/16)
2. Create an advisory committee to evaluate recognition requests, using fire service stakeholders. (2015/16)

### C. Fire Services Liaison Group (FSLG) recommendations

The Fire Commissioner’s 2012 response to the recommendations of the FSLG report contained guidance for addressing the concerns raised. The recommendations that remain unresolved require follow up action.

#### Deliverables

1. Complete a plan that details how the OFC will address the outstanding recommendations. (2015/16)

## 5. Enforcement

### A. Enforce fire safety and prevention legislation

The OFC through the *Fire Services Act* is responsible for enforcement of the BC Fire Code and carries out this duty through the system of Local Assistants to the Fire Commissioner (LAFc). The LAFcs are supported through a combination of training, advice and assistance provided by OFC staff.

#### Deliverables

1. Provide advice and support to LAFcs in issuing Fire Service Act orders. (ongoing)
2. Manage fire safety referral process used by WorkSafeBC and the BC Safety Authority, to support LAFc responses. (ongoing)

### B. Mentoring of Local Assistant to the Fire Commissioner (LAFc's)

To develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of LAFcs involved in fire inspections and investigations, it is important that the Fire Service Advisors provide support in developing the LAFc's understanding of the legislation and public education aspects of fire safety.

#### Deliverables

1. Revision of existing LAFc online course. (2015/16)
2. Provision of online LAFc training for combustible dust and fire safety plans. (2015/16)



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The following table outlines the timeframe for specific work deliverables according to their strategic lines of effort:

	Year One 2015/16	Year Two 2016/17	Year Three 2017/18
<b>Legislative</b>	<p><u>Fire Services Act:</u> 1. Consultation with stakeholders and review of previously completed efforts.</p> <p><u>Fire Services Act:</u> 2. Submit to government for consideration by legislature</p> <p><u>Data Reporting:</u> 1. Upgrade/replace existing FIRE reporting system</p> <p><u>Training Standard:</u> 1. Amend existing Playbook based on fire service and community feedback</p> <p><u>Fire Service Advisory Committee:</u> 1. Identify appropriate committees and related stakeholder organizations to establish the committee(s), along with the necessary Terms of Reference.</p>	<p><u>Data Reporting:</u> 1. Ensure data reporting system compatibility with national fire reporting system</p> <p><u>Training Standard:</u> 1. Analyze the scope of the existing standard to identify additional areas for inclusion</p>	<p><u>Data Reporting:</u> 1. Use of data in identification of at risk demographics</p>

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	Year One 2015/16	Year Two 2016/17	Year Three 2017/18
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	<p><u>Provincial Resource Coordination:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage BC Fire Chiefs Association to establish a combined effort to develop the framework for the provincial coordination of resources in the event of a state of emergency.</li> <li>Complete a review of previous planning efforts.</li> </ol> <p><u>Meet Mandate:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop staffing plan to meet mandate and priorities</li> </ol> <p><u>Wildfire Events:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage WMB to establish financial process management plan</li> <li>Update existing operational guidelines for SPP</li> <li>Engage and educate local authorities on Interface Fire procedures</li> </ol>	<p><u>Provincial Resource Coordination:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a draft plan for the creation of a PFD.</li> </ol> <p><u>Business Continuity:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate resource requirements for continuity of operations</li> </ol> <p><u>Wildfire Events:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create expandable OFC staffing structure for major WUI deployment situations</li> </ol>	<p><u>Business Continuity:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a business continuity plan for OFC</li> </ol>

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	Year One 2015/16	Year Two 2016/17	Year Three 2017/18
<b>Prevention</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-establish Provincial Public Education Committee</li> <li>2. Reconfigure overall OFC website</li> <li>3. Update content of Fire Prevention Week Materials</li> <li>4. Increase use of social media</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase use of social media</li> </ol>	
<b>Guidance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify key meetings and workshops with stakeholders</li> <li>2. Update OFC bulletins</li> <li>3. Participation in Inter-Ministry Working Groups</li> </ol> <p><u>Awards/Recognition:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify types and levels of recognition</li> <li>2. Create committee to evaluate recognition requests</li> </ol> <p><u>FSLG:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete a plan that details how the OFC will address the outstanding recommendations.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participation in Inter-Ministry Working Groups</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participation in Inter-Ministry Working Groups</li> </ol>

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	Year One 2015/16	Year Two 2016/17	Year Three 2017/18
<b>Enforcement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide advice and support to LAFC's in issuing <i>Fire Service Act</i> orders</li> <li>2. Support LAFC response to FIPI referrals</li> </ol> <p><u>LAFC Mentoring</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revision of existing LAFC online course</li> <li>2. Provision of online LAFC training for combustible dust and fire safety plans</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide advice and support to LAFC's in issuing <i>Fire Service Act</i> orders</li> <li>2. Support LAFC response to FIPI referrals</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide advice and support to LAFC's in issuing <i>Fire Service Act</i> orders</li> <li>2. Support LAFC response to FIPI referrals</li> </ol>