



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

Leading innovation and excellence in public and life safety

Wednesday, January 31, 2018

Ross Nichols
Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management
Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
25 Morton Shulman Ave.
Toronto, Ont.
M3M 0B1

RE: O AFC recommendations on Standard Incident Reporting (SIR)

Dear Fire Marshal Nichols,

As a follow up to our discussion at the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC) Board meeting on January 15, I would like to share a list of proposed recommendations on Standard Incident Reporting (SIR) for the consideration of the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM). The recommendations, endorsed by the O AFC Board of Directors, were crafted by a provincial working group of chief fire officers with expertise in incident reporting protocols and software.

1. The O AFC be considered a key stakeholder in a comprehensive review of the SIR process undertaken by the OFMEM. The O AFC should contribute to the review and improvement of the current SIR process.
2. A comprehensive review of all SIR codes and criteria for selection be completed to ensure validity and reliability. This review will address, but not be limited to:
 - a. the types of codes used
 - b. the number and classification of codes
 - c. the number and classification of codes in alignment with the expectations of the applicable NFPA Standard
 - d. data collection for responses where multiple codes or actions can occur within the same incident
 - e. Dollar loss (or direct/indirect economic loss) estimates
 - f. The ability to limit (or restrict) the use of the 'other' type code (while providing specific data to classify the selection of such a code)
 - g. Outcomes for OFMEM Directives and Fire Code alignment (property classification)
3. A comprehensive review of NFPA 1710 and 1720 be undertaken to formulate a data dictionary and measurement criteria, which allows for standardized measurement of response time variables across all fire services in Ontario. The method in which time stamps are collected and presented is not consistent given the inherent differences that exist in fire departments, Primary Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), fire departments dispatch providers (internal or external), and fire department records management software. For example:
 - a. Alarm handling time: When is the actual point of transfer, when the call is transferred? Sometimes there is a delay in transfer of call. Which service owns that time?
 - b. What constitutes arrival on scene?



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

Leading innovation and excellence in public and life safety

- c. What is an intervention?
 - d. Reported times should be reflective of the type of fire department, as specified in either NFPA standard.
 - e. Establish measurement for public expectations of service delivery (what service for which incident type).
4. The development and implementation of comprehensive SIR training for all users (especially at the data entry stage) to build consistency in data collection and reporting.
 5. Creation of data links or a standard framework between Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD) software and Records Management Software (RMS) to capture measurement criteria used in the SIR. For example:
 - a. Guidelines for capture times (en route, arrived, on scene, establish command, etc.)
 - b. Benchmarks (water application, primary search, etc.)
 6. Engage RMS vendors in the SIR review process to understand how the proposed recommendations from the OFMEM will be implemented into future software applications.
 7. Improve the SIR process to allow for the development and understanding of provincial and local outcomes, rooted in SIR data. For example, but not limited to:
 - a) What potential outcomes were realized on fires, rescues and medical incidents, etc.?
 - b) What the call originated as, versus what data is recorded after the incident.
 - c) What variables and outcomes should be captured to identify improvements in public safety through community risk reduction?
 - d) The effectiveness of mandated OFMEM programs and activities.
 - e) Access to data compiled through the investigative branch of the OFMEM to better understand risk and fire service performance.
 8. The measurement of public education and fire prevention activities is limited to non-existent. Provincial and local fire service stakeholders need to understand how to start measuring these activities to determine how they are lowering risk to Ontarians. It is likely that this ask is not within the scope of the SIR, presuming that it is for the reporting of response incidents. If so, then who/what/when/where/why/how do we capture this in a province-wide, consistent and reportable framework?
 9. Develop a method of access to the SIR database for fire chiefs and fire departments to improve their service delivery and justify financial expenditures in order to improve public safety. Fire chiefs and fire departments should have the ability to compare data across other jurisdictions. Given this, how would access be granted to other municipalities' data for comparison purposes, in order to demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of internal department programs?
 10. Consultation and collaboration occur with the stakeholders responsible for the Canadian National Fire Information Database (NFID) in order to develop a national reporting platform and leverage work already completed.



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

Leading innovation and excellence in public and life safety

11. Consultation and collaboration occur with the stakeholders responsible for the NFIRS and NFORS system to understand its viability in an Ontario context, learn from their past experience and understand future plans with both systems. Special attention should be considered for the NFORS system research into data collection with reduced exposure to employee input.
12. Consultation and collaboration occur to publish any fire service guidelines required for the Standard Incident Report (SIR) process.
13. A review of the primary answering point data to determine if the 911 system initiates the most efficient and effective service delivery to the public.

We are eager to discuss the above proposed recommendations with the OFMEM and are available for consultation at your convenience. With the provincial Fire Safety Technical Table to begin working on SIR-specific initiatives in coming months, we feel a meeting between the province and the OAFCh is warranted in the near future.

To set up a meeting, or if you have questions about this report, please contact Richard Boyes, OAFCh Executive Director by email to richard.boyes@oafc.on.ca or phone at 905-426-9865.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Hernen', written over a white background.

Chief Stephen Hernen
President