



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

Leading innovation and excellence in public and life safety

Thursday, May 6, 2021

Jon Pegg
Fire Marshal of Ontario
Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management
2nd Floor
25 Morton Shulman Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M3M 0B1

RE: Standard Incident Report

Dear Fire Marshal Pegg,

I am writing you today regarding ongoing concerns as it pertains to the updates to the Standard Incident Report (SIR). The Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC) wrote a letter to Ontario's previous Fire Marshal, Ross Nichols dated January 31, 2018, outlining thirteen recommendations to update and modernize the SIR. The recommendations were crafted by a provincial working group of chief fire officers with expertise and experience in incident reporting protocols and software, that was then endorsed by the O AFC Board of Directors. A copy of that letter is included with this correspondence.

Since that letter was sent, and for the past three years, the O AFC has been working with various members of your team to update the SIR to meet the needs of Ontario's fire service and the needs of the Provincial Government. While work was slow at first, our members and your team had progressed to the point where discussions were taking place for a retreat at the Fire College to finalize the work in early 2020. However, due to COVID-19 and provincial lockdown measures, that did not occur. In response to this, and in an effort to continue pushing forward, our members of the working group requested from your office information on what is considered to be "provincially significant data"; or what data the Ontario government requires to be collected on the SIR. It has been over a year since that request was made, and we are still waiting to know what data the province requires to be captured.

It is our understanding that the SIR is supposed to be updated every five years and to the best of our knowledge, a comprehensive overhaul hasn't been conducted in nearly nine years. Since our letter was sent three years ago, it appears that only our first two recommendations were acted on.

Recently we learned that your office will be conducting an official SIR review and drafting a "project charter". It was communicated to us that your office will consult with the O AFC only *after* you have made and drafted the SIR changes. If this is true, it is extremely disheartening to hear, as it means that all thirteen of our recommendations have been ignored. We are concerned that not only the work we have accomplished together will be forgotten, but that the updated SIR may not meet the needs of Ontario's fire service. There continues to be a focus on the collection of data, not only from a municipal and provincial perspective, but federally as well. It is imperative that we be at the table for these discussions.



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As per the Fire Marshals' Directive 2015-001, under clauses 9.(2)(f) and 9.(2)(g) of the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, 1997 (FPPA), it is the duty of the Fire Marshal to keep a record of all fires reported, to develop and maintain statistical records, and to conduct studies in respect of fire protection services. Subsections 11.(2) and 11.(3) of the FPPA requires that assistants to the Fire Marshal report on fires and other matters related to fire protection as specified by the Fire Marshal, in a form and manner, and within a time period, specified by the Fire Marshal. Furthermore, every fire department as defined by subsection 1.(1) of the FPPA, must complete a Standard Incident Report for every response made by the fire department. We understand the importance of the SIR, and that the information is vital to shape fire safety programs, identify the need for Fire Code changes and to evaluate the success of programs and legislation. As you know, incident information gathering is essential to assessing community fire risks.

To comply with this Directive and ensure that fire services in Ontario are submitting relevant, accurate data, updating the SIR must be a priority. We are asking that you recommit to the thirteen recommendations in our previous letter, and that your office continues to collaborate with our working group to ensure the update is done in a manner that addresses all concerns. The SIR update must meet the needs of both the fire service, and the Provincial Government. Collaboration and communication is the only way to ensure its success.

Fire Marshal Pegg, I look forward to your earliest reply. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a meeting to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Executive Director Michelle O'Hara at 905-441-7766, or by email to michelle.ohara@oafc.on.ca.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark MacDonald".

Chief Mark MacDonald
President