

**TO:** CHAD TURPIN  
ACTING CITY MANAGER

**DATE:** 2021 Jul 21

**FROM:** CHRIS BOWCOCK  
FIRE CHIEF

**SUBJECT:** PROVINCIAL WILDFIRE DEPLOYMENTS

**PURPOSE:** To provide Council with an update regarding Provincial  
Wildfire Deployments.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** this report is for information purposes.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be provided to the Chair and members of the Public Safety Committee.

**REPORT**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In preparation for the 2021 Wildland Fire season, the British Columbia Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) contacted fire departments to identify firefighting resources that might be readily deployable when called upon in support of a major wildfire event. In February of 2021, the Fire Department, supported by the Director of Public Safety and Community Services, provided a report that identified the intension of the Burnaby Fire Department to provide fire resources at the need of the Province based on further Council approval.

Of note, the OFC and British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) recognize that, depending on the immediate needs of a local jurisdiction, departments may not be in a position to supply resources to the Province when requested.

**2.0 POLICY SECTION**

The response of the Burnaby Fire Department to provide wildland firefighting during major provincial events aligns with the following goals and sub-goals of the *Corporate Strategic Plan*:

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- **A Safe Community**
  - Emergency Preparedness – Enhance plans, procedures and services so that we are better prepared to respond to emergencies and are able to maintain City services
  - Emergency Services – Provide responsive emergency services
- **A Connected Community**
  - Partnership – Work collaboratively with businesses, educational institutions, associations, other communities and governments
- **A Healthy Community**
  - Healthy Environment – Enhance our environmental health, resilience and sustainability
- **A Thriving Organization**
  - Organizational Culture – Ensure that our core values are reflected in our policies, programs and services

### **3.0 LOW IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION**

It is valuable to note that all costs associated to the contributions by the City of personnel and equipment towards the provincial wildfire response efforts, are fully recoverable from the Province. Additionally, at no time during wildfire deployments, is it expected that the delivery of services to the citizens of Burnaby by the Fire Department be reduced in any way. This is due to detailed planning, back filling at provincial cost and close management to ensure our City capacity to respond to citizen demand for emergency response is maintained.

The Department has traditionally maintained reserve apparatus for the temporary replacement of frontline fire vehicles in order to facilitate maintenance. To provide the vehicle equipment required for these deployments, (1) of the Department's reserve fire engines will be moved into frontline service.

### **4.0 2021 DEPLOYMENT REQUESTS**

To date, the Burnaby Fire Department has provided resources to (2) emergency deployments at the Lytton Creek fire incident.

- 2021 June 30 through July 11
- 2021 July 13 through to current operations

With the 2021 July 20 declaration of a Provincial State of Emergency, it is expected that the demand for structural fire protection resources will remain high through to the end of September of this year. The high temperatures and continued drying trends in wildland areas across the Province are combining to create very high risk fire conditions. These

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conditions are not expected to subside until a broad and sustained seasonal weather change occurs.

## **5.0 BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION**

There are several key benefits to the City in supporting a provincial wildfire response:

- Provincial Leadership - by providing Department crews and equipment, the City of Burnaby maintains its strong leadership position within the Province and contributes to the protection of smaller and at risk communities. This is especially important during a Provincial State of Emergency.
- Gains in wildland firefighting experience for Department staff - participation in these major events increase Department morale and knowledge and skill development. This growth in Department staff capabilities benefit the citizens within the City of Burnaby.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

It is recommended that this report be received for information purposes. It is further recommended that a copy of this report be provided to the Chair and members of the Public Safety Committee.



Chris Bowcock  
Fire Chief – Burnaby Fire Department

Copied to: Director Public Safety & Community Services