



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee

Date: August 30, 2006

From: Jim Hancock, Fire Chief

File:

Re: **RICHMOND FIRE-RESCUE REVIEW - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Staff Recommendation

1. That Council receive the Richmond Fire-Rescue Review Implementation Plan and consider the funding requests required to implement the plan as part of the 2007 budget process.
2. That staff report to the Community Safety Committee on Richmond Fire-Rescue's progress on their Review Implementation Plan quarterly to the end of 2007.

Jim Hancock
Fire Chief
(2700)

Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY						
ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
Budgets	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Human Resources	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Facility Management.....	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	<input type="checkbox"/>		
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Staff Report

Origin

On June 26, 2006 Council received and considered Sue Paish’s Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) Review recommendations (*Appendix 1*). Council instructed staff to provide a plan, with budget implications, for implementation of any recommendations that may result from the external review.

The Implementation Plan was developed through the collective input of staff from RFR and Human Resources. Staff met with Ms. Paish before developing the implementation plan to ensure a clearer understanding of her recommendations. This report was sent to Ms. Paish to ensure that the plan addressed all of her review recommendations.

RFR’s Implementation Plan identifies noteworthy pre-review activities, completed recommendations, and future actions. Each future action identifies any cost implications, the task leaders and completion date.

Analysis

RFR has already completed a number of review recommendations and is making significant progress on others scheduled for completion by year-end.

There are still a number of other significant pieces of work, outlined in the following table, that need to be started. These will create a strong foundation upon which RFR can continue to move forward.

2007 June	Review RFR’s leadership and administrative support structure.
2007 June	Develop a Recruitment and Hiring strategy and plan for RFR that addresses the complete recruitment, hiring, retention, and workforce management cycles. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Outreach strategy. • Development of strategies for: wellness, attendance management, and return to work accommodation.
2007 June	Develop a long-term vision and training program for all levels of staff in RFR.

Each of the above tasks will generate a separate report to Council with any long-term (2008 or beyond) financial implications identified to Council within the report.

Ms. Paish advised due to the limited personnel within RFR’s current leadership structure RFR’s ability to move forward is hampered. To complete the above tasks, and focus its leaders on strategic and operational management functions, RFR is requesting funding as part of the 2007 additional level budget process to complete the recommendations. The task completion dates are dependent on resources being made available.

The review will be incorporated into a 5-year strategic plan for RFR. Work on the Strategic Plan is already underway, with a draft expected by the end of 2006 and a subsequent presentation to Council in early 2007. RFR's Strategic Plan process will see the identification of all current and future issues, development of action plans, and provide a five-year financial strategy (2008-2012).

Financial Impact

The 2007 funding needed to implement the report recommendations is shown in the chart below.

Items	2007 One Time Costs	On-going Costs	Funding In Place
Training - Fire fighter 3 days of training on inter-personal skills. - 2% Increase in staff replacement costs for 3 days of training. - Battalion Chiefs & Officers inter-personal training costs. - Fire Chief & 2 Deputy Chiefs inter-personal training costs. - Insights training costs for all RFR staff. Training Totals = \$478,300	 <u>\$ 21,300</u> <u>\$ 21,300</u>	 \$307,000	 \$ 60,000 \$ 60,000 \$ 30,000 ----- <u>\$150,000</u>
Other Items - Ombuds Service (6 month trial in Fire). - Legal counsel to review City workplace conduct policies. - Printing costs for policy dissemination. - Value of diversity key message development and delivery. - Consultant to develop Community Outreach program for diversity. - Website Re-design. - Industrial Psychologist to review Hiring Practices. - Best practices review - organizational structures, diversity & recruiting. - Consultant skilled in organizational design & effectiveness. Other Items Totals = \$232,500	 \$ 25,000 \$ 7,500 \$ 20,000 \$ 75,000 \$ 30,000 <u>\$ 25,000</u> <u>\$182,500</u>	 \$132,000 \$ 55,400 \$187,400	 \$ 15,000 \$ 25,000 \$ 10,000 ----- <u>\$ 50,000**</u>
Staffing - Deputy Chief. - Office Manager to address: wellness, attendance management, return to work strategies & community outreach program implementation. - Administrative Assistant. Staffing Totals = \$296,600	 \$109,200* <u>\$109,200</u>	 \$132,000 <u>\$ 55,400</u> \$187,400	
COMBINED TOTALS = \$1,007,400	\$313,000.	\$494,400.	\$200,000

* Represents one-time 2007 additional level funding request in the amount of \$109,200. The subsequent years salary would be secured from an off setting reduction of \$109,200 from RFR's 2008 overtime budget.

** Represents 2006 funding (\$50,000) provided by Council to implement results of the Review.

Conclusion

RFR staff have embraced the Review's recommendations, understand the need to change, and are using the Review as a starting point in moving towards their goal of becoming the best Fire-Rescue Department in Canada.

Ms. Paish noted in her review that it is not often that an organization finds itself needing significant and fundamental change and having most stakeholders understanding that change will happen.

Positive changes in RFR's organizational culture have already started. RFR staff are enthused about pursuing the actions set out in the implementation plan and have prepared this report for Council's consideration.



