



STAFF REPORT

To: Board of Trustees
SUBMITTED BY: Fire Chief Arjuna George
DATE: November 20, 2017

Staff Report on the Fire Rescue Canada Conference 2017

I had the opportunity to attend the Annual Fire Rescue Canada Conference held in Vancouver BC, September 17-20, hosted by the Canadian Fire Chiefs Association (CAFC).

This annual four-day event attracts leading authorities and vendors from all sectors of the Fire & Emergency Services community. Fire-Rescue Canada focuses on education through numerous guest speakers, seminars and a three-day Vendors Gallery and attracts delegates from across Canada and the United States.

The conference provided me with valuable tools to enhance my job skills and professional development. Every year the content provides strong and tangible takeaways focusing on areas such as:

- Operations & Labour Relations
- Risk Management
- Leadership
- Volunteer department topics
- Safety, Health & Wellness
- Emerging Topics

I had the opportunity to attend several presentations over the four-day conference, including presentations from the following:

- **Leadership**, by Calgary's Fire Chief Steve Dongworth
- **Managing Mental Health**, by Silken Laumann
- **Succession Planning**, by Swift Water Current Fire Chief Denis Pilon
- **Career Development, Human Resources and Leadership Building**, by Chief Steve Prziborowski
- **Post Traumatic Stress Injuries**, by Bernie Van Tighem
- **Firefighter Health and Wellness**, by Oak Bay Fire Chief Dave Cockle
- **Management and Organizational Behaviour**, by Les Karpluck

The conference was concluded with a powerful presentation from Dave Sanderson, one of the last passengers off the “Miracle on the Hudson” plane crash in New York City.

The most valuable session I attended was presented by Benjamin Martin from Henrico Country Fire on Organization behaviour in the Fire Station. His energetic presentation provided valuable tips and takeaways for improving morale, building relationships, and improving our organizational health culture.

These sessions provided me with an occasion for growth and professional development in a variety of areas. The opportunity of meeting and interacting with Chief Officers from across Canada is critical to learning new management practices and learning from leaders in our field of work.

I appreciate and thank the Board of Trustees for the opportunity to be able to attend the annual Fire Rescue Canada conferences where the skills that I acquire will help improve Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue.

Next year’s Fire Rescue Canada is held in our nation’s capital, Ottawa, Ontario. I have recently been asked by the CAFC to present at the 2018 conference in Ottawa.

Arjuna George

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arjuna George', with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

Fire Chief
Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue