



## REPORT N° PRO2019-020

<b>Date</b>	07/08/2019
<b>Submitted by</b>	Brian Wilson
<b>Subject</b>	PRO2019-020 – Fire Department Training Hours Report
<b>File N°</b>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

1) **NATURE/GOAL :**

To respond to Council's request for more information in regards to the training hours of the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department, with a comparison to neighbouring municipalities.

2) **DIRECTIVE/PREVIOUS POLICY :**

Council directed Administration to provide a report on the hours spent training by the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department, specifically looking at optional versus mandatory training, and comparing to neighbouring departments.

3) **DEPARTMENT'S RECOMMENDATION :**

THAT the Committee of the Whole receive report PRO2019-020 as information.

QUE le Comité plénier reçoit le rapport PRO2019-020 à titre d'information

4) **BACKGROUND :**

The Clarence-Rockland Fire Department operates under By-law 2017-155 which establishes the fire department and provides regulation on the service levels provided.

Currently the fire department conducts regular training on alternating Wednesday evenings, usually for 2 hours, and sometimes up to 3 hours per evening. Under the current collective bargaining agreement with CLAC, members are required to attend a minimum of 60% of these training sessions. Career members of the department attend these training nights as well, in addition to conducting on-shift training. Per the collective agreement with IAFF, career members attending regular training nights are compensated at regular time, this is in addition to their regular 40-hour work week. The advantage of having all staff training together is evident, as all work side-by-side at emergency calls.

Within By-law 2017-155, it states that the goals of the fire department shall be those contained within the most recent Master Fire Plan, as presented to Council. The most recent Master Fire Plan was received by Council on May 15, 2017.

The Master Fire Plan notes a number of recommendations in regards to training:

- Recommendation #19 is to develop and implement a comprehensive training program based on the NFPA Professional Qualification Standards, as adopted by the Province.
- Recommendation #20 suggests to revise the hours of training to regularly schedule training for 3 hours per training night.
- Recommendation #21 suggests that the department should switch to weekly training sessions, instead of bi-weekly. If combined with station maintenance duties, this would result in a doubling of the number of training hours from an average of 4 per month, to an average of 8 per month.
- Recommendation #23 suggests that all firefighters should undergo mandatory live-fire training on an annual basis.
- Recommendation #27 suggests that all Officers of the department should be trained to the NFPA 1021 Fire Officer Level 2 standard.
- Recommendation #28 suggests that the department implement the Blue Card Command certification program as a component of the Officer training program.

The Master Fire Plan goes on to outline the requirements as noted under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, specifically the Section 21 Guidance Notes for Firefighters, which require the employer to ensure adequate training and supervision is provided to all firefighters, to ensure their competence when responding to emergency situations.

Historically, the department trained in-house using recognized curriculum which was based on the NFPA standards. Medical training was historically conducted by UCPR Paramedics, loosely following the standard first aid program.

After reviewing the NFPA 1001 Firefighter standard, which requires firefighters responding to medical calls to train to the First Responder level (at a minimum), the department converted its medical training program over to the Red Cross. This transition is currently underway in Ottawa as well.

Currently the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department trains using the NFPA Professional Qualification Standards, or the Canadian Red Cross, as a basis for initial training and continued competence. The following standards are utilized by the department, with the required number of hours for initial certification noted, along with required refresher training hours.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Hours for initial certification</b>	<b>Hours for refresher certification</b>	<b>Required or Optional Training</b>	<b># of CRFD members</b>
NFPA 1001 – Firefighter	240 hours	80 hrs / year (est.)	Required (OH&S)	79
DZ Driver Training	40 hours	2 hrs / year (est.)	Required (MTO & OH&S)	79
NFPA 1002 – Pumper Operator	80 hours	4 hrs / year (est.)	Required (OH&S)	79
First Responder	40 hours	20 hours / 3 years	Required (NFPA 1001)	66
Emergency Medical Responder <sup>1</sup>	80 hours	40 hours / 3 years	Optional	13
NFPA 1006 – Water/Ice/Boat	60 hours	8 hours / year (est.)	Required (OH&S)	35
NFPA 1021 – Fire Officer I <sup>2</sup>	60 hours		Required (OH&S)	15
NFPA 1021 – Fire Officer II <sup>3</sup>	60 hours	8 hours / year (est.)	Required (OH&S)	15
NFPA 1021 – Fire Officer III <sup>4</sup>	80 hours		Recommended	5
NFPA 1021 – Fire Officer IV <sup>5</sup>	80 hours		Recommended	2
Blue Card Command <sup>6</sup>	74 hours	32 hours / 3 years	Required (Master Plan)	15
NFPA 1033 – Fire Investigator <sup>7</sup>	80 hours	4 hours / year	Required (OH&S)	3
NFPA 1041 – Fire Instructor I	60 hours		Required (OH&S)	12
NFPA 1041 – Fire Instructor II <sup>8</sup>	60 hours		Required (OH&S)	6
NFPA 1521 – Incident Safety Officer	24 hours		Required (OH&S)	15
<b>TOTAL HOURS (Firefighter)</b>	<b>460 hours</b>	<b>~100 hours / year (avg.)</b>		
<b>TOTAL HOURS (Officer)</b>	<b>798 hours</b>	<b>~110 hours / year (avg.)</b>		
<b>TOTAL HOURS (Chief Officer)</b>	<b>1,078 hours</b>	<b>~120 hours / year (avg.)</b>		

<sup>1</sup> CRFD focused this training on full-time staff, with some part-time staff filling the class. This training is not currently offered throughout the department, but rather focused on full-time staff who can maintain the skills through on-shift training time.