Sandra Pearson (2750)
Manager, Richmond Fire Rescue



Richmond Fire-Rescue Review Implementation Plan

August 30, 2006

Richmond Fire-Rescue Review Implementation Plan

Introduction

On June 26, 2006 Council received and considered Sue Paish's Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) Review recommendations (*Appendix 1*). Council instructed that staff provide a plan, with budget implications, for implementation of any recommendations which may result from the external review.

The Implementation Plan was developed through the collective input of staff from RFR and Human Resources. Staff met with Ms. Paish before developing the implementation plan to ensure a clearer understanding of her recommendations. This report was sent to Ms. Paish to ensure that the plan addressed all of her review recommendations.

The RFR Implementation Plan identifies noteworthy pre-review activities, completed recommendations, and future actions. Each future action identifies any cost implications, the task leaders and completion date. This plan will eventually be incorporated into a 5-year strategic plan for RFR.

Culture

A positive cultural shift within Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) has begun. The foundation for the changed behaviours and actions of staff can be attributed in part to training and numerous presentations that preceded the Review and an increased awareness of the issues.

Ms. Paish's Review noted that there are real strengths and positive elements in RFR upon which to build. Those include the fact that many members of RFR are sincerely supportive of improving the demographic diversity in RFR. RFR realizes that the status quo in terms of operations, structure, and culture is unsustainable and that change is coming.

The key to sustaining and growing this positive cultural shift is staff training, with emphasis on today's RFR leadership. Over the next five years the leadership in RFR will significantly change due to retirements. For long-term sustainability the training plan must also focus on RFR's leaders of tomorrow and reach deep into its ranks.

RFR's inter-personal training needs to be developed under the City's broader corporate training program to ensure consistency with the City's organizational cultural values, goals, and leadership competencies. However, training should allow for members of RFR to be exposed to other diverse organizations and their cultures.

Pre-Review Activities

RFR recognized the need to change its organizational culture and had started to build a foundation through various strategies including training. A variety of sessions were planned and training sessions completed in early 2006, they included:

- *Arête* – An external trainer presented a one-day session to all RFR staff. It provided the training and tools to deal with inappropriate workplace conduct.
- *Respectful Workplace* – The Fire Chief, IAFF 1286 President, and Manager of Human Resources delivered a 2-hour respectful workplace presentation to the majority of RFR staff. The training and discussions included: human rights legislation, creating a supportive work environment, inter-personal conduct and treating each other with dignity and respect.
- *Code of Conduct* – The Fire Chief and two Deputy Chiefs held a 1-hour session with most RFR staff to review the Code of Conduct policy and discuss staff expectations.

The Fire Chief will continue with his evening fire hall meetings reaching all seven halls and each of their four shifts. These smaller meetings with the Chief are designed to emphasize the need and value of cultural change within RFR and reinforce the positive changes already emerging.

Completed Review Tasks

The review contained two priority tasks to be completed within 60 days relating to the development of training plans.

Annual training plans for the Fire Chief and two Deputy Chiefs are complete with training commencing in 2006 and continuing into 2007. Their plans contain desired outcomes, are focussed on inter-personal leadership and management skills. The various learning institutes will expose them to a variety of learning styles, individuals from non-fire cultures, and different organizations.

The Fire Chief and a Deputy attended the 2006 Canadian Fire Chiefs conference in Halifax in August and attended learning sessions on diversity recruiting and retention, harassment, and coaching.

The training plan for the Battalion Chiefs and 90 senior officers are complete and provide less intense inter-personal leadership and management skill training than for the Chief and Deputy Chiefs. The six days of training focus on: effective communication, leadership, coaching, change management, conflict resolution, and the value of diversity.

These training plans will be finalized with the City's Manager of Learning and Development.

The training plan for the fire fighters, which will include 3 days of inter-personal skills training will be completed by June 2007 by RFR and the City's Manager of Learning and Development. The training will include ½ day sessions on the following topics: effective communication, leadership, coaching, change management, conflict resolution, and the value of diversity.

Future Actions

Develop a long-term learning vision and training program for all levels of staff in RFR.
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The program will be developed by a team with representatives from RFR and Human Resources and be completed by June 30, 2007. The long-term vision and training program for RFR will be the subject of a report to Council.

In developing the plan, the following ideas would be considered:

- ❑ Developing subsequent annual learning plans for RFR's senior and expanded management team that follow the City's broader management training objectives, framework, and leadership competencies.
- ❑ Developing a succession plan for training. It includes the development of leadership competency skills deep within RFR's ranks for the purposes of succession planning including participation in Richmond's Leadership Development program.

Future Actions - cont'd

- Supplementing City leadership learning programs with attendance at outside institutions to acquire a broader perspective on issues pertinent to cultural change, effective management, and providing for a variety of learning styles. This would include best practices investigations into a variety of other training and learning programs such as: The Banff School of Management; Royal Roads University; Queens University; UBC Sauder School of Business; SFU Segal School; and Human Resources Management Association (HRMA).
- Continuing Arête respectful workplace training and introducing other learning tools to all RFR staff such as: learning roundtables; short HR training sessions in the fire halls; job shadowing; one-day topical seminars conducted at BCIT, HRMA, including exposure to public administration.
- Altering the training schedules to allow for recurring training in the evening and other training during the day.
- Introducing a process of written and verbal presentations to reinforce the learned skills.
- Developing an evaluation mechanism to see if the training is working and beneficial to staff.

