



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

We are the trusted leader in fire services by inspiring and influencing a safer Ontario

Director Andrea DeJong
Deputy Fire Chief, St. Catharines Fire Service

RE: 2026 Mandate Letter

Dear Secretary DeJong,

It is important to first acknowledge the task that you have taken on. Being an Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC) Director requires a commitment of time, focus and dedication. And for that I wish to personally thank you. The O AFC has long been a leader in public and firefighter safety. Our collective role as a board is to ensure that the legacy of the past continues as we build a strong path forward for future leaders.

Our individual and collective efforts are important in achieving the expectations placed upon us by the membership. This mandate letter will serve as a formal and transparent delegation of the duties and responsibilities assigned to you for the 2026 O AFC term.

Within the 2026 term, the O AFC has agreed to the following targets that constitute our annual strategic plan and incorporate our government relations priorities. We seek to complete these targets:

1. Advocacy & Government Relations

- Advocate for sustainable funding and continued program support for fire and life safety
 - Extending the Fire Protection Grant
 - On-going support for NG911
- Bring awareness to the increasing role that climate-based emergencies have on fire departments
 - A whole of government approach to looking ahead
 - Building relationship with the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response (MEPR)
- Advocate for firefighter health and safety, and wellbeing
 - Continued support for cancer prevention and pre-screening programs
 - Continued support for mental health programs
 - Increasing roadside worker safety through the “Slow Down, Move Over” law

2. Membership Services



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- Improving the conference experience with a conference app
- Providing members access to fire safety resources
- 3. Financial**
 - Monitoring and evaluating changes in historical financial patterns
- 4. Development & Education**
 - Increase deliveries of MNR-based training from the 2025 offerings
- 5. Leadership**
 - Ensure OAFCh Director standards and accountability
- 6. Communications**
 - Website improvements
 - Improve internal and external project management

For the 2026 term you have been appointed to serve as Board Chair of the Fire Prevention & Public Education committee. You are also being assigned to the Governance committee, as well as several working groups: SIR, NG911, PSBN/PSRN, Tiered Response, Analytics & Technology and Northern Chiefs. The board has already agreed to revise the Terms of Reference for committees and working groups so that one document guides them. A goal within the strategic plan is to ensure director standards and accountability. This includes ensuring that meetings occur as scheduled, achievable goals are set and met, and that the committees and working groups are a functioning part of the OAFCh. They serve as conduits to our members, our subject matter experts, and our stakeholders. Your work in leading or supporting any of our committees will be strengthened by the board and staff to maintain consistency and contribution.

My expectation for the FPPE committee under your guidance is:

- Ensure that meetings are held as defined within the new terms of reference, support a co-chair to act in your absence, make proper use of the web-based software, and allow for positive member engagement
- Seek input from members related the government relations priorities, specifically their perspectives on climate-based emergencies
- Continue to seek solutions to improving and enhancing fire safety legislation
- Increase public education advocacy programs



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Another change within the O AFC Board is moving from Board Alternates on committees to allowing Board Observer positions. These positions allow Directors to sit in on committees specific to their O AFC roles to offer support or seek support for their own responsibilities. I ask that you remain available and flexible to support or seek support within committees. Much of what we do has overlap, and our work will not be limited by positional titles.

Specific to your appointment to the Governance committee, I ask that you assist with the ongoing review and revision of the O AFC Constitution. This document requires annual review for currency and applicability. Your insight is important to that goal. Related to your additional appointments to several working groups, I ask that you provide your strength in experience and insight to each. As part of the leadership for each working group, your involvement will help to advance O AFC goals and priorities. The SIR, NG911, and the PSBN/PSRN working groups provide a unique commonality and shared issues, and your involvement in each will allow for a collective approach. The Tiered Response working group is positioned to support all fire departments in their medical response capacity as the industry changes and grows. You are also tasked with co-leading the Analytics & Technology working group. I expect that this group will continue their work in identifying, improving, and expanding the use of data and electronic information within the fire service. The Northern Chiefs working group is positioned to support northern fire departments and the diverse conditions that they face. And the IMS Steering Committee is positioned to influence the bridge between fire and emergency management.

Your election to the O AFC Executive team is something to be proud of. To step forward as a leader amongst leaders is a testament to your character. I am proud to have you on this team and look forward to what we can accomplish. Part of this appointment brings with it additional responsibilities. You are by default a member of the Human Resources committee. Your position as Secretary also requires additional responsibilities related to the communications of the organization. Executive members are also responsible for representing the board at official events and comprise the delegation teams sent to government meetings. This increased workload requires your attention and determination. My only expectation of the executive team is that we work as a team. We are expanding our government relations priorities and have new strategic plan goals for the year. There is much to do.



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On behalf of the membership of the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, I offer my gratitude for your commitment to board. Our collective work, one in which our success will be a sum of our parts, will improve fire safety for all of Ontario and those who respond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Parkin".

Fire Chief Jeremy Parkin
President

Cc: Jeremy Inglis, Vice President
Mark MacDonald, Executive Director