

The Fage-Topping Study/Report Found:

- In 2008 there were 40,000 fire emergency dispatches in NS
- There were 18 fire 'dispatch points' in NS – of varying abilities and reliabilities.
- Many dispatch points operated without contracts with clients and virtually none had SLA's in place.

Current State

- Nine contracted fire dispatch points which are competitive commercial or municipal enterprises. *
- Estimated aggregate cost - \$750k/annum *
- Approximately 280 VFD's in NS. **

* Excluding HRM, CBRM, Truro and Amherst

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Who We Are

About Us

The Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia (FSANS) represents the entire fire service of the province. In 2016 FSANS struck a multi-party committee to respond to the Fage-Topping Report and develop benchmark standards for fire dispatch. A fire dispatch standard, based largely on NFPA 1221, and a model SLA were endorsed by FSANS in October, 2017. Now we must educate and encourage municipalities and fire services to use the standard when seeking or renewing dispatch services contracts.

Contact Us

Phone: 902-956-9740

Email: terry.canning@eastlink.ca

Web: www.fsans.ns.ca/



**FIRE SERVICE
ASSOCIATION OF
NOVA SCOTIA**

c/o Terry Canning
127 Whidden Road
Brookfield, NS
B0N1C0



**Fire Dispatch:
The Weakest Link**

**FIRE SERVICE
ASSOCIATION
OF NOVA
SCOTIA**

*Is Fire Dispatch important to
your Municipality?*

Do we need a Fire Dispatch Standard and Coordination?

- Historical and recent experiences indicate that there are serious gaps in fire dispatch reliability and service

(Wentworth incident; Valley equipment)

- Many personnel are underutilized in the current nine points
- Delivery of service is inconsistent between facilities – and to VFD's
- There are no back-up capabilities for fire dispatch operations
- There is no ability for incoming 'overflow' calls to be transferred to an alternate dispatch point for prompt action

What does the standard include?

Consistent protocols – there must be a single protocol within a dispatch agency for all clients

Overflow Capability - When too many incoming calls overwhelm capacity

Business Continuity/Succession

Planning – Many current services have no long-term plan for disaster reaction or key-personnel loss

Service Level Agreement – A model Service Level Agreement (SLA) is provided – each legally binding agreement must be customized to the contracting parties

Components of the Standard

- Personnel - staffing levels, qualifications and training
- Facilities - fire resistance, electrical standards, survivability, redundancy
- Technology – survivability, redundancy, best value with back-up capability

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” - Socrates



Conclusions and Go-forward Plan

- With no comprehensive SLA there is no accountability of the service provider to the paying client – the municipality, which has ultimate responsibility
- Dispatch is a universal requirement of every emergency service – ambulance, police, fire, whether volunteer, composite, or career
- Reliability is an expectation of every citizen – which is currently not assured
- The Dispatch Standards Committee revealed a need for provincial coordination of this municipal responsibility – a logical extension of the world-vclass E911 system employed in Nova Scotia
- The province must be convinced to accept its role in this endeavor and take the lead