<sup>2</sup> This level of training is currently only offered to senior members of the Department.

<sup>3</sup> This level of training is currently only offered to Captains within the department (10 members).

<sup>4</sup> This level of training is currently only offered at the District Chief level and above, with the intention of making this a minimum requirement to become a Deputy Chief.

<sup>5</sup> This level of training is currently only offered at the Deputy Chief level and above, with the intention of making this a minimum requirement to become the Fire Chief.

<sup>6</sup> This level of training is currently only offered to permanent officers of the department (13 members).

<sup>7</sup> This level of training is currently only offered to senior officers of the department who may have an active role in conducting fire investigations.

<sup>8</sup> This level of training is currently only offered to Officers or senior firefighters who are actively involved in the development of training programs and lesson plans.

Council further asked Administration to look at comparisons with neighbouring departments. Of the neighbouring volunteer fire stations, the City of Ottawa is the only accredited fire department, and trains its volunteers weekly as part of meeting their ongoing accreditation process. Special training is in addition to regular weekly training, and includes things such as pumper operations courses, or officer training.

The chart below looks at comparisons between Clarence-Rockland and neighbouring departments from a big-picture perspective (rough averages for special training hours, etc.).

Department	Training Frequency	Training Duration	Minimum Attendance	Annual Hours @ 100% (per FF)	Min. Annual Hours (per FF)	Annual Special Training Hours (per FF)
Clarence-Rockland	Bi-weekly	2 hours	60%	52 hours	31 hours	25 hours
Ottawa	Weekly	2 hours	70%	104 hours	73 hours	30 hours
Russell	Bi-weekly	3 hours	70%	72 hours	50 hours	12 hours
Embrun	Bi-weekly	3 hours	70%	72 hours	50 hours	30 hours
Alfred-Plantagenet	Bi-weekly	2.5 hours	Can miss 3 nights	60 hours	52.5 hours	25 hours

## 5) **DISCUSSION :**

The training programs used by the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department are mandated under Occupational Health & Safety, which states that “an employer shall provide information, instruction and supervision to a worker to protect the health or safety of the worker.” The OH&S Act further goes on to require employers, “when appointing a supervisor, (to) appoint a competent person.”

Competence is defined as having knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the task. Thus, when examining competence in the field of emergency services, it is recommended to look at recognized standards, such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, which have been adopted in the Province of Ontario.

The current training program used by the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department struggles to meet recognized best practices in terms of number of hours of training per year. This was recognized in the 2017 Master Fire Plan, which identified that the current number of hours

spent on training should be roughly doubled, in addition to significant additional specialized training should be added (e.g. Fire Officer II, Blue Card Command, and Ice/Water training).

Initial discussions were held with CLAC in regards to exploring increasing the number of training hours, as recommended within the Master Fire Plan. CLACs response was that while they supported the idea of additional training hours, their membership did not support either extending the training hours on regular training nights, nor adding additional training nights (e.g. changing to weekly training).

There are very few 'optional' training programs offered by the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department, save and except for the Emergency Medical Responder program through the Canadian Red Cross. This program was elected to be run for the career staff of the department, as the department already had a qualified instructor, and the hours spent undergoing this training could be done during regular working hours. In an effort to fill the class, some part-time firefighters were given the opportunity to take this training as well. The results have been noticed among local paramedics, who have been able to rely on the advanced skills possessed at this level to help provide advanced patient care to critical ill patients.

Worthy of note is that since the fire department increased its medical training programs in conjunction with utilizing squads (pickup trucks or SUVs) to respond to medical calls, the department has realized a significant increase in the percentage of calls where the fire department is arriving ahead of paramedics. These changes have also resulted in a significant increase in the number of patients whom rescuers have successfully resuscitated on-scene over the past couple of years.

In an effort to ensure competency on the firefighting side, the department has undertaken to offer specialized certification training courses through the new Regional Training Centre. This has allowed for members to continue improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities through recognized Ontario Fire College courses while still being able to stay at home with their families.

In summary, the Clarence-Rockland Fire Department continues to train its members to ensure competence at all levels of the organisation. This requires the commitment of municipal funds, both for course tuition fees, as well as wages to pay firefighters to attend training courses. It is the opinion of the Fire Chief that continue investment into the department's training budget should be made, to ensure adequacy in training the members of the department in order to meet the needs of the community.

*"You cannot train too much for a job that can kill you."*  
- unknown

6) **CONSULTATION:**

None.

7) **RECOMMENDATIONS OR COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE/ OTHER DEPARTMENTS :**

None.

8) **FINANCIAL IMPACT (expenses/material/etc.) :**

None.

9) **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS :**

None.

10) **RISK MANAGEMENT:**

None.

11) **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

12) **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

None.