

STANDARDS OF COVER (February 2014)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Calgary Fire Department's Standards of Cover is one of the foundation components required by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) for accreditation purposes. The Calgary Fire Department has been a CFAI-accredited fire service since 1999 and was the first Canadian fire service to achieve that designation, and today, is one of seven Canadian fire services to have received this prestigious designation. Of the more than 33,000 fire agencies in North America, only 201 have achieved the status so far.

The accreditation process provides a valuable, independent means by which the Calgary Fire Department evaluates its program and service delivery. In addition to an annual review of its operations and progress towards its stated performance benchmarks as outlined in planning documents, the Fire Department participates in annual reporting to maintain its CFAI accreditation. The Fire Department also completes a re-evaluation of its services every five years to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the principles of the accreditation process: continuous improvement, organizational adaptability and enhanced public safety.

STANDARDS OF COVER

The CFAI's manual that was developed to assist fire services in creating standard of cover documents states, "To control an emergency before it has reached its maximum intensity requires geographic dispersion of technical assets and cost-effective clustering of service delivery points for maximum effectiveness against the greatest number and types of risk."

The Calgary Fire Department's Standards of Cover documents the strategies developed to meet that challenge: to balance risk and resource availability in an ultimate effort to save lives and limit property damage. It outlines the procedures that determine the distribution and concentration of the Department's fixed and mobile resources and describes how those resources are deployed to respond to emergencies across the city, in consideration of the assessed risks and the level of performance as approved by Council.

The Standards of Cover is part of a cycle in striving for continuous service delivery improvement: risk levels in the community are assessed, performance objectives developed, actual performance evaluated, and modifications are then made as needed to ensure the Fire Department's response coverage is effective. The framework is guided by requirements set out by CFAI.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESSES

The development and updating of the Standards of Cover is integrated into the Calgary Fire Department's broader and long-term planning and evaluation process. As with all components in the process, the Standards of Cover is guided by the Department's overarching vision and influenced by Corporate and Departmental plans. The Standards of Cover also contains specific components that are required by CFAI of all accredited agencies, including an assessment of performance against CFAI-set baselines for deployment measures. In this way, the Standards of Cover is both unique to the service delivered by the Calgary Fire Department and inclusive of an assessment that can be compared to baselines set by an international accrediting body.

2014 STANDARDS OF COVER AND CURRENT PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The Standards of Cover was finalized in early 2014 and submitted as part of the Calgary Fire Department's re-accreditation application for the period of 2014-2019. The development of the 2014 Standards of Cover resulted in a final overall evaluation, the recommendations of which were both summarized in the document and will be implemented over the remainder of the 2012-2014 business planning cycle and incorporated in the Fire Department's 2015-2018 business plan as specific goals and objectives.