2007 Cost Implications

There are key issues that are being requested as part of the 2007 budget process. These items will allow RFR to pursue training early in 2007 and ensure that critical fire-rescue services are delivered to the community during staff training absences. Items are:

- ❖ Including \$60,000 for 3 days of inter-personal skills training for fire fighters. Half day training sessions will focus on: effective communication; leadership; coaching; change management; conflict resolution; and the value of diversity.
- ❖ Including the one-time Insights learning tool costs of \$21,300 in the training budget for all RFR staff. Insights helps develop the level of personal effectiveness by increased self-understanding and understanding of others, by enhancing their ability to adapt, and by improving their ability to connect with others in both their work and personal life.
- ❖ Including \$60,000 in training costs for the Battalion Chiefs and senior officers in the training budget.
- ❖ Including \$30,000 in training and travel costs for the Chief and two Deputy Chiefs in the training budget.
- ❖ Increasing RFR's staff fringe rates by 2% (\$307,000) to a total of 30% to cover backfilling of staff during training in 2007 and beyond. This allows for 3 days of uninterrupted inter-personal skill training per person per year.

RFR Structure

RFR has and continues to hold weekly senior management meetings, which include the Fire Chief, two Deputy Chiefs, the two non-uniformed managers and will be expanded to include RFR's HR Manager. The meetings will continue to provide oversight of all strategic, policy and operational issues in RFR.

The extended management team concept, which includes the Battalion Chiefs and heads of the Training, Education, Fire Prevention/Inspection, and Mechanical units, has been in place for some time. The team will be expanded to include RFR's HR Manager and the Manager of Learning and Development as resources. The monthly meetings are used to implement policies and other directives as well as act as a direct communication platform between the shifts and senior management.

RFR does not currently have the leadership resources or the 24/7/365 management presence required to introduce and sustain long-term changes in a department of 213 employees. Senior RFR managers are immersed in day-to-day operations keeping them from performing their strategic and operational management functions.

Future Actions

Identify opportunities to recognize the role of the 2 non-uniformed senior RFR managers and increase their exposure to, and role perception of, the firefighters.

Includes strategies such as: increased attendance and involvement at senior officer meetings; affirmation of their roles by the Fire Chief in various communications. The Fire Chief and the two non-uniformed senior RFR managers would do this by December 31, 2006.

Review RFR's leadership and administrative support structure.

The review of RFR's organizational structure will be completed by a team of staff from Human Resources, RFR, and with the assistance of a consultant. The review will be completed by June 30, 2007 and will be the subject of a report to Council. The next action step would be pursued based on the findings from the structural review.

Pursue the concept of removing the Battalion Chiefs from the IAFF bargaining unit into management.

A plan would be developed for the removal of the Battalion Chiefs and other section heads where management presence is required. The plan would include: a review of duties; exclusion precedents; and development of an exemption strategy. Managers from Human Resources and RFR would do this subsequent to the overall organizational review.

The Review will include the following:

- Identify strategic and operational requirements for RFR executive and senior management personnel.

Future Actions Cont'd

- Identify current structural and work assignment barriers for resolution via a revised organizational structure.
- Identify the clerical and administrative support services needed for RFR's leaders to perform effectively.

2007 Cost Implications

RFR's managers are enthused and energized and ready to move forward with the actions outlined in this report. They recognize that if change is to succeed they will need to focus on key strategic leadership roles and free themselves from the overburdening daily operational tasks. Additional regular full-time positions are requested as part of RFR's 2007 budget as follows:

- ❖ *Deputy Chief (\$132,000)*. The work level of the two existing Deputy Chiefs is unrealistic. Their existing two portfolios need realignment and to be split into three Deputy Chief level functions if they are expected to focus on leadership roles. A new Deputy Chief position allows for leadership transition to occur at the senior level as two Deputy Chiefs and Fire Chief are able to all retire within the next 3 years.
- ❖ *Office Manager (\$109,200)*. Lessens the number of human resource-related tasks from the Deputy Chiefs and allows for the effective management of RFR staff absences. There is a need to manage issues such as staff absences for illness or injury that are covered through overtime at the rate of time and a half. After the first year of funding, this position can pay for itself through overtime savings. Office Manager duties would also include:
 - Developing personnel management strategies for RFR that includes the implementation and on-going management of those strategies in concert with RFR's Manager and the City's Manager of Occupational Health & Safety. Includes day-to-day running of programs such as: attendance management, wellness, and return to work (ie. WCB).
 - Co-ordinating the performance review process.
 - Implementing RFR's Community Outreach program.
- ❖ *Administrative Assistant (\$55,400)*. To provide administrative support services to the three Deputy Chiefs.

In addition to the above positions, 2007 funding is requested for:

- ❖ Best practices investigations of other Fire-Rescue Department organization structures, diversity and recruiting in 2007 (\$30,000).
- ❖ The services of an outside consultant skilled in organizational design and effectiveness in 2007 (\$25,000).

The following task will be funded from the \$50,000 Council provided to Fire in 2006 to implement the results of the Review.

- ❖ Consultant (\$25,000) to revise and further develop the content on RFR's website including the promotion of RFR's new information on recruitment, hiring, community outreach, and improved public image.

RFR and The City

There is a need to reinforce ways and means for RFR to be seen and accepted as an integral part of the various City's departments and divisions.

RFR needs a broad City policy framework under which to manage and operate its department. This includes the creation of a positive and receptive work environment that is physically and intellectually accepting – one that recognizes the value of diversity.

Completed Review Tasks

- RFR completed a review of the City's significant inter-department committees and task forces and identified those where RFR could add value. A review of RFR's membership took place to determine if participation could be pushed further into RFR's ranks. Where appropriate, a discussion with the Committee Chair and RFR representatives took place to identify ways of maximizing attendance and RFR's contribution in shift work situations. The review netted the following findings:
 - More aggressive integration of RFR members into Richmond's committee structure was noticeable during the strategic teams.
 - RFR's membership in committees or teams continues to be at the senior leadership or Fire Prevention Officer level.
 - RFR already provides indirect and valuable input into major City projects such as the Olympics and Canada Line by sitting on operational teams chaired by outside agencies such as VANOC and InTransitBC.
 - RFR already participates in a variety of City teams and task forces such as: Safety Operations Steering Team which includes events review, Richmond Safe Communities Alliance, Community Plan development teams, Richmond Emergency Planning Committee, City/RCMP Joint Leadership Team, and the HR/RFR Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

Future Actions

Develop a Respectful Workplace Committee.

The need to pursue the development of a Respectful Workplace Committee would be considered by Human Resources once supplementary and potentially overlapping Review initiatives have been realized. The supplementary initiatives include:

- Hiring, Recruitment, and Community Outreach Strategy Development
- Value of Diversity messaging including Training Strategy Development
- Corporate Human Resource Policy Review
- Ombuds Service trial

Future Actions - cont'd

Identify and implement opportunities for Human Resources to increase its physical presence in a positive way within RFR.

Includes:

- Reviewing physical opportunities in order to increase access to general and/or specific HR advice/support to all employees and management.
- Identification and quick start to outreach opportunities so HR and RFR can learn more about each other's business such as: fire hall visits, attendance at officers or shift meetings to explain who the players are, what they do, and what issues are facing them.

A team from Human Resources and RFR will complete this task by Spring 2007.

Cost Implications – None.

YVR Merger

The Review indicated that there was a need to acknowledge the 1995 YVR merger issues, be sensitive to possible lingering issues, and learn from the experience.

Future Actions

Communicate with current RFR personnel about the 1995 YVR merger.

The communication would:

- Acknowledge the problems that arose with the merger.
- Identify the valuable skills that these individuals brought to RFR.
- Include a timeframe where staff can raise any unresolved issues with the Fire Chief.
- State the desire to learn from the experience and move forward.

The IAFF 1286 were invited to co-sign the communiqué however declined.

The Fire Chief will complete this task by September 30, 2006.

Cost Implications – None.

Procedures

The Review indicated that there are no concerns about the emergency response procedures with those interviewed speaking very positively about the quality of the emergency response at all times.

The Review noted there was a need to address non-emergency operations and in particular it identified a need for the City and RFR to consider the consistency and impact of their decisions not just on an individual basis but on the department as a whole.

Pre-Review Activities

In December 2005, RFR secured a consultant to consolidate, review, and supplement its existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) manual. The manual review process includes:

- A review of existing City human resource policies to ensure consistency and a link to City practices and policies on discipline plus those applying to complaints or grievances.
- A review of the progressive steps to address staff complaints while taking into consideration those in place for labour relations or other issues covered by policy or agreements.

This project is well underway and will be completed by project leaders Sandra Pearson and Geoff Lake by November 30, 2006.

Future Actions

Apply consistent and progressive discipline for individuals engaging in inappropriate conduct.
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- The City's HR Manager for RFR will continue to be used as a professional, non-biased opinion on proposed disciplinary actions, thereby ensuring consistency with current broad City disciplinary practices.
- RFR's historical disciplinary records and decisions will continue to be used as a point of reference for future actions.

Future Actions Cont'd

Define the role and test the value of an Ombuds service for the City in RFR.
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The Ombuds service engages employees in direct conversation to monitor the factors affecting job satisfaction and performance, plus collect critical feedback on operational deficiencies. Ombuds synthesizes the information, delves beneath the surface, explores assumptions and connects relevant data, then returns the information in a highly useable format along with constructive, meaningful analysis to assist RFR to interpret results so it can act on the information quickly and with confidence. Employee calls are confidential and their anonymity guaranteed. This doesn't relieve an employee of their responsibility to report concerns through established protocols like the Health & Safety Committee and the day-to-day use of the Chain of Command.

The Fire Chief and Human Resources Department would be responsible for defining the Ombuds role, introducing and running the trial in RFR and assessing the trail in April 2007.

2006/2007 Cost Implications

- ❖ The Ombuds trial will cost \$15,000 and is funded from the \$50,000 Council provided to RFR in 2006 to implement the results of the Review.

Policy Framework

There is a need for the City to provide and train its personnel within the various departments, including RFR, with current and understandable workplace conduct-related policies.

Pre-Review Activities

- In April 2006, RFR implemented the Council adopted Code of Conduct for RFR.
- Over the years RFR has produced a number of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) that provide guidance to RFR staff on workplace conduct. The SOP's (refer to sample list below) will be reviewed for consistency with, and reference to, the City's human resources policies.
 - Protection of Personal Information
 - Use of Information Technology Resources:
 - Adult Magazines & Calendars
 - Choice of TV Programs & Videos
 - Harassment & Discrimination Free Workplace
 - Minimum Dress Code
 - Privacy in Shower & Washroom Facilities
 - Reporting Violent Acts

Future Actions

Initiate a review of the City's workplace conduct policies.

The review of the City's workplace conduct policies would include:

- Development of a comprehensive set of workplace conduct policies that would apply to all City staff.
- Comparisons of RFR's workplace conduct SOP's against City policies to identify any policy gaps.
- Utilization of the services of Sue Paish or the City of Richmond's legal Counsel to provide input on the drafted policies.
- Discussion of the draft policies with the various City Employee Unions.

Human Resources will complete draft policies by December 31, 2006.

Develop a procedure for taking adopted corporate workplace conduct policies to staff.

The rollout could include:

- For existing staff – the development and presentation of content at information sessions.
- For new employees consider enclosing the key policies into the:
 - Offer letter package and having the employee read and sign off on them prior to or on their first day of work and then having the signed off policy filed in their employee file.
 - New employee orientation packages.

Human Resources will complete this task by mid-2007.

2007 Cost Implications

There are one-time costs associated with completing the policy framework tasks as follows:

- ❖ Includes \$25,000 for legal counsel to review new and re-drafted City workplace conduct policies.
- ❖ Includes \$7,500 printing costs to disseminate the policies to City staff.

Recruitment & Hiring

The diversity mix in RFR needs to change. For change to happen:

- All members must understand the value of diversity.
- Change needs to occur in a planned manner and will impact all cycles of employment (outreach, recruitment, hiring, retention, and workforce management).
- Adopted practices need to be credible, defensible, and accepted by RFR staff. Changes must not be seen as change for the sake of political correctness or as hiring second-class recruits.
- RFR's physical and cultural environments must be set to successfully achieve a change in workforce diversity.
- Realistic recruitment goals and timeframes must be set.
- RFR will need to overcome the public's negative impression of its workplace culture.

Pre-Review Activities

- RFR will continue with the recruitment and hiring steps used in the 2005's firefighter selection process that include: an information night, use of Ergometrics testing, detailed method of scoring, and overall candidate evaluation.
- In 2001, RFR and Human Resources developed a RFR career path document for staff. It identified a variety of positions with the education expectations and hiring selection criteria that is based on seniority or knowledge, skills, and ability. This document will be reviewed to ensure that it effectively covers the current human resource skill development expectations for all of RFR's leadership positions.
- RFR and IAFF 1286 recruited and sponsored three Richmond female youths as part of a community outreach initiative. The youths attended SFU's Safety Camp in August 2006 and have reported their experiences to the Fire Chief and IAFF 1286.

Completed Review Tasks

- RFR will be using the accredited Candidate Physical Ability Test CPAT as part of future recruiting. Prior to its use, a team of RFR staff will visit Abbotsford to observe and/or participate in the testing. The department's use of this testing will be communicated to RFR staff after the Abbotsford visit. An invitation to local media to attend and participate will also be considered.
- The next firefighter recruitment will be delayed to the Spring 2007 to provide time for:
 - RFR staff to observe CPAT in Abbotsford.
 - A review of the overall candidate weighting on the mechanical, psychological, and physical aptitudes.
 - An independent review by an Industrial Psychologist to confirm the fire fighter testing tools as credible and defensible.
 - Communication of recruitment changes and rationale to RFR staff.
 - A hiring and recruitment best practices discussion with the Halifax Fire Department.

The next firefighter recruitment will involve a re-evaluation of the 2005 candidate competition files.

Future Actions

Review the overall candidate weighting on the mechanical, psychological, and physical aptitudes.

This task will be done by Deputy Chief Lake and Dianne Malone by February 2007. This would include the use of an Industrial Psychologist consultant to review the adopted testing processes to ensure they are credible, defensible, and meet current HR Tribunal Legislation.

Create a task force to develop a strategy and plan for RFR that addresses the complete recruitment, hiring, retention, and workforce management cycles.

Includes:

For Outreach & Recruitment -

- Best practices visits to understand the value of diversity and how other organizations outside of RFR who have physical requirements have succeeded such as the police and military fields. This included discussion in Halifax in August 2006.
- The setting of realistic goals for increasing the number of women and visible minorities in RFR. This may require the prior approval of the Human Rights Tribunal.
- Retaining services to develop and deliver a series of key messages to RFR staff on the value of diversity and benefits of making changes to the hiring, recruitment, and workforce management processes. May include delivery by respected fire services speakers from the cities of: Phoenix (former Fire Chief Alan Brunacini), Seattle, or Calgary.
- Develop a Community Outreach strategy and program for RFR that includes:
 - The development of an advertising and promotional program to promote fire fighting as a career; Richmond as a community with a great deal to offer; and its Fire-Rescue Department as an exciting and welcoming workplace. This includes an update of RFR's current website.
 - Focussing on providing firefighter career opportunity information to non-traditional areas ie: sports organizations; schools and colleges; youth and young adult organizations; and groups that service female and visible minorities.

Recruitment -

- Review of the role of fire schools including the current pre-qualification application requirement.
- Discuss RFR's future with the Justice Institute of BC:
 - Candidate diversity expansion needs.
 - Recruitment needs, given an anticipated shortage.
 - Alternate training options to meet the needs such as:
 - Advance recruitment and conditional offers of employment by the City that would be subject to the recruit obtaining a JI certificate within a specified time period. This would likely require the City to pay the recruit minimum wage for hours attended school.

