

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.

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**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-class E911 system employed in Nova Scotia
- The province must be convinced to **accept its role** in this endeavor and **take the lead**