



Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

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REPORT #: FES-24-005 **COMMITTEE DATE:** 2024-03-19
REPORT TO: COTW-General **DUE IN COUNCIL:** 2024-03-26
SUBJECT: Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services Standards of Cover

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1.1 Council receive this report regarding the Standards of Cover Document completed by the Fire & Emergency Administrative Staff.
- 1.2 Council endorse the Department's Standard of Cover Document, including the Community Risk Assessment, baseline and benchmark response times, critical tasking information, fleet replacement schedules, Risk Reduction Inspection Schedules, and other pertinent information detailed within the document.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services (NOLTFES) administrative staff have prepared a Standards of Cover (SOC) document that identifies the written policies and procedures that establish the department's distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources.
- All information contained within the SOC Document assists in outlining how the Department currently functions and outlines assets and resources required to ensure it meets the community's needs. An endorsed SOC is an important step in continuously improving customer service excellence.
- The SOC is an item identified with the *Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services 2021-2025 Strategic Plan*. Completing the Fire Department Strategic Plan is also an item identified within Council's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the progress that NOTLFES has been making, specifically toward the completion of the SOC document, a key element toward the department's ongoing pursuit of continuous improvement. Understanding and applying the information contained in the SOC document to the day-to-day operations of the Community Risk Reduction and Operations & Training Divisions will assist in guiding all the department's decisions related to response, training, prevention, and education. The items identified within the SOC document will be reviewed annually to ensure the department is operating with the most up-to-date information possible.

Through the adoption of the SOC Document, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services will continue to be a leader among volunteer departments across the country.

4. BACKGROUND

In the Summer of 2021, the NOTLFES began taking a continuous improvement and customer service excellence approach to all that it did. A critical step in this approach was to develop a SOC document. This document identifies the written policies and procedures that establish the department's distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources.

5. DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

A large volume of information about how the department operates daily is included in the document. Information regarding the history of the department, its organizational structure, and finances are included. Previously approved and endorsed information laid out within the Community Risk Assessment is also contained within the SOC.

Operational information identifying critical tasking, baseline and benchmark response timing, risk reduction inspection schedules, and fleet replacement schedules are all included within this overarching document. A SOC document permits any person to read through and understand how the department functions, what resources are available, and how we deliver customer service while focusing on continuous improvement. This guides the department and assists in minimizing delays with staff turnover. Proper succession planning is an integral part of any organization. Having a guiding document laying out the details of the department, this process can be established and guided much easier.

With the information contained within the SOC, approval of this document assists in maintaining and confirming the established Council-approved level of service that the NOTLFES delivers to the community. Establishing critical tasking provides a clear direction toward what is acceptable regarding the number of responding firefighters for nearly all common emergency types. Identifying the department's baseline and benchmark response times targets how long it takes to respond to emergencies and to assist in reducing these times. Providing proactive inspection schedules based on identified risks within the community ensures the Town's building stock is regularly reviewed for fire safety concerns. A clearly laid out fleet replacement schedule guides the department for years to come with an understanding of which vehicles should be replaced and when providing direction towards maintaining the level of service that Council set and that the community expects.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

The content of this report supports the following Strategic Plan initiatives:

Pillar

4. Optimize Organizational Excellence

Priority

4.3 Culture & Workforce

Action

4.3 a) Culture & Workforce

Pillar

1. Vibrant & Complete Community

Priority

1.3 Strategies & Masterplans

Action

1.3 a) Strategies & Masterplans

7. OPTIONS

- 7.1 Option 1: Council receive and approve the Standard of Cover Document, assisting in working towards customer service excellence and continuous improvement.
(Recommended)
- 7.2 Option 2: Council choose not to endorse the Standard of Cover Document and provide alternate direction *(Not Recommended)*

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications from receiving and endorsing the SOC. Numerous schedules and requirements outlined to maintain the current level of service will have longer-term financial impacts; however, all future financial requests will be required to come forward to Council for approval through the budget process. Additionally, all the schedules and requirements noted within this document are not new or additions to the department's current operational needs or budgets. This document has simply organized them into one easy-to-read overarching guiding document.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications from receiving and endorsing the SOC.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

There are no specific communications required with the endorsement of the SOC.

11. CONCLUSION

NOLTFES Staff believes that the endorsement and adoption of the SOC document will continue to propel the department along its path toward customer service excellence and continuous improvement. Additionally, through the endorsement, the SOC will continue to place the NOTLFES as leaders among volunteer departments nationwide.

12. PREVIOUS REPORTS

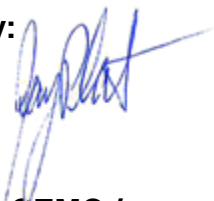
- FES-22-006 – Community Risk Assessment

13. APPENDICES

- Appendix I – Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services Standards of Cover

Respectfully submitted:

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