Future Actions - cont'd***Workforce Management -***

- Change the orientation of probationary firefighters to include a:
 - Longer basic training period.
 - Component on the City's human resources policies and review of RFR's workplace conduct SOP's.
 - Discussion on the importance of interpersonal skill and continued development through training.

A team of staff from RFR and HR would do this by June 30, 2007.

2007 Cost Implications

- ❖ One-time funding request for \$20,000 to develop the value of diversity key messages and deliver them to RFR staff.
- ❖ One-time consultant funding request for \$75,000 to develop the Community Outreach program for diversity recruitment. The on-going daily implementation of the Outreach program would be done by the new Office Manager position (requested under the RFR Structure section).
- ❖ The \$10,000 for an Industrial Psychologist to review the recruitment testing tools and validate their use against current HR Tribunal legislation would be funded from the \$50,000 Council provided to RFR in 2006 to implement the results of the Review.

Workplace Safety

Ms. Paish's Review noted "There is considerable pride across RFR in the quality and sophistication of equipment available for emergency purposes. Members of RFR are grateful that investment has been made continuously to ensure that RFR has the most effective and efficient equipment available. This is an understandable source of pride and positive morale across the department."

The creation of a suitable physical environment is a key component in creating a welcoming environment where mixed gender fire crews can work.

Pre-Review Activities

RFR introduced a variety of procedural and physical changes intended to create an environment where mixed gender fire crews can work. The changes included:

- A review of all fire halls to ensure that appropriate privacy was provided in washroom and shower facilities. Changes included the enhancement to signs and door locks.
- A review of the two new fire hall designs to ensure they contain segregated facilities.
- Development of SOP's:
 - Minimum dress code requirements.
 - Privacy in shower and washroom facilities
- Changed existing uniform undergarments to non-gender boxer shorts.

These SOP's are being reviewed as part of the SOP project to ensure they clearly communicate staff expectations.

Completed Review Tasks

The fire halls have been reviewed and halls have been identified where changes can be reasonably be made to accommodate mixed gender crews. A plan to introduce these changes in the most cost effective way was developed and included using current programs such as seismic upgrades and hall replacements. The review revealed that Fire Hall 1 is the only one that cannot, in its current state, reasonably accommodate mixed gender crews. Given the extended replacement date for this hall, a 2007 minor capital request to alter the building will be made.

2007 Cost Implications – Inclusion of \$60,000-\$90,000 in the 2007 Facilities Management minor capital budget request for locker, rehabilitation, and recovery rooms.

Initiatives Respecting Workplace Behaviour

In July 2004, staff from RFR, Human Resources, and members of the IAFF 1286 Union Executive created a *Building a Respectful Workplace Action Plan*. The plan identified a variety of actions planned over a three-year period. Actions related to initiatives around:

- Interpersonal, management, and leadership succession training.
- Recruitment, hiring, and promotion.
- Performance management evaluation.
- Mixed gender crew facilities.

The plan has been updated to reflect the status of the actions and included a determining of items requiring further action under the umbrella of RFR's Strategic Plan.

Cost Implications – None.

Re-Integration of Women Fire Fighters

The review recommendations regarding the re-integration of the women fire fighters were made after all three women had returned to work under the terms of their specific agreements with the City. All of their issues were addressed.

Since the three women's return to work, two are working under the terms of their re-integration agreement while the third is off sick. Further consultation with Ms. Paish has taken place.

The two non-suppression women firefighters are returning to their unit's main work location upon conclusion of office renovations scheduled for completion by December 31, 2006.

Future Actions

Communicate the re-integration plan and timing for the women fire fighters to RFR personnel.
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The RFR staff communiqué will:

- Honour any information restrictions contained in the return-to-work agreements or grievance resolutions.
- Advise on the re-integration plan and timing for the women fire fighters.
- Indicate that in the future, RFR will process any complaints and re-integrate employees in the same manner that is available to all other RFR members, regardless of their gender.

Fire Chief Jim Hancock will complete this task by September 30, 2006.

Cost Implications – None.

Culture

1. *“Culture change will be the product of many different strategies and will happen slowly. A key short term requirement for any meaningful long term change is comprehensive and in-depth training for the Fire Chief and the two Deputy Chiefs in respect of:*

- *Effective Communication;*
- *Leadership;*
- *Coaching;*
- *Change Management;*
- *Conflict Resolution; and*
- *The value of Diversity.*

This training will likely need to take place over several days and does not need to be customized to RFR or focused on firefighting. The training should be provided by a credible, external provider. Developing a training plan for the Deputies and the Chief should be a priority in the next 60 days.”

2. *“A comprehensive training program needs to be developed for Battalion Chiefs and Officers on the topics noted above. The training need not be as intense or lengthy as that for senior management but needs to be in depth, provided likely through external providers and be part of a year round comprehensive training program. Development of a training plan and schedule should be a priority in the next 60 days.”*

3. *“The RFR needs to develop comprehensive training objectives and plans for all RFR members focussed on the topics noted above. The training plan will serve two important goals:*

- (a) *it will provide ongoing substantive training on topics that are non-technical but critical to the future success of RFR; and*
- (b) *it will start to instil throughout RFRF that understanding becoming proficient in the non-technical topics is as important as technical proficiency for future individual and departmental success.”*

RFR Structure

4. *“The non-uniformed senior managers responsible for Finance and Administration should be recognized as part of and included in the senior management of RFR. A Senior Management or Executive Committee of RFR chaired by the Chief and comprised of the Chief, two Deputies, Manager of Finance and Manager of Administration should be established and be responsible for overall leadership and management at an executive level in RFR. The committee should meet regularly, likely weekly or bi-weekly and should have oversight of all strategic, policy and operational issues in RFR.”*
5. *“Negotiations should be initiated by the City focussed on recognizing the Battalion Chiefs as management exclusions from the IAFF bargaining unit.”*
6. *“When the Battalion Chiefs are exempted from the bargaining unit they, along with the RFR Senior Management Team should combine to form the RFR Extended Management Team responsible for ensuring the implementation of policies and other directives. The Extended Management Team will also provide the platform for direct communications between the shifts and senior management.”*

RFR and The City

7. *“Under the leadership of the Chief Administrative Officer or another senior member of City staff there should be a concerted effort made to appoint members of RFR to significant inter-departmental committees and task forces currently operating in the City.”*
8. *“Under the leadership of a Senior Professional in the Human Resources area a multi-department committee should be established charged with the responsibility of improving talent retention and attraction in the City through building an inspired, diverse and inclusive work environment. The committee should report to a senior level, either the “TAG”. Membership on this Committee should be diverse in respect positions held, departments of employment, age, cultural backgrounds, gender etc., but membership should not be based on tokenism.”*
9. *“Consideration should be given to seconding or temporarily assigning a member of the Human Resources department to RFR. This need not be a full time assignment and should not be permanent. This would allow a member of the Human Resource group to better and more fully understand the operations and culture in RFR and to assist RFR management and others address issues before they become problems. The presence of a member of Human Resources in RFR would also provide ready and consistent professional Human Resource expertise to RFR. To avoid the potential of this person becoming distanced from the HR department, the reporting relationships should remain through the HR department.”*

YVR Merger

10. *“Current RFR management should acknowledge to RFR members that problems arose from the merger, some of which remain unresolved. Ideally, the IAFF would participate in such an acknowledgement.”*
11. *“No policy or specific program needs to be developed to address lingering issues but individual members of RFR management must be alert to concerns of members and address these individually.”*
12. *“RFR and City leadership need to learn from the YVR – RFR merger, in particular that the inclusion of women or those with skills different from traditional firefighting skills requires careful appreciation and consideration of the interests, expectations and perspectives of all members of RFR and not only the interests of a specific group.”*

Procedures

13. *“There is a strong consensus that issues that have arisen respecting workplace conduct have emanated from a small group. The actions and attitudes of a few have undermined the attempt to build a more diverse fire department in the past and will continue to do so into the future if these individuals are not appropriately managed. There is an equally strong view that discipline for inappropriate conduct has not been consistently applied. It will be very important to ensure that all individuals found engaging in inappropriate conduct be dealt with in a consistent manner and that individuals engaging in inappropriate conduct more than once receive harsh discipline. This will require cooperation between the Union and RFR management and will also require consistent and firm management of any complaints or grievances.”*
14. *“Battalion Chiefs and Officers need to be aware of workplace conduct issues and address them before these issues become complaints or grievances. There is a sense that workplace conduct issues are moved quickly to a complaint process in part because Officers and Battalion Chiefs are uncomfortable addressing them and in part because these are not seen as important matters in RFR. The training recommended for these supervisory levels should assist in addressing this as will the assignment of an HR professional physically in RFR. However, the Battalion Chiefs and Officers need to be aware of and be comfortable and prepared to address these issues immediately when they arise.”*
15. *“For some time women firefighters have been meeting regularly with senior officials in the City to discuss their concerns. This may have been set up with the best of intentions but it is widely perceived as establishing a superior and unique process for the women that is not available to others and that is potentially creating “resolutions” that are not helpful to the overall integration of the women back into suppression crews in RFR. The meetings with the women either need to end soon with a resolution that brings the women back into the fire halls or the purpose of these meetings needs to be explained to RFR.”*
16. *“Special accommodations have been made for two of the women firefighters that sees them stationed in facilities outside of the fire halls for extended periods. While there may be good reason for these decisions, these reasons are not known and the sequestering of the women in locations physically separate from RFR is not helpful to their re-integration in the future. The women should be returned to physical locations in RFR even if they are not on suppression crews. The longer they are physically distant from the department, the more difficult their re-integration will become.”*

17. *“There is one woman who has not yet returned to work. A perception is taking hold that special accommodations are being made for this woman that are unlike those that would be provided to any other firefighter and which would potentially adversely affect the operations of the RFR. It is important that a decision be made soon as to whether and under what circumstances this woman will return to active duty and that any accommodations that are made not materially disrupt current operations. It will also be very important for this woman and for members of the crew to which she is assigned to have an open and candid discussion regarding behaviour and workplace conduct as soon as she returns to active duty.”*

Policy Framework

18. *“In order to continue to strengthen the relationships and understanding between RFR and other departments in the City, there needs to be a multi-department review of the policy framework for all employees of the City, including members of the RFR in respect of workplace conduct and related policy topics. This is likely best done through a multi-department task force or committee led by a senior member of the Human Resources group charged with the responsibility of identifying policy topics relevant to human resource and workplace conduct matters, reviewing all existing general City policies and those that may exist in other departments of the City and developing a unified policy framework that will govern all City employees.”*
19. *“The existing Harassment-Free Workplace Policy (Policy 6004), needs to be completely re-written to ensure that it reflects current legal and other standards, is more clear and understandable and is in harmony with other City policies, including the Code of Conduct, which also needs to be reviewed in the context of the overall policy review.”*
20. *“The development of a consistent policy framework for all City employees will provide the platform for clear expectations respecting behaviour in the workplace and respecting the consequences for breaches of those expectations. However, policy development alone will not change conduct or culture. The policies need to be explained in a careful and practical manner to all employees of the City through information sessions. These information sessions would be best established such that employees from different departments, including RFR are combined. The sessions would need to be run several times. In order to ensure that there is the maximum distribution of information from the sessions throughout the City, including RFR, attendance at one session should be mandatory for every City employee. Separate sessions may need to be held for management and non-management employees.”*

Recruitment

21. *“There will need to be a “business case” established and communicated to all members of RFR respecting the benefits of a more demographically diverse department. This may be part of the overall training plan referenced above. It is a topic that deserves specific and careful attention to ensure that any changes to the recruitment approach is not seen as diminishing standards for the sake of “political correctness”.”*
22. *There needs to be a comprehensive community outreach program developed, focused on providing information to prospective candidates outside the “firefighters’ network”. Groups included in this outreach may include: high schools throughout the Lower Mainland; BCIT, various colleges; YWCA and YMCA; various sports organizations; Girl Guides and Boy Scouts; and other community based organizations catering to youth and young adults.”*

23. *“In order for the candidate pool to provide a reasonable number of potentially qualified female candidates and candidates from visible minorities, there may need to be specific attention paid to groups that service these demographics.”*
24. *“Goals for increasing the number of women and visible minorities should be realistic recognizing that it may take some time for RFR to overcome the effects of the recent publicity. Forcing unrealistic targets or quotas for hiring in the near term will be unsuccessful and will have long term negative effects.”*
25. *“RFR Senior Management working with Human Resources needs to consider whether the Justice Institute diploma needs to be a pre-qualification.”*

Hiring

26. *“Changes to the selection process will need to be developed in cooperation with the Union and carefully communicated to all members of RFR. This is critical to avoid or at least minimize the potential that changes to the selection process will be perceived as creating lower standards and the hiring of “second class” recruits.”*
27. *“The steps taken in the 2005 selection process such as the information night, the method of scoring individual elements of the selection process and the overall evaluation of candidates should be retained.”*
28. *“The use of Ergometrics testing should be retained and further consideration should be given to adding elements to the selection process that are focused on attitude, team work, cooperation, and problem solving.”*
29. *“The current skills assessment component of the selection process needs to be changed. The current model is customized for RFR and has not been externally validated. The overall selection process either needs to be subjected to a validation process by an organization such as the City for Public Safety and Excellence, or the module needs to be abandoned in favour of an externally developed and accredited module such as CPAT.”*

Workplace Safety

30. *“There is currently considerable variation in the quality of the fire halls with some providing considerable privacy and separate washroom facilities for women and men, and others providing very little. With the completion of two new fire halls later this year to replace halls No. 4 and No. 5, there will be no hall that could not reasonably accommodate a mixed gender crew. However, where a hall does not provide segregated facilities, there needs to be clear discussion at the beginning of each shift led by the Officer of each mixed gender crew respecting the expectations for washroom use and privacy protection.”*
31. *“In the near future those remaining halls that do not provide separate washroom and shower facilities for men and women need to be renovated so that such facilities are available.”*

Initiatives Respecting Workplace Behaviour

32. “The RFR Senior Management Team should carefully review each of the projects in the Action Plan, determine the nature and status of each project and:
- prioritize projects
 - establish meaningful timelines for completion
 - establish budgets, and
 - assign individuals responsibility for ensuring project implementation as directed by the committee.”

Re-Integration of Women Fire Fighters

33. “The Fire Chief and a member of Human Resources or the General Manager should be responsible for overseeing the re-integration.”
34. “The Chief and General Manager should meet with each of the women separately to determine from the woman’s perspective the specific barriers from her perspective to re-entry to the Department.”
35. “The Chief and General Manager in consultation with the Senior Management Team, should together assess the reasonableness of the barriers. The woman should be advised of any barriers she has identified which the employer determines are unreasonable or for which she cannot be reasonably accommodated.”
36. “Any barriers determined ‘reasonable’ and which can be addressed should be dealt with in the next 30 days.”
37. “RFR members who will be working with the woman should be consulted about any concerns or questions they have respecting the woman’s return to the Department.”
38. “The Fire Chief and the General Manager should assess any concerns raised by firefighters in the same way concerns from the woman are assessed (see 34 and 35 above).”
39. “The woman should be advised of the specific terms under which she will be returned to the Department, what accommodations have been made and what accommodations could not be made.”
40. “The terms of return and timing of the return of each woman should be communicated to RFR members as determined appropriate by the Chief and the General Manager.”
41. “Certain of the above discussions may need to include representation by the IAFF or may require negotiation with the IAFF.”
42. “When the woman return physically to the Department there should be a brief meeting with her colleagues at which the Chief is present where she can be welcomed back and where ideally she will express her enthusiasm about returning to the Department